



Early Edition

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Enabling the Early Childhood Educator

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Issues



Updates



Program Resources



ACSI News

Little thoughts...Big Ideas

Our ministry to young children and their families in today's tumultuous society presents a growing challenge for us as Christian educational leaders. We are leaders, whether we want to be or not. By profession, we are trained to provide academic direction; by our temperament, we are designed to pave the way for emotional stability in others; by our instincts we are compelled to nurture and comfort those around us and by our faith, we are appointed to fulfill God's mandate through our work. With all these credentials, why do we shy away from leadership? Are we afraid of failing in our own eyes or afraid of making this long-term commitment? Have you ever stopped to think of what you are actually accomplishing? It is not mere child's play but an artful combination of academic training and theological application that intentionally targets the world that children live in as well as animate the faith they need in order to follow Jesus for the rest of their lives! This definitely falls into the category of leadership on a daily level and in some cases, minute by minute.

Now that you recognize yourself as a leader, you need to dispel the mythology about leadership. It is not about power and tough behaviour, but about giving away power through the right behaviour. On a practical and personal level, you need to move out of your comfort zone and rise to the occasion in order to activate your leadership potential and:

R = recognize your leadership goals where you are,
I = identify them and take ownership of what you do
S = strategize and develop a realistic action plan,
E = empower yourself, with others, to reach goals.
From these benchmarks, you can do the following:

1. Develop your credibility and reputation: do you have a track record of doing things well?
2. Understand how to relate to other people around you: how are your interpersonal skills especially

with people who have a different opinion?

Please remember that there is no such thing as microwave leadership...it doesn't just happen.

3. Develop self-discipline and patience: are you able to control and manage your own behaviour consistently? The goal is not to cross the finish line first but to cross the line with as many people as possible.
4. Learn how to lead yourself: can you be truly accountable for your actions when no one is looking?
5. Learn how to deal with criticism: as a leader, everything you do will attract attention.
6. Develop a passion for what you want to do: your passion will drive and sustain you and help you reach your goals successfully.
7. Learn to listen, listen and listen: this helps to develop trust and lasting relationships.
8. Define your own personal success: find out what you do well and keep on doing it.
9. Recognize your reality: are you part of the problem or the solution?
10. Distinguish yourself during the tough times: no matter how hard it gets, a great leader keeps on leading and never gives up.

Dr. Stephanie Ling, Editor, ACSI EE Department

Saturday April 25th **Impact 2009**

Are you ready to celebrate again? Get ready for our 12th Impact conference in April 2009! Our theme will be on "Building Hope" and will focus on how we can help prepare young lives to be the next generation of leaders. Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Rick Tobias who is the Executive Director of Yonge Street Mission. Set this date aside and be prepared to have a great time of fellowship, professional development and re-energizing together!

"That in all things He might have pre-eminence" Colossians 1:18

Dealing with Fatigue

As the winter months approach us, we tend to feel more tired, anxious and de-energized. Fatigue can be caused by sleepiness, lack of energy, sunlight and overall physical health. Fatigue can have a variety of effects on our ability to function well each day and can strike both the young and old. There are some simple environmental strategies that we can put into place in order to intervene and help manage potential fatigue problems in both adults and young children. The following strategic signposts can be explored:

- Adequate, regular and consistent amounts of sleep each night. Teachers can work with parents on this.
- Rest periods at school: longer nap/quiet times
- Healthy well-balanced diet with adequate amounts of water throughout the day with protein awareness.
- Regular exercise every day: indoors and outdoors
- Relaxation activities: story time, drawing, music etc.
- Avoid the accumulation of intensive "seatwork"
- Balanced schedule of daily activities.

Decorating the learning environment with bright, warm looking colours does much to enliven the atmosphere as well as promote a sense of well being. Putting more emphasis on orderliness with classroom furniture, equipment and learning manipulatives can give a greater sense of peace and calmness as well. Music is a great source of uplifting energy and acts as a wonderful morning energizer to children arriving on a cold morning. It works just as well at the end of the day too! Use your imagination in creative applying these easy daily tools to intervene when you anticipate fatigue approaching!



Remembering Christmas...



Loving Father, Help us remember

the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.

The 9 Temperament Traits...



Understanding a child's temperament can be facilitated if we can define its unique features. Recent child development research conducted by Doctors Chess and Thomas has identified nine distinct temperament traits in young children and list them as follows:

- Activity Level:** indicates the child's 'idle' speed or how active the child is (squirm, wiggle, sedentary)
 - Distractibility:** degree of concentration displayed when a child is not particularly interested in an activity. (distracted by sound, motion, noise etc.)
 - Intensity:** gauges a positive or negative response to the environment (getting upset at noise, lights)
 - Regularity:** refers to the predictability of biological functions like appetite and sleep (does the child get hungry or tired at predictable times?)
 - Sensory Threshold:** relates to how sensitive the child is to physical stimuli (sound, taste, touch, temperature changes, clothing, music)
 - Approach/Withdrawal:** marks a child's response to new situations or strangers (eager, hesitant, upset)
 - Adaptability:** relates to how a child adapts to small transitions and changes (routine deviation, peers)
 - Persistence:** this is the length of time a child continues with activities in the face of obstacles. (being interrupted when doing a puzzle etc.)
 - Mood:** indicates a child's reaction to the world (is the glass seen as half full or empty?)
- These pointers can give you a framework in which to identify some general traits in young children. Some may be combined, temporary or permanent.

Morning Prayers ...

