

Who Made You the Teacher?

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Boot Camp 2022

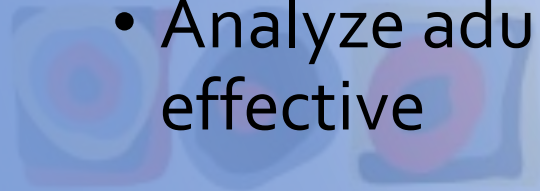
June 16, 2022



Objectives

- Review the responsibilities of the teaching team in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms
- Identify the benefits of a team approach to teaching pre-k and kindergarten children
- Dissect the issues that can challenge the approach to teaching as a team and develop solutions to the challenges
- Analyze adult communication strategies and determine the most effective

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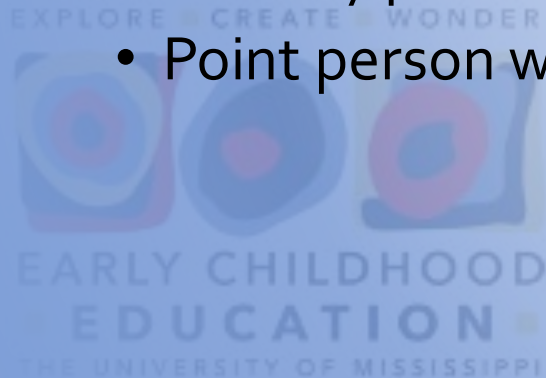
The Responsibilities of the Teacher and Assistant Teacher

Teachers serve as:

- Instructional leaders
- Models for the classroom behavior they want to see and hear in the classroom
- Organizers
- Primary planners
- Point person with parents

Assistant Teachers serve to:

- Reinforce the teacher in providing instruction to students per the teacher's guidance and joint planning
- Provide reinforcement to the teacher in classroom management techniques so students see the same type of modeling in the adults that defines how they are to interact in the classroom
- Support the teacher in gathering and reviewing student assessment data that guides planning and instruction



Do We REALLY Need Two Teachers in the Classroom?

MDE Pre-K Guidelines: The teacher-child ratio for classrooms serving four-year-olds is 1:10 maximum. If an assistant teacher is assigned in the pre-kindergarten classroom for the entire day, the teacher-child ratio for classrooms serving three-year-olds does not exceed 2:14 maximum at any time, while the teacher-child ratio for classrooms serving four-year-olds does not exceed 2:20 maximum at any time. WHY?

According to the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER), Research indicates that class size should be limited to no more than 20 children, and classes should have no more than 10 children per staff member. **Smaller classes and fewer children per teacher enable teachers to interact with each child more frequently, work with smaller groups, and offer each child more individualized attention, resulting in better outcomes. The smaller the class, the easier it is for a teacher to develop a good understanding of each child's interests, needs, and capabilities(2019).**

Do We Currently Have Two Teachers in the Classroom or One Teacher and an Underutilized Professional?

Assessing the efficiency of the assistant teacher's presence in the classroom:

- Does the assistant teacher (AT) have a copy of the learning standards and the lesson plan in advance of when she is to assist in teaching?
- Does the AT have opportunities to meet and plan with the teacher on a regular basis? Does the teacher regularly model instructional strategies for the AT?
- Does the AT primarily assist the teacher in teaching or in managing paperwork, making bulletin boards, running copies of work sheets and other clerical duties?
- Does the AT have the primary responsibility to instruct children in small groups and learning centers having been given the material in advance of teaching?
- What job expectations does the teacher and principal convey to the AT?

Do You Consider Assistant Teachers Professionals? It Is More Than Pay...

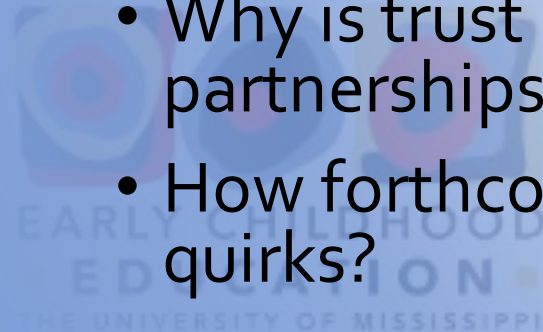
Much has been said and written about the professionalism of teachers and assistant teachers. The pay raise starting in the upcoming school year has been praised, as it should be. The mood is more positive, but COVID burnout is still an issue. How will this play out in your classroom?

- As a teacher, do you value your AT by including them in conversations about the schedule of the day, certain children and what and how learning standards will be taught?
- As an assistant teacher, do you ask questions, take initiative to address things that are needed without being asked or told to do so?
- As a teacher are you respectful and consider the AT a true partner in managing the classroom and teaching the children? Do you take time to develop a relationship?
- As a AT do you show up everyday ready to work, regardless of how you feel about being at school that day?

Working Together: Change is Hard

- Is there a shared vision of the goals? How does that happen?
- What leadership style is practiced by the teacher? Boss vs Leader
- How does the AT accept direction? How is it given?
- How does change affect the AT? Affect the teacher?
- What is intentionally done by both the teacher and AT to develop trust in the partnership?
- Why is trust considered the number one element in successful partnerships?
- How forthcoming are you with your partner about your habits and quirks?

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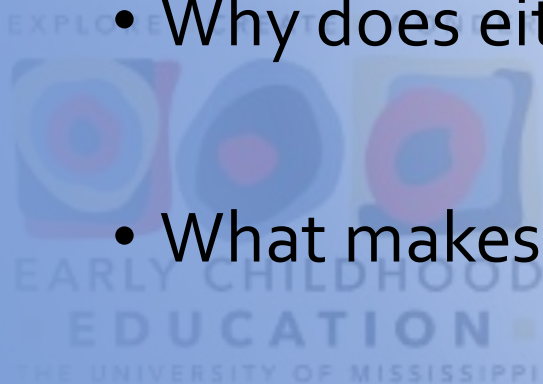


Unpleasant Thoughts...

- If teachers primarily give AT clean up jobs or those that are of a clerical nature, would the principal feel the need to protect the AT when it comes time to utilizing them as a substitute teacher as much as if it is evident that the AT is being utilized as an instructor and important part of the teaching in the classroom?
- If an AT sits down and looks like they are just “passing the time of day”, would the principal or the teacher think they really wanted to work in the school? Would they invest in providing energy to support the AT in future job opportunities?
- If the teacher does begin to expect more from the AT, how will that play out? Will the AT respond positively or negatively? It depends...

Turning to Pleasant Thoughts...

- What can be accomplished if the team is hitting on all cylinders?
- What can the school year become for the teaching team and most importantly the students?
- Why does either team member want to teach pre-kindergarten?
- What makes the day a good one?



Summary : A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words



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