

Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

## Section 1. Early career educator



You must know

It's important for children to collaborate, learn from, and help each other because it helps them grow and learn in various ways. Let me explain through some examples:

**Shared Play Experiences:** Imagine a recent activity where we created a pretend market inspired by our town's weekend market. Children from different backgrounds took turns being vendors, customers, and cashiers. They worked together, negotiating prices, role-playing transactions, and setting up the market display. By collaborating, they learned about teamwork, problem-solving, and communication while experiencing the joy of playing and learning with others.

**Ongoing Project:** Another example is an ongoing project focused on environmental conservation. Children were split into small groups, each with a specific research focus like recycling, energy conservation, or water preservation. They collaborated by gathering information, brainstorming solutions, and designing informative posters. During group discussions, they shared their findings, exchanged ideas, and made collective decisions on how to raise awareness about environmental issues. Through collaboration, they learned how to work together towards a common goal, value different perspectives, and make a positive impact on their environment.

**Supporting Diversity and Collaboration:** In our diverse classroom, we organised a sensory exploration activity using textured materials. Children worked in pairs, with one child blindfolded and the other guiding them through the sensory experience. This activity promoted collaboration between children with different abilities, allowing them to communicate, trust, and rely on each other. It taught them about empathy, understanding, and respecting each other's unique strengths. By collaborating across diverse

abilities, they learned the value of teamwork and how collaboration can bring out the best in everyone.

When first starting out as an educator, it's important to know some of the fears and behaviours that children may show if they are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other. For example:

1. **Fear of Rejection:** Sometimes, kids might worry that others won't accept them or include them because they may have had past experiences that made them feel this way, or they might not feel very confident about themselves.
2. **Reliance on Others:** Instead of trying to solve problems on their own, some kids may rely too much on their friends or classmates to help them, rather than learning how to figure things out for themselves.
3. **Unequal Contribution:** When working together, kids may feel frustrated or upset if they think that some people are doing more work or getting more recognition than others. They want things to feel fair and equal.
4. **Competition and Comparison:** Some kids may start comparing themselves to others and feel like they need to be better than everyone else. They might think that they're not good enough if they don't do things as well as their classmates.
5. **Reluctance to Seek Help:** Even though working with others is a chance to learn from them, some kids might feel nervous or worried about asking for help because they don't want to seem like they can't do something or be judged by others.
6. **Conflict Resolution Challenges:** Sometimes, when kids work together, they might disagree or have arguments. This can be a challenge because they have to find ways to talk and solve the problem in a peaceful and fair manner.

### Week 15, 22 to 26 May 2023 – 5.2.1 Collaborative learning

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You must practice

It's important to acknowledge and address these fears or perceived fears that children may have. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to do so:

**Fear of Rejection:** Educators should make sure everyone feels welcome and valued in the classroom, so kids don't have to be afraid of being left out or rejected.

**What to say:** "I want our classroom to be a happy place where everyone feels included. We are all friends here, and we support each other. Let's make sure to be kind and welcoming to everyone, so no one feels left out or sad."

**Reliance on Others:** Educators should encourage kids to be independent thinkers and give them chances to grow and learn on their own.

**What to say:** "Hey, friends! I love how creative and smart each one of you is. Today, we're going to practice using our own amazing brains to come up with ideas. When we have a problem to solve, take a moment to think on your own and see what fantastic ideas you can come up with!"

**Unequal Contribution:** Educators should make sure everyone has a fair chance to contribute and be appreciated for their efforts. They can set clear rules for teamwork and talk about the importance of everyone's contributions.

**What to say:** "When we work together, it's important that everyone has a chance to contribute and be heard. That means listening to each other's ideas and taking turns sharing our thoughts. Remember, every idea is valuable and special!"

**Competition and Comparison:** Educators should create a positive atmosphere where kids support each other instead of always trying to be the best.

**What to say:** "In our classroom, we celebrate each other's progress and growth. We're not here to compete with each other, but to support and help one another."

**Reluctance to Seek Help:** Educators should make it clear that asking for assistance is a normal and a positive thing, and they should create a supportive

environment where kids feel comfortable reaching out for help.

**What to say:** "I want you to know that it's perfectly okay to ask for help. We're here to support each other and learn together. If you're feeling stuck, please just ask."

**Conflict Resolution Challenges:** Educators should teach strategies for solving problems peacefully, like listening to each other, understanding each other's feelings, and finding compromises. Learning how to handle conflicts in a positive way is an important skill for everyone.

**What to say:** "When we have an argument or a fight, it's important to listen to each other. Let's make sure we give each person a chance to share their thoughts and feelings. By listening, we can understand each other better and feel better."

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you doing well? Describe your practice in detail.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.

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