

Exchange™

Your Early Childhood Community

A Tool for Professional Development

Many early childhood education programs find a membership to *Exchange* to be an effective and enjoyable professional development tool to use with teams. Below are examples of tested ideas contributed by programs around the country.

1

Shared Reading - an *Exchange* "Book Club"

WHAT IT IS:

With each new issue of *Exchange*, choose one article for all team members to commit to reading. Then hold a discussion group on the article, modeled after book club discussions.

HOW IT WORKS:

Administrators can choose the article based on team needs or rotate the job of choosing throughout the team. Whoever chooses the article then writes four or five discussion questions to distribute to the group. Email Variation: Email the questions and ask each team member to reply to the whole group with responses. Invite and encourage comments on each other's responses.

2

Choose Your Favorite

WHAT IT IS:

Whether with every issue, or just once a year, invite team members to share their favorite article and why they chose it.

HOW IT WORKS:

Ask people to create a two-sentence "sales pitch" about the article by completing the phrase, "You really should read this article because ...". These "sales pitches" can be shared electronically or during an in-person meeting. If people are meeting in person, it can be fun to vote on who "sold" their article most effectively.



3

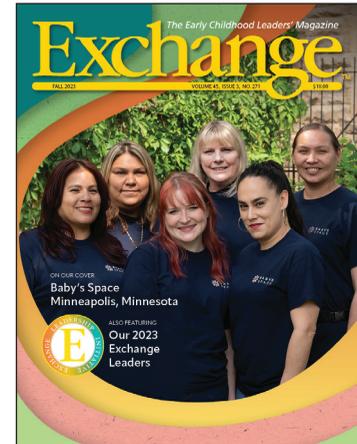
Each One Teach One

WHAT IT IS:

With each new issue of *Exchange*, randomly pull a name of one team member to be the designated “teacher.” Ask that person to choose an article they would like to “teach” to the rest of the group.

HOW IT WORKS:

Whether the teacher will be meeting with the group in person, or electronically, encourage creativity in the presentation. The teacher may lead a discussion, or put together a brief summary of the article’s important points, or share examples from his/her classroom that relate to the article. During in-person meetings, the designated teacher may even want to ask people to play charades or Pictionary-style games using key words from the article.

**4**

Investigate a Topic

WHAT IT IS:

Once or twice a year, choose one topic (examples: supporting infants and toddlers; anti-bias curriculum; working with families; strengthening children’s math learning...), and find related articles from the past issues of *Exchange*.

HOW IT WORKS:

Administrators can choose a topic they feel will be especially important for the team, or staff can vote on a topic from a list of choices distributed to all. Once the topic has been chosen, ask team members to look through past issues of *Exchange* or search the archive to find as many articles as possible that are related to the topic. If staff share their thoughts electronically, ask them to write about which article they found especially valuable and why. If meeting in-person, ask each person to talk about ways the article expanded their thinking.

**5**

Bridging Research and Practice

WHAT IT IS:

Use the newest feature in *Exchange* magazine, Bridging Research and Practice, to help staff put early childhood research into practice in their classrooms.

HOW IT WORKS:

Choose one of the Bridging Research and Practice topics and ask staff to read about ways they can implement (or integrate) the research-based ideas into their classrooms. Encourage them to try at least one of the ideas from the article. After about a month, send out a request for staff to share their successes, challenges and observations.

