



WORKING WITH YOUNG
CHILDREN WITH TRAUMA
– APPLYING PRACTICE

PRINCIPLE 2

PARTNERSHIPS WITH
PROFESSIONALS



DISCUSSION STARTER

Partnerships can be formed between individuals and between organisations or services. Partnerships between early childhood professionals are characterised by:

- respect for each other's experience and expertise
- open and ongoing constructive communication
- trust
- clarity about roles
- agreed goals or purpose
- openness to different views and perspectives and willingness to learn from others
- commitment to building relationships
- collaboration with families and children.

1. Do the partnerships you and/or your service have match the characteristics listed above?

2. If some of the characteristics are missing or could be stronger, what steps can you take to establish or strengthen them?

Notes



discussion starter

A family day care educator works closely with a maternal and child health nurse a social worker and a physiotherapist to support a child attending her service who has recently been diagnosed with a developmental delay. The child's mother is 17 and a single parent. The educator says that she has learned so much from the other professionals – not just about their roles but about how to support young mothers and about developmental delay. She said that being included in planning meetings with the parent and other professionals once every two months has boosted her confidence and her image of herself as a professional educator. She said *I was surprised at first that I could tell them things about Joel that they didn't know – that even his mum hadn't noticed. I've learned so much from them about how to help Joel become more confident and also about how to support his mum. As a result I've joined a community network of professionals who support young single mums. Before Joel started coming I didn't know there were so many single mums in our community.*

1. In what ways does this partnership benefit Joel and his mum?

2. How does it benefit the educator?

3. What factors might contribute to the success of this partnership?

Notes



discussion starter

Abid recently moved schools and enrolled in the school age care setting attached to his new school. The educators are concerned that he isn't settling in. He is often by himself and appears to have no friends. He stays in the reading area for much of the afternoon. The educators' hunch is that this is not because he wants to use the books but rather because he feels safe there.

After discussing the situation with his family the educators got permission to approach his Year 2 teacher. She said that his behaviour was much the same in school. The only time he seemed happy and eager was when the class went off to music sessions. These sessions are led by a local musician who comes into the school once a week. The teacher hadn't spoken to the music teacher but said that she would.

She reported when they met a few days later that the music teacher said that Abid had amazing skills on drums, far exceeding other children. One of the school age care educators had recently seen a busker in the city who was drumming on a variety of metal containers – rubbish bins, olive oil drums, buckets, saucepan lids and tin cans. The educators decided to bring in a few of these objects and talk to the children about creating a homemade drum set. They discussed it with the group, not singling out Abid, but when it was assembled Abid amazed everyone with his skills.

The classroom teacher meanwhile had integrated discussion of different sounds made by different sized containers into the science focus with the aim of inspiring some new ideas for 'drums'. The teacher spoke to the music teacher about the need to build Abid's strengths and confidence and to help him make friends. The family commented that Abid had talked about his interest in drumming and they discussed ways to encourage this interest at home and at school.

The professionals agreed that talking had been very useful. They decided that school age care educators and the relevant teachers in the school would meet monthly to discuss children and to build in better continuity and responsiveness to children's strengths and abilities.

1. How did this simple example of collaboration benefit Abid?

2. How did it benefit the professionals?



DISCUSSION STARTER

1. Reflect on the professional partnerships you have with individuals or organisations. Use the table to identify who, why and the benefits for professionals, children, families and community.
2. Place an asterisk beside the partnerships that may be directly related to working with young children with trauma.

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (WHO?)	PURPOSE FOR THESE PARTNERSHIPS (WHY?)	Benefits to professionals, children, families and community

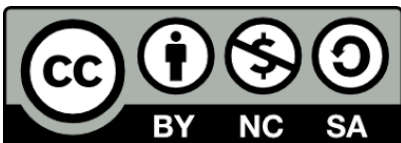


action PLAN

1. Reflect on the information and practice examples of different professional partnerships discussed in this workshop.
2. Use the table to identify other professionals or organisations that you could form partnerships with and why they would be helpful. Identify how you will initiate or lead this partnership building.

Possible new partners (who?)	Purpose for these partnerships (why?)	Steps you would take to initiate these new partnerships





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