

13e. Volunteer Experiences with Children

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When working with children, be positive, offer choices and model appropriate behaviors. An attitude and atmosphere of calmness is best. Safety is of the utmost importance. To help with children's comfort, use indoor voice, make eye contact and connect at their level, even if you have to kneel or bend down.

Each classroom has a variety of learning/interest centers. Below are a few suggestions for each area.

Art

- Be aware of what you say – “Tell me about your picture,”
- Make sure there are enough materials: paper, paint, etc.
- Talk about colors.

Blocks

- Enhance play by asking the child questions about what they have built.
- Be a narrator i.e. “I see you are making a tall tower.” “You are being very careful with the blocks.” #
- Play sorting games by color, shape, number, etc.
- Take dictation as the child describes what they are creating.
- Help children respect building space (not knock down other work)

Circle Time

- Join circle time activities.
- Reinforce being quiet during circle time.
- Give praise for sitting appropriately and paying attention.

Dramatic Play

- Pretend with the children.
- Talk with and encourage conversation.
- Offer helpful instruction tailored around what the children are doing.

Library

- Read to a child.
- Let child tell you a story from the pictures.
- Ask questions: What happened to _____? What happens next?

Music

- Model movement and expression.
- Participate with the children: sing, play instruments, dance, etc.

Sand and Water

- Talk about cause and effect (i.e. how many cups does it take to fill the _____?)
- Talk about measuring and comparing. # Help children play cooperatively.

Science

- Encourage children to feel objects.
- Expand on a child's knowledge base of the topic.
- Model and guide discussion.

Table Games

- Assist and/or demonstrate fine motor skills.
- Assist and/or demonstrate hand-eye coordination.
- Encourage conversation talking about colors, shapes, sizes, game rules, etc.