



Reflect on your own experiences with children, families, and colleagues. If you are an supervisor, administrator, or adult educator, how might you use these questions and activities to help other adults reflect on their experiences?

Consider the Child's Point of View

When you watch children closely, you often see them translating their experiences by acting out what they've seen and heard. Their perceptions of leadership come out in their play. For instance, a child might pretend to lead Circle Time by saying, "Okay, everybody, sit crisscross-applesauce. I'm the boss here."

In what ways have your observed children being leaders?

Try This

Take some time to observe how children understand the idea of leadership. Offer them a group of animal or people props. Pay close attention to how they move the figures around and their conversation. Notice whether or not they associate the idea of leader with size, role, position, or tone of voice. Model curiosity by probing with some gentle questions, such as:

"Why is this one in the front?"

"I noticed you made all of the leaders boys. Can girls be leaders too?"

"What do the animals/people say that show they're the leaders?"

"Are there leaders in our school? What do you have to do to be a leader?"

Remember that this is an activity of investigation, not a time to teach or preach to the children. If you hear some thinking among the children that you'd like to "correct" or change, first explore where their thinking might have come from. Then, consider some things you could change in your leadership roles or organizational culture to gradually provoke a change in their understandings about leadership. Use the template provided to help you reflect.