

Collaborative Teaming – Collaborative Conversations

Summary

What is a Collaborative Conversation, anyway?

- Positive and supportive conversations between educators, program staff and other practitioners that are related to children and classroom activities.

What's the Point?

- Creates an environment of respect and support where all team members can feel safe
- Establishes a foundation of honesty and trust where strong work relationships flourish
- Provides team members time to reflect and examine thoughts and feelings as well as share concerns and ideas
- Consistent communications among team members improves the overall functionality in the daily routine

How Do I Do This?

- Conversations between adults in the classroom are related to children and classroom activities
- Tone of conversations between adults is positive and supportive of each other
- Team members seek or request opportunities to have in depth conversations about classroom or child related topics when needed
- Team members take time to examine their thoughts and feelings around current practice, to determine topic of conversation for meetings
- Be honest about your own experiences and perspective and be open to others' diverse perspectives
- Use reflective and open-ended questions to understand colleagues' point of view
- Listen attentively and with open minds to the ideas of all team members
- Team members come up with a common understanding of how to move forward

How Will the Children Participate in This Practice?

- Observations of children and notes from conversations with children guides discussion
- Children's strengths and interests guide decision making

Checklist

Task	Complete?
The team establishes an appropriate time and location for collaborative conversations to take place.	
The team agrees upon a key topic to discuss e.g., "I'd like to talk about our use of visuals during transitions."	
Team members come to the conversation with their observations and any important data that has been collected or information from families to share.	
Team members take turns sharing their thoughts and ideas. They engage in active listening with each other (avoid interrupting, make eye contact, ask for clarification when needed)	
Team members come to the conversation to listen without judgment and are open to each other's ideas and feelings with empathy. Considering other persons point of view.	
Team members ask open ended questions to gain more insight into co-worker's points of view and ideas. "Tell me more about that."	
Team members share information and resources to support co-workers recent professional learning, and scaffold existing knowledge and skills.	
Through bi-directional (two way) discussion, team members make collaborative decisions for moving forward and establish next steps.	
Team members decide and agree upon a plan for action, with agreed upon roles and responsibilities.	

Co-imagining possibilities is made more dynamic as you invite the children, families, and colleagues to invent and create further opportunities to expand on children's experiences.

Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette & Thomas, 2014, p. 88

Flight: Alberta's early learning and care framework.

Retrieved from www.flightframework.ca

