

SymPaper#4: Tender Shoots for ECE: Educator-child conversations and developing socio-emotional competencies

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Biography:

This paper presents an initial evaluation of a collaