

Promote my
professionalism as an
early childhood
teacher education
essay



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As a new student teacher, I currently confront the challenges of how to participate as a confident team member in an early childhood centre and help the team to achieve the centre goals. This essay will focus on discussing how to promote my professionalism as an early childhood teacher. Firstly, I will give a description of culturally appropriate, collaborative and ethical practices, and team membership and conflict resolution respectively.

Meanwhile, I will descry some strategies that I can apply to develop my professional practice. Moreover, I will illustrate the strategies that centre management and administration could use to support my discussion.

Culturally appropriate practices are one of the critical factors to build up a quality early childhood service in Aotearoa/New Zealand. According to the statistics from the census population report, more than one fifth of children were born overseas (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Therefore, with more and more immigrants moving to New Zealand, there are increasingly children and teachers from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds in our center. It makes the early childhood centers and social become more multicultural. In this way, Vossler, Waitere-Ang and Adams(2005) emphasized that education would occur within cultural context. Cultural appropriateness should be viewed as one of the educative function to ensure the quality of education and promote teacher's professionalism. As a teacher, I should be sensitive about the knowledge of culture represented in classroom (Ramsey, 2004). Te Whariki also states that early childhood educators should ensure that programmers and resources are sensitive and responsive to the different cultures and heritages within the families of the children attending that service (Ministry of Education [MoE], 1996). Thus, the

teachers should be conscious to create the classroom environments which reflect the identities of the children and families. In this way, children can develop their identities, solidarity with others, and critical thinking (Gerrity, 2003). I can create some resources that promote a culturally and linguistically inclusive practice. For instance, I can make some traditional clothes from different culture, and encourage children to wear those clothes to do some drama plays. In this way, all the children will have an equitable opportunity for learning the positive judgments on their culture and their family background. Moreover, I will provide alternative materials in our teaching environment, which just like includes dolls of different races in “home area”. In this way, they will learn to respect other children who come from other cultures. I will also provide some books about myths/legends from different cultures to extend children’s understanding about other cultures.

The centre management and administration of culturally appropriate also can help me to improve and support my professionalism. The supervisor and administrator could encourage other teachers to provide role models. It helps children see that we value diversity and that we are open to others, regardless of their different cultural values and practices they follow. In this way, it will help the children accept difference. For the new teachers who do not have many experiences in culturally appropriate practices, the centre’s manager could assign a mentor to support them and promote their professional development (NZTC, 2005). The centre also can schedule some regular meetings to let the teachers to share the strategies that they apply on culturally appropriate practices.

Early childhood centre is a complex system that involves children, teachers and parents. This means that we need to work collaboratively with parents, whanau, and communities to help the children improve their developments. A good relationship with colleagues will help the team to achieve the centre's goals. It because in an effective team, every team member will cooperate with other team members and support each other. For example, in our centre's regular meetings all the teachers would share the ideas of teaching planning and some information about children. It always illumines other teachers and makes them think more deeply and have more ideas, because every teacher has different philosophy and different level of understanding about early childhood education. Their thought will be stimulated by other different styles of thinking (NZTC, 2005). In addition, implementing collaborative practices enhances reflective and critical thoughts. In this way, it helps educators to make professional decisions and judgments. It can also enhance self-efficiency, self-esteem and staff morale (NZTC, 2005). Moreover, applying collaborative practices also benefit the young children and their families. For instance, the teacher and the parents can work as a team to improve children's learning. If the parents can share with the teacher some information about what their children interested in at home, the teacher would plan some activities to the children to follow their interests. In this way, it supports the children's learning effectively. To improve my professionalism about collaboration, I need to improve the skills about collaborative reflection. Firstly, Annan, Lai and Robinson mentioned that teachers could analyze the process of the teaching practices together. Then one of the teachers who could evaluate the outcomes of children's learning experience and analysis with his/her colleagues. Finally, they could

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find something that they might improve next time (Annan, Lai & Robinson, cited in NZTC, 2005) It will help teachers to be willing to change and open their minds, thus collaborative practices could be applied consistently.

The administration and management in early childhood services also play an essential role in supporting me to consistently apply the collaborative practices. The centre should have some strategies to encourage the staffs to discuss the centre's program and make any necessary changes. It will motivate the team to support with each other. For example, in our centre we have the board in the office, teacher can write down some suggestions or information. In this way, teachers could know what happened in the centre even the day that any others do not work. The centre also needs to have the policy about rewarding to encourage staff to apply the collaborative practices (Sciarra & Dorsey, 2002).

Ethical practice is another big challenge that a new student teacher may face with. As a teacher, I need to be familiar with the Code of Ethics to develop my professionalism of ethical practice, because “ The code of ethics provides a set of shared valued for all childhood educators in Aotearoa/New Zealand to abide by”(Early Childhood Code of Ethics National Working Group, 1995, p9). In early childhood settings, educators are often required to make decisions about what is right or wrong, we need to use the code of ethics as reliable guidelines to guide our behaviors and protect the children, even if my personal philosophy are conflict with it. For example, I used to expect the children to finish the activity, because I thought that the activity was successful or not depending on whether the children finished the activity.

But New Zealand Code of Ethics (1995) states that teachers should value the <https://assignbuster.com/promote-my-professionalism-as-an-early-childhood-teacher-education-essay/>

right of children to “ have their individual needs met” (Early Childhood Code of Ethics National Working Group, 1995, p11). Thus, I have changed my philosophy. Because I have learned that what they could learn from the activity is more important than the result and the teacher need to provide the activity that could meet children’s individual learning level.

The management can support me for my ethical practices by policies like the policy of child abuse. The management also should keep up date with new legislation and share the information with teachers (Ministry of education, 1998). In this way, the teachers would be familiar with the children’s rights and know how to protect their rights. Moreover, the management structure should ensure someone will support the teacher when he/she meet the ethical dilemmas. For example, the other colleagues and supervisors can help the teacher to deal with the dilemmas. They could read the centre’s policies or other documents together and discuss the values under the situation. And then they could decide what action they would take.

Team membership is one of the keys to ensure a quality early childhood service (NZTC, 2005). If everyone works co-operatively with each other in a team, it will help the team work effectively and achieve outstanding outcomes. As a new member of a confident team, when I participate in a team I will firstly understand the goals’ that the team need to achieve. Once I understand that, it will help me to contribute to the effective running of team work. Then I should clarify my roles and my responsibilities so that I know what exactly I could do as a team member. It helps me work more effectively for achieving the team’s goals. To become an effective team member I also need to have an attitude of “ being mutually supportive of <https://assignbuster.com/promote-my-professionalism-as-an-early-childhood-teacher-education-essay/>

each other” (NZTC, 2005, p15). For example, I will seek for some suggestions from the colleagues if I have any questions. I will also speak out my opinion if I think something is not right. I will be open-minded, accept constructive feedbacks, share my information and thought with other staffs¼and keep reflecting on myself to change my performance.

The centre’s management also could help the teachers build a good team member. It can provide the effective plans and models to help teachers understanding how a team is going to achieve the goals (NZTC, 2005). It also could provide some policies about communication to ensure the team work more effectively and have a high performance, because policies will be the guidance to guide teachers’ behaviors and make the open communication happens.

Conflict in early childhood will damage the harmonious relationships and break the effective communication. However, conflict itself is not the main problem. The main problem is how teachers would address, approach and manage the conflict effectively. If we could address the conflict effectively, conflict could turn its negative side into a positive learning experience (NZTC, 2005). Therefore, I need to develop my skills and respond to conflict professionally when I deal with the conflict. Firstly, manage conflict should be managed as soon as possible and do not wait for it to explode. Then, I will analyze what is the conflict about and what would be a proper solution for me and other parties involved. I also need to take time to let me get my emotions under control. Moreover, I need to be aware of my body language and pay attention to what I and others saying and feeling. It will help me to promote understandings and avoid a destructive power struggle. In addition, <https://assignbuster.com/promote-my-professionalism-as-an-early-childhood-teacher-education-essay/>

I should learn to be open-minded. I will ask questions instead of directly assume and focus on solving the conflict instead of blaming people. I will be willing to change my thoughts and consider about others' thoughts (NZTC, 2005). It helps me to take all parties of the consideration into my consideration and find a mutually acceptable solution.

Centre's policies will be used to support myself when handling with conflict. "Policies are essential tools for educator and management. They are agreed statements of purpose about particular aspects of a service's management and programmes" (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 63). I need to evaluate the conflict and try to approach it in ways that according to the policies. It also needs to provide a model of effective communication to help teachers negotiate with others when they try to deal with the conflict.

In this essay, it has analyzed the effective professional practices in early child education context. It also has examined some strategies that centre management and administration could support me to be a professional teacher.

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