

Sharing Space, Time & Ideas

A Reflection on the 3–5 Satellite Meeting Time



REGGIO-INSPIRED
LEARNING
CENTRE
Frog Hollow

What would it take for us as a community to collaborate?



In the spring of 2017 we came together to think about our new Organizational Intent at Frog Hollow: Creating cultures of collaboration that respect children’s Hundred Languages.

At our 3–5 Satellite program, we wondered how children defined “collaboration” and what it would take for us – as a community – to collaborate.

We considered our community and we noticed that we are unique in that we spend long hours together, not only “learning”, but living: eating, napping, celebrating, grieving...

We are a community that shares space, time & ideas.

Sharing Space

What does it mean to share space in a childcare program?

If we truly believe that children and adults are partners in learning and living, if we truly believe that the childcare space belongs to both children and adults who breathe in it, then what does this space look like?

If we are thinking about collaboration, our space must represent and encourage the concept.



What does it mean to share space in a childcare program?

We started to think of a space that encourages individuals to face each other, to communicate, and to share space intentionally.



“Every great design begins with an even better story”

- Lorinda Mamo



Sharing Time

It is easy for educators to fall in the rhythm of time in program and follow routines day after day.

But to think of a community that shares space and time, we must think of time differently.

We must consider that adults and children experience time differently; we must cherish the time we spend together and we must spend the time with intent, rather than obligation.

We asked ourselves: How do we come together as a community and spend time with each other meaningfully?



If we are inspired by the idea of collaboration, our time shared together must allow for the practice.



We wanted to step away from the traditional “circle time” as we saw disadvantages in the design.

We agreed that we didn’t want a time in which only the educators shared knowledge with the children.

We were interested in a time shared equally with educators and children; a time that provided the opportunity for everyone in our community to think, reflect & share.

We didn’t want a time in which only the educators shared knowledge with the children.



We began to give our meeting time meaning.

We created beautiful meeting spaces that allowed for the whole group to meet and talk.

Sharing Ideas

What does it mean to have equal opportunities to speak about our ideas?

What does it mean for adults and children to exchange perspectives?



“Human beings are hardwired with the impulse to share our ideas, and the desire to know we've been heard. It's all a part of our need for community.”

(T. Kring)

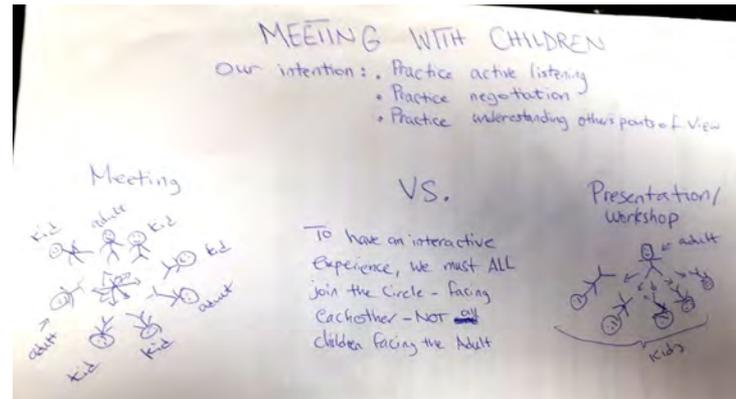


As we observed and reflected on our meeting time, we noticed that the adults did lots of talking and the children did a lot of listening.

It was as though we (adults and children) have all been programmed to fall into our roles of “teaching” and “being taught” – even though that was not what we were interested in.

It was eye-opening for us to see how our children have lost their confidence to share their ideas with us and how as educators we fell so easily into the role of talking and telling.

We knew that we had to take a step back – we had to create opportunities for children to speak and for adults to listen.



Our meetings have changed continuously ever since we started them. We are constantly reflecting on the time we share together to see if we are in concert with our intentions.

We started to have meetings with children forming a “C” and facing the educator.

We later decided that this model had no connection with our intentions for collaboration.



We have used the time to play group games;

to listen to nature and discuss what we heard;

to share questions that came up during project time

or to talk about our favourite Birthday memory





And as always, we continue to explore – wonder, reflect & discuss.

How does our meeting time become so meaningful that it becomes a ritual to us?

How can this time be used to represent the hours, minutes and seconds the children and educators at Satellite share together?