

Teacher-to-Teacher Talk-2013 Update

Narrator: Welcome to this short in-service on teacher-to-teacher talk. The first question you're probably asking is: What is teacher-to-teacher talk? And you may also be wondering what it has to do with quality teaching and learning. Teacher-to-teacher talk refers to the ways that the adults communicate and interact in the classroom. Positive and respectful teacher-to-teacher talk makes for a productive classroom.

Teacher: Teacher Jo, would it be possible if we continued to do small group here?

Teacher Jo: Then I wouldn't -- no problem.

Teacher: Yeah, oh, okay, great.

Teacher Jo: Teacher Jane, can Salim and I look at the list?

Teacher Jane: Sure.

Teacher Jo: We're just wondering when it's going to be his turn. Let's see.

Narrator: The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning's framework for effective everyday practice supports school readiness for all children. Teacher-to-teacher talk is one feature of the foundation, the effective and engaging interactions and environments that are essential for quality teaching and learning. More specifically, a smooth-running and well-organized early learning environment requires that the adults in the classroom help each other by communicating in ways that help to maximize learning time for the children. For the purposes of this in-service, teacher-to-teacher talk refers to the teachers, aides, and other adults who work in a single classroom.

Here are a few things to remember about effective teacher-to-teacher talk. Teacher talk is purposeful. Teacher-to-teacher talk helps to ensure consistency with classroom routines and rules. Teacher-to-teacher talk is a way to share information about the learning activities or about children's interests. By sharing information, the adults support each other. Teacher-to-teacher talk is also a way to create a

sense of teamwork. Let's think about what it means to ensure consistency with classroom routines and rules. Early childhood classrooms are busy places. There are many activities and many things to keep track of. Teacher-to-teacher talk helps teachers remember the schedule and remember what materials are needed and when. Teachers can help each other when something comes up, like a child needs some special attention, and make sure that all the responsibilities are covered. In addition, teacher-to-teacher talk is important for supporting teaching and learning.

Teacher 1: Nice job using your words there, Jody.

Boy: Not yet.

Teacher 1: So, really reinforce him for any time he's using his words, instead of physically expressing himself.

Teacher 2: Gotcha.

Teacher 1: Yeah.

Narrator: Teachers can help each other remember a child's current learning goal or an effective teaching practice or a strategy to support a child's positive behavior. Teachers can also remind each other of classroom jobs that need to be accomplished, such as collecting assessment information or providing a child with enough practice on an important skill. Remember that teacher-to-teacher talk is a way to make the classroom run more smoothly. It should mean that there is more time to talk and interact with the children.

Teacher: It was time for small groups to be over, and I said, "Okay, it's time to put our things away." And then Teacher Sandra came and told me about, you know, well, one of the kids. And she says, "He needs more time, so what we need to do with him is to announce ahead of time we're going to be -- you know, small group's going to be over in a little bit and we're going to have to put things away because we need to go outside."

Narrator: Just as important as remembering to communicate with other adults in the classroom is communicating in ways that are respectful and that build a sense of teamwork. To do this, teachers can

use words like "we" and "us" and use words that are warm and caring. And teachers need to be aware of nonverbal cues as well. Remember that teacher-to-teacher talk is one way that adults model appropriate social behavior for the children. The purpose of this short in-service has been to highlight the importance of purposeful and respectful teacher-to-teacher talk. Teachers talk to each other to increase consistency in the classroom, to share information, and to build a sense of teamwork.

This in-service can be used in conjunction with our in-service on zoning to maximize staff efficiency to help achieve a well-organized classroom and to increase learning opportunities for children. There are also tips and tools for you to use to help create a more productive classroom.

Thank you for listening.