

ECD Quality Toolkit Pilot Project 2016

Summary of key points from Mediator Training Work Shop 18 February 2016

Notes from Activity: What is self-reflection?

Thinking critically about ...		
your own practice	making a difference	how to move forward
setting goals and measuring your self- improvement	your own priorities	your own assumptions, context and background and how it influences your behaviours

Self-reflection....		
is holistic self-evaluation	is the man in the mirror	is making yourself vulnerable
contains an element of assessment and judgement	means interrogating your own actions	can contain both positive and negative elements
means reflecting on the past to move towards the future	is a tool for growth	being aware of your own subjective lens
leads to self-management	means being honest	helps you serve people

Notes from Activity: The Roles and Responsibilities of a Mediator

Some roles				
Mediator	Reporter	Photographer	Active listener	Interviewer
Objective & neutral observer		Transcriber	Recorder	

Some responsibilities ...			
Plan & prepare	Set up appointments	Manage time	Be punctual &

			professional
Explain the purpose of the pilot	Explain the nature of your role	Act as a guide to the tool and process	Use clear and appropriate language
Mediate, facilitate & assist	Understand the practitioner's context	Encourage self-reflection	Show empathy
Affirm the practitioner's role	Relax practitioner's & build confidence	Avoid leading questions	Be aware of possible power play
Acknowledge the practitioner's experience & knowledge (or lack thereof)			

Notes from Activity: Sample Questions

What are my views on how children learn, and my views on the best way of interacting with them?

- Familiar environment
- Start with the unknown then move to the known
- Ensure lessons are fun and interesting
- Reinforced
- Concrete
- Basic needs are met
- Interact through child directed play based experiences

How do I facilitate learning through play?

- Through play, children learn about the ever-changing world
- Allowing children to have active engagement with the material
- Considering the elements of fun and creativity and allowing children to reflect on what they have learnt

What other methods of teaching do I use?

- I ask the “student” to teach me so that I understand how much they know about the subject.
- I demonstrate to the person so that they have a practical idea of the subject/ topic. I add a bit of drama so that they can recall the subject more easily when in a practical environment.

How do I create a caring environment for children?

- Leadership and decision making happens first
- Light, clean, airy, attractive, vibey classrooms need to be established
- Good food and adequate medical care

- Experienced, child-friendly staff are employed
- Pay attention to the happiness of the staff as their unhappiness has a direct impact on the care of the children
- Care of the education provided, boredom in the children creates chaos at school
- Children's Rights

Am I always aware of children who experience barriers to learning?

- No, especially at the beginning of the year when I don't know the class. Parents and other caregivers are sometimes reluctant to share issues related to barriers so I must be observant.

What do I do if I see children having learning difficulties?

- First review the enrolment form to have a background
- Contact the manager of the school
- Contact the parents individually
- Set up a strategy plan
 - Identifies the learning difficulty
 - If professional people are at the school approach them
 - Seek help if not available
 - Get guidance to accommodate such learner in the curriculum delivery.

What do I do or who do I go to if I need help or support with any aspect of my work?

- In terms of my role as a facilitator, I always look on what aspect must be done. For example, on any new training material I consult with my senior as he/she will assist based on her understanding and then reflect back on my own understanding.

How do I deal with different developmental areas, such as physical, intellectual, emotional and social development?

- Ensure a space is created that facilitates the goals of ECD
- Provide and equip the areas with materials (bought or made)
- Use my knowledge to facilitate and encourage children's stimulation (daily programme)
- Observe, record and use information for future planning

How do I manage a group of children who might be at different ages and different stages of development?

- I will use the concept of curriculum differentiation and group the same developmental ability children together within the bigger group. The same activity can be done then just at different levels of difficulty. Each child will feel included and is more likely to participate happily.

How does a child's home and community environment affect my teaching practice?

- Understanding the environment and relationship the child has with both home/parents/siblings/ family and then community – culture, beliefs and language.

- Lesson preparation will have to cater for the different levels of development of the children
- Offer assistance to the child and parent

How do I involve caregivers and other community members in children's learning and development?

- Organise a Fun Day at the school and/ or ECD centre/ site with activities that may include parents and communities as participants
- Group parents with children during activities and games so that they will understand the learning and development
- Organise workshops where we workshop people about children's learning and development
- Care givers can also be involved in homework
- Involve the community in a project where children have to go and ask questions and look for resources.
- Open functions where you can invite anyone and everyone

How do I talk to the children in my care and get them to talk to me?

- I need to be open, friendly and treat them all with respect.
- Talk in a clear voice (don't shout or raise your voice).
- Talk about something which interests them to get them to engage and talk
- Build a trusting relationship.

How do we communicate if the children can't talk?

- Through sign language
- Play – dramatization
- Videos
- Books
- Puppets
- Observations
- Expressions/emotions
- Drawings
- Surroundings
- Visual aids (flip cards, posters, action cards etc)
- Through imitation, mimicry and mime.

How do my own values and beliefs affect my work as an ECD practitioner?

- Professionalism
- Love for children
- Passion
- Knowledge and experience
- Wanting to learn more about different and dynamic approaches

What do you do if a practitioner asks you for advice?

- Give objective advice / advice on factual matters
- Say “In my opinion”
- Use your discretion
- Don’t be negative
- Be aware of your body language
- Deal with ‘what is’, not ‘what should be’

Extra Tips/ Observations from the workshop

- Be encouraging about how practitioners and principals can use the Quality Reflection Tool going forward: for example, principals could take one dimension each month and have a discussion using the tool with staff as part of a professional development practice.
- Stress the fact that this is not a compliance assessment or evaluation. We would however love feedback on the Reflection Tool if they use it. Note that there will be a follow up phone call from the mediator or partner organisation to get any feedback from the site on whether or how it has been used.
- Please could you note in your report what language/s you used in the conversation.
- Remember that in this context you are a listener and not a teacher.
- Affirm, acknowledge and thank the practitioner for her time.

Submitting reports

You will be given a link to an electronic google template to fill in for reporting on your site visits. You will draw on the notes you took during the site visits to complete the report template; please keep your handwritten notes to submit to us at the Mediator Feedback workshop.

Reporting templates are designed as follows:

- **ECD Mediator Site Visit Responses:** this captures the findings from your conversations with

practitioners or principals, and your observations of the learning activities.

- **ECD Mediator Pilot Process Feedback:** this captures your feedback on the pilot processes and tools.

Please note that you will need to complete one Mediator Site Visit Report per person interviewed: that is, if the principal and the practitioner were two different people and both were interviewed, you will need to complete two Site Visit Reports for one site. You will however only need to complete only one Process Reflection report per site.

Thanks and enjoy your site visits!

29-02-2016