

What Do I Say Now?

Sometimes we all struggle with knowing how to respond to others. Think about the following scenarios and how they might influence cognitive development for children or youth. How would you start a conversation with the staff member?

<i>If you saw...</i>	<i>You would say...</i>
<p>Trent is a new caregiver in the infant classroom. He has very little experience with infants, but he is warm and energetic. He seems to gravitate towards the mobile infants. You have noticed that he waits until one of the other caregivers responds to younger infants when they cry.</p>	<p><i>“What have you enjoyed about starting in the infant room? Which children have you made a strong connection with?”</i></p> <p><i>“I noticed how much Javion enjoyed playing peek-a-boo with you today. It’s great that you have already built such a strong relationship with some of the children. Are there children you feel less comfortable with? What can we do to help you build your confidence?”</i></p>
<p>Meredith and Alacia work together in the preschool classroom. They have become good friends. You have noticed them becoming chattier with each other. In fact, they spend most of free choice time sitting together in different areas of the room and talking about non-work-related topics. They are spending less and less time talking to the children.</p>	<p><i>“During my visit today, I noticed a few children came across the room to ask you for help. Has that been happening often? What do you think we could do to make sure you’re able to supervise the whole room and help children who need it?”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s so important to make sure you connect with each other during the day, but it’s also really important to connect with kids. I can tell you two have a great relationship. How can we make sure children experience that during free choice time, too?”</i></p>

Corinne has been a school-age staff member for three years, and she does excellent work with the program. She came to you last week crying because she is so upset about a new staff member. She thinks the new staff member is too harsh with the kids and stifles their creativity. She is thinking about finding a new job.

"I am so sorry to hear that you're upset. Thank you for sharing your concerns with me. You are looking out for the kids, and that's what we want! I'll come tomorrow and observe in your program. Based on what I see, I'll schedule a meeting to get the new staff member up to speed on our philosophy and approach. In the meantime, if you see anything that puts a child in danger, don't hesitate to follow reporting procedures."