

TEACHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are two basic teaching roles in a preschool: the lead teacher and the support teacher. For example, one person might be assigned as a head teacher with one or two other teacher aides. These roles can interchange or alternate from day to day so that a teacher's aide may fill the lead teacher role while the head teacher and other aides are acting as the supporting teacher(s). A lead teacher takes the initial responsibility in planning what activities are going to take place during the day. The lead teacher is also responsible for the pace of the activities. The lead teacher should be ahead of all others in transitions. For example, while the children and other teachers are cleaning up, the lead teacher will go to the rug area to organize materials and then begin a fingerplay or song transition as the first children arrive in that area.

Support teachers have an obligation to make the lead teacher look like a "super star." This can happen when support teachers make suggestions at the planning sessions or fulfill assignments of preparing activities designated by the lead teacher. A support teacher works directly with the children during group time to assist them in finding their places and getting involved in the activity. A lead teacher should never have to break into a discussion or story to quiet a child or settle some other confusion. The support teacher should deal with such situations. The support teacher should know fingerplays and songs so that he/she can assist the children and the lead teacher.

After the children leave, it is the responsibility of both the lead teacher and support teacher to clean up and evaluate the day's activities. It is the lead teacher's responsibility to make sure these tasks are completed. If a formal evaluation session is held, the lead teacher should be in charge. If an informal evaluation occurs, it is the lead teacher's responsibility to record the suggestions for next time.

Basically, a lead teacher does more organizing and administering the preschool program than do the support teachers. However, the teachers share responsibilities about equally. One teacher leads out in planning and carrying out the planned activities. The other teacher(s) takes a supportive role(s). Great things happen when teacher roles are fulfilled.

Have students complete the "Teacher Roles" chart as you discuss this information.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEAD TEACHER:

1. Actually develops the lesson plan.
2. Keeps track of each child.
3. Conducts evaluation session.
4. Arranges room and selects materials to be used each day.
5. Is first to each new activity.
6. Communicates with children.
7. Coordinates with support teachers to make certain they know what is expected of them.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPPORT TEACHER:

1. Assists in planning.
2. Keeps track of each child.
3. Answers children's questions and helps with children's requests.
4. Takes part in evaluation sessions.
5. Helps with room setup
6. Assists children with cleanup.
7. Supervises children during activities.
8. Participates with children.
9. Resolves behavior problems that might occur during activities.
10. Helps arrange room and outside play area.
11. Helps children prepare to leave.
12. Learns songs, fingerplays, etc., so he/she can take part in activities.