

Practice Guideline on Communication and Collaboration

Pause and Reflect

With colleagues, consider the following scenario:

Aida, an RECE, and her teaching partner have been engaging in collaborative inquiry focused on emergent curriculum. Through their observations, they've noticed the children's recent interests in dramatic play and families. These interests inspired the educator team to design a dramatic play area focused on families. Excited about their pedagogical approach, the educators decided to implement their ideas in a couple of days. They did not take the time to collaboratively discuss the plan in detail. They did not consider what materials they were going to include, the children in their room and their views about family. Aida and her partner designed the dramatic play area with a heteronormative view of the family. There were new books in the book nook on moms and dads, and Aida was engaging with the children asking questions such as, "Is that what your mommy usually makes for dinner?" As the children began dressing up, Aida asked, "Can all the moms and dads follow me to the table, please?" One child paused and asked, "But where should I go? I have a mommy and an auntie." Aida was taken aback by the child's comment. Her colleague also stopped and stared blankly. Both educators scrambled for words but didn't know how to respond.

Consider the following reflection questions:

- **What factors led to how the learning environment was set up?**

- **What aspects of the collaborative inquiry process were left out?**

- **What could Aida and her teaching partner have done differently to prevent the child from being singled out?**

- **What would you have done differently in planning and implementing the emergent curriculum and setting up the learning environment?**

- **What are some challenges related to communication and collaboration in this scenario?**

- **What are some communication and collaboration strategies Aida and her colleague could have implemented to ensure all children felt a sense of safety, engagement and belonging?**

- **How could each educator’s respective ethical and professional standards have been used to support the collaborative inquiry process?**