

**SUMMARY OF
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION TEACHERS WORKSHOP:
UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO YOUNG CHILDREN**

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Background

In the fall of 2014, the Developmentally Successful Learners (DSL) Committee of the Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative determined that one of its two priorities for the year would be to offer 2 workshops for shared professional development inclusive of early care and education providers with [kindergarten] teachers and/or other school professionals (Community Plan strategy 6).

A subcommittee was formed and its members (Ozlem Camli, Manny Mondanipour, Robin Otis, Pam Molochko, Kim Bobin, Pat Mulrain, Sue Tenorio and Sally Dastoli) planned and developed the content of the two workshops. Additionally, the Subcommittee sought to “kick start” the formation of an Early Childhood Care and Education Directors Network during post-workshop discussion the evening of the event..

Attendees of previous DSL workshops and/or Center administrators indicated that a dearth of offerings existed related to infants and toddlers. “Challenging behaviors”, was also previously identified by attendees as a topic of great interest, Accordingly, the Subcommittee developed a series of two workshops in which challenging behaviors of the two different age groups (infants/toddlers and preschoolers) was to be the main focus and Heidi Levitz the presenter at both workshops.

Unfortunately the week before the first scheduled workshop, Ms. Levitz became ill and was unable to present, She graciously offered, however, to combine both age groups into one workshop presentation and did so by agreement of the Subcommittee. .

This summary details the outcomes of the teacher workshop, “Understanding and Responding to Young Children”, which was held on the evening of April 20, 2015 at Webb Elementary School in Wethersfield.

Results

A total of 23 individuals, representing 7 Wethersfield area early childhood organizations were in attendance. Five individuals were administrators and 1 a [non-public school] kindergarten teacher, the remainder being early childhood teachers. A total of 20 individuals completed pre-workshop evaluations. Individuals were not required to identify themselves. Post-workshop evaluations, which included four additional questions, were completed by 21 individuals. Results of each are reported here:

Pre-Workshop Evaluations

1. I am knowledgeable about challenging behaviors of typical young children, infancy to preschool, in my care

Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25%	65%	10%		

2. I regularly use effective strategies to manage challenging behaviors of young children, infancy to preschool, in my care

Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30%	60%	10%		

Post-Workshop Evaluations

1. Based upon today's professional development program, I am very knowledgeable about challenging behaviors of typical young children, infancy to preschool, in my care

Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
57%	43%			

2. Based upon today's professional development program I will use strategies presented to manage challenging behaviors of typical young children, infancy to preschool, in my care

Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
62%	38%			

3. Question: As a result of this workshop, what new strategies will you use to manage challenging behaviors of typical young children, infancy to preschool, in your care?

Responses: Most frequently mentioned responses were: to be more aware of body language and facial expressions, matching [voice] to language used. Repeating expectations [for students] daily and focusing on and reinforcing desired behavior were also often mentioned as was the "fish philosophy".

4. Question: What was most useful to you about this presentation?

Responses: Most frequently mentioned responses were: different communication strategies and positive body language/praise for good behavior, assisting [children's] self-regulation of behaviors. The relationship between brain development-emotions-behaviors as well as current studies related to early childhood development were often mentioned. Identification of ECCP (Early Childhood Consultation Project) as a resource with provision of contact information was appreciated as was group participation.

5. Question: Are you interested in participating in future Professional Development workshops?

Responses: Yes 90% No 0%

6. Question: In which of the following topics/activities would you be interested?

- Joint professional development for early education providers and Kdg. teachers:81%
- Round table discussions between early education and Kdg. teachers sharing experiences:67%
- Presentations by a speaker on topic of interest:52% (topics listed were music and movement, block play, conducting small groups)
- Early education providers and Kdg. teachers visit each others' classrooms:38%
- Other: 10% (included science and/or math with toddlers, making and presenting puppets)

Post-Workshop Discussion

Reportedly, all workshop attendees agreed that the workshops are "a wonderful opportunity" but very few were willing to organize them. Attendees were asked to make [related] comments at the bottom of post-evaluation forms. One individual provided her contact information, stating her willingness to help while three other unidentified individuals expressed enthusiasm to participate and/or serve on a planning committee. Three additional, unidentified individuals recommended follow up with a specific Center Director.