

10/25/14

Mentor Transcript: Toddler (New Assistant Mid-year)

J(Q)	How do you go about taking on a new assistant mid -year?
kristad(P)	<p>It is always a good thing to have your new partner begin before your current assistant's last day. This gives her an opportunity to see what her new position really entails. Observation is the most valuable tool she will utilize during this time. Giving her a list of duties that will fall under her charge will also be helpful for her to focus her observations around.</p> <p>Something else to consider is a schedule of skills that she should be working towards acquiring.</p> <p>Such as:</p> <p>Week 1 - will be able to understand the procedure and manage the bathroom throughout the day. Will be able to read a book, sing a song etc. to 5 children and keep them seated for 10 minutes. Will be able to assist the children in putting away manipulatives when done working with them.</p> <p>This schedule should reflect the growing skills that you expect of your assistant. It will give her a point of reference and allow her to focus on the skills that will be necessary for her to function in the community, have the children get to know her and respect her and keep the community moving forward throughout the day.</p> <p>Another important aspect of her days should include time with you. This time should include specific training involving follow-up with materials. This means that you should be teaching her how to set up and clean up work to assist the children who need some re-directing while they work or wander off from their work. It also gives you time to discuss each child and their work habits and personalities. It will give you time to discuss how you</p>

	<p>would like certain situations and children handled. It will also give you time to give feedback, positive and constructive, about her day. This is vital in her learning what she is doing right and what things she needs to tweak and how.</p>
kristad(P)	<p>Another aspect that should be a focus is developing a personal relationship. Getting to know each other helps create a bond that says you really are partners and care about each other. This goes a long way when dealing with difficult situations and also allows you start to develop a working relationship that can become seamless. This is what we all hope for when you have a partner.</p> <p>Children of this age require much patience and humility. When you can look at each other across the room and know what the other is thinking you know you have done your job. That being said, training an assistant takes humility, diligence, patience, communication and time. The clearer you can be about your expectations and the more consistently you model what you want, the better trained and better equipped she will be in managing the class, supporting your work with the children and doing what needs to be done in the manner and time frame that you would like. You have the opportunity for a life long friend and work partner.</p>
R(Q)	<p>I have a new child who is crying a lot and won't let go of his backpack. He seems interested in some of the material sometimes, but when I try to take his backpack from him he starts crying again and he is no longer interested in doing anything but getting his backpack back! The cycle starts all over again. Is it okay for him to keep his backpack with him?</p>
kristad(P)	<p>I think this scenario plays out with quite a bit of frequency! It is often hard for kids to "let go" of their possessions. They are unsure of their new surroundings, people around them and, "Who is trying to take my things?!" Children sometimes need to hold on to their belongings to feel secure until they have acclimated to their new community and become more interested in exploring rather than holding on for dear life to his backpack.</p> <p>Once he becomes more interested in what is going on around him he will not be so attached to his belongings and will be</p>

	<p>comfortable separating from it. And then he can begin to attach to his new environment. This will happen through work! It is a very simple example of separation and attachment that we learned so much about in our training. So, what I am suggesting is that it is okay for him to keep his backpack with him for a while. He will probably let go of it on his own in time.</p>
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