Now, before I run to play, let me not forget to pray
To God who kept me through the night
And waked me with the morning light.
Help me, Lord, to love you more
Than I ever loved before,
In my work and in my play
Be thou with me through the day.
Amen.

-- Author Unknown

Christmas Thoughts...

Some children see Him lily white
the infant Jesus born this night
Some children see Him lily white
with tresses soft and fair.



Some children see Him bronzed and brown
the Lord of heav'n to earth come down
Some children see Him bronzed and brown
with dark and heavy hair.

Some children see Him almond-eyed
This Saviour whom we kneel beside
Some children see Him almond-eyed
With skin of yellow hue!

Some children see Him dark as they
Sweet Mary's Son to whom we pray
Some children see Him dark as they
And, ah! they love Him so!

The children in each different place
Will see the Baby Jesus' face
Like theirs but bright with heav'nly grace
And filled with holy light!

O lay aside each earthly thing
and with thy heart as offering
Come worship now the infant King
'tis love that's born tonight!

'tis love that's born tonight!

Snow Globes

Baby food jars with lids
Distilled water
Glitter or assorted sparkles
Festive ornament or figurine
Super glue (teacher use !)
Decorative ribbon



1. Teachers can glue the figurine to the bottom of the jar and wait until it is completely dry.
2. Children can decorate the lid of the jar.
3. Fill the jar almost to the top with distilled water.
4. Add the glitter and other sparkles if desired.
5. Fasten the lid securely and add decorative ribbon.
5. Fasten the lid securely and shake !
Addition: can colour the distilled water if desired.



Oatmeal Dough (NON-EDIBLE)

This dough is great to work with and would probably be more suited to older children if you wanted more detail in your Christmas ornaments.

Recipe:

1 part flour	food colouring
2 parts oatmeal	pipe cleaners
1 part water	Tempera paint

1. Option: before mixing, decide what base colours you would like the dough and then it can be added directly to the water first. This ensures a smooth integration of the colour). Mix flour, oatmeal and water together and knead until in a pliable consistency.
2. Form into any shape desired and dry for two hours. Insert the pipe cleaners to hang the ornaments and then dry overnight.
3. Paint the ornaments as desired and enjoy !

Pine Cone Christmas Trees

large open pine cones
glitter
white Elmers' glue
dental floss and a needle
small beads
bow or star to top off your little tree
cotton balls



1. Glue a few cotton balls to the bottom of the pine cone. These look like snow and help the 'tree' stand upright.
2. Put a little dab of glue at the tips of the pine cone and then sprinkle on the glitter.
3. String some small brads onto the dental floss (about 1' to 1.5 ft. depending on the size of the pine cone).
4. To string the beads easily, tie one bead securely to the string. Then give the floss to the child for stringing. Older children can use the needle for stringing. When done, tie off the last bead with a knot.
5. Wrap the beads around the pine cone and glue them to the tree.
6. Top off your tree with a small bow or other decoration.
7. Can make a few of them with different sized pine cones for a nice centerpiece.



January Snow Stories



As a way to develop literacy skills, use story dictation to write down children's stories about snow. In this method, an adult writes down a child's words as the child talks about snow. Don't worry about correct grammar and don't be concerned if the 'story' is only a few words. Read the children's stories aloud at story time and act the stories out. Post the stories on a bulletin board and be sure to share the stories with parents and family members. A fun book to also read to the children is the classic picture book, **The Snowy Day** by Ezra Jack Keats.

For assessment purposes, this can be classified in the Language Arts area with the goal of having children be able to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. The learning standard to be achieved is for them to compose well-organized, coherent writing for specific purposes. The early learning checklist/benchmark can be their literacy development in being able to dictate a story and other experiences.

February: First Fairy Tales



Young children enjoy books that reflect their own lives, but when they are around four years old, they begin to be interested in stories that are a little more fanciful than real life. Fairy tales expose them to talking animals, magic beans and royal kings. The Three Pigs, the Three Bears and The Three Billy Goats Gruff are all excellent choices for a first exposure to fairy tales.

Creating silly names is also a favourite past time of young children. This is a great way to introduce children to the concept of rhyming. These can be integrated into the story time with fairy tales, silly stories and other imaginative ways of combining words to make them rhyme. You will find that children will say them over and over again and simply begin to enjoy their usage of fun words together!

Seasonal Comforts That Don't Expire...



HUGS

It's wondrous what a hug can do.
A hug can cheer you when you're blue.
A hug can say, "I love you so"
Or, "I hate to see you go."
A hug is "Welcome back again,"
And "Great to see you! Where've you been?"
A hug can soothe a small child's pain,
And bring a rainbow after rain.
The hug, there's just no doubt about it -
We scarcely could survive without it!
A hug delights and warms and charms,
It must be why God gave us arms,
Hugs are great for fathers and mothers,
Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers;
And chances are your favourite aunts
Love them more than potted plants,
Kittens crave them, puppies love them;
Heads of states are not above them.
A hug can break the language barrier,
And make travel so much merrier.
No need to fret about your store of 'em;
The more you give,
The more there's more of 'em.
So stretch those arms without delay
And give someone a hug today!

A Lasting Impression...

with individualized Handprint Trees...

Everyone wants to be reminded that they are special. Our handprints reflect our uniqueness and individuality.

For each child, have a sheet of construction paper on which to paint a Christmas tree. Have children dip a hand in green paint and, with fingers together, make a pyramid of green handprints. Make a trunk with the side of the fist dipped in brown paint. A five-point, yellow or gold star is made with a wide-open hand. Last, add decorations in different colors with thumb prints. Can make these each year to demonstrate the growth of each child's hands.

