

Early Childhood Coalition Communities of Practice #3

04/17/2025

Meeting Agenda: ECC Communities of Practice–Enhancing Early Childhood Education Practices. Every third Thursday of the month @ 6:00 PM

Objective: To explore and implement strategies that promote social-emotional development, self-regulation, and social justice in early childhood education through working as a community.

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88108268122?pwd=jEz29HENa418SE9ea57xY4MIscZmob.1>

What to do to prepare for the session

Review sessions 5&6 in the workbook:

- Engaging Environments for Childhood
- Investigating Materials

Agenda:

(5 minutes) Welcome and Connecting Back

Briefly welcome everyone and acknowledge the previous discussions on our image of the child and the importance of their perspectives.

Briefly ask: How might our understanding from those sessions influence how we think about creating engaging environments and offering materials?

(20–25 minutes) Engaging Environments for Childhood

Individual Reflection (3 minutes): Consider what "engaging environments for childhood" truly means to you. What are some key characteristics or elements that come to mind?

Small Group Discussion (10–12 minutes): Break into smaller groups (e.g., 3–4 people). Discuss the following questions:

Based on your experience and understanding, what makes an environment truly engaging for young children? Consider physical

space, social interactions, and opportunities for exploration.

How can we intentionally design environments that reflect our positive "image of the child" (from last session)?

How can we create environments that actively invite and respond to children's diverse "points of view" (from Session 4)? Provide specific examples.

What challenges have you faced in creating genuinely engaging environments, and what strategies have you found helpful?

Whole Group Share (7-10 minutes): Reconvene as a whole group. Share key insights, engaging examples, or common themes from the small group discussions.

(25-30 minutes) Investigating Materials

Individual Reflection (3 minutes): Consider materials' role in children's learning and engagement. What qualities of materials tend to spark curiosity and investigation?

Activity/Small Group Exploration (12-15 minutes): (Facilitator Note: If possible, have a small collection of diverse materials available—natural items, loose parts, recycled materials, etc. If not physically possible, ask participants to mentally consider various materials.)

In small groups (can be the same or different from the first activity), discuss the following questions about the provided (or imagined) materials:

What possibilities for exploration and learning do these materials offer children?

How might different children engage with the same materials based on their interests and perspectives?

How can educators observe and learn from children's interactions with materials to inform our practice?

How can we move beyond simply providing materials to actively "investigating" them *with* children? What does that look like?

Whole Group Share (10-12 minutes): Bring the whole group back together to share:

Key observations about the potential of different materials.

Insights gained from considering how children might interact with materials.

Practical ideas for "investigating materials" alongside children.

(10 minutes) Connecting Themes and Future Considerations

How do "engaging environments" and "investigating materials" work together to support children's learning and development?

How can we continue to reflect on our environments and material choices through the lens of our image of the child and their perspectives?

Briefly preview the topic for the next session (if applicable).

Any final questions or reflections?

(5 minutes) Closing

Extras for consideration:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME8KjqyqthM>

Article: [Managing Oneself \(1999\) – HBR](#)

Take a walk through one of modern management's founding fathers, Peter F. Drucker's seminal article first published in 1999. He explains that having the ability to choose your future is a relatively new invention. The peasant from centuries ago didn't have to worry about what career path to choose or how to achieve them. Drucker challenges us to ask ourselves: "What are my strengths? How do I perform? What are my values? Where do I belong? What should my contribution be?"

Video: [Check out the video](#) on Managing Oneself for a quicker overview of the article.

Article: [How Will You Measure Your Life? – HBR](#)

"How can I be happy in my career? How can I be sure that my relationship with my family is an enduring source of happiness? And how can I live my life with integrity?" These are questions that famed economist and the world's foremost authority on disruptive innovation, Clayton Christensen asks us to consider in this article. By applying his models used to explain disruptive innovation, he helps us understand how to build more meaningful and intentional lives.

Video: [How to manage your time more effectively \(according to machines\)](#)

"Human beings and computers alike share the challenge of how to get as much done as possible in a limited time. Over the last fifty or so years, computer scientists have learned a lot of good strategies for managing time

effectively — and they have a lot of experience with what can go wrong. Brian Christian shares how we can use some of these insights to help make the most of our own lives.”

During the session: Discussion

Use these questions to encourage discussion during sessions

For non-directors/center owners:

- Will your career progression inevitably lead to a managerial position?
- How do you feel about that?
- Do you have the goal of becoming a Center Director or owner?
- What attracts or deters you from pursuing the Director/center owner role?
- What skills do you think you need to develop before you’re ready to become a Director?
- How do you manage yourself well?

For Center Directors/Owners:

- What are your best strategies for managing others?
- What skills did you not know you needed before becoming a manager?
- What resources do you rely on to be a good manager?
- What are the biggest challenges of managing others?
- How do you manage yourself and others well?

After the session

How did that go? Did group members have takeaways for managing themselves and others? Sometimes a lot can be covered in these discussions and leave you needing time to reflect on everything presented. It’s helpful to ask yourself these questions after your session:

- How did that session go?
- What went well? Did anything stand out from what was presented?
- What can I learn from my group members?
- What do I want to remember to ask about during our next session?

Actions

- Each member should note key action(s) before the next session.
- Don’t forget to fill out the feedback form.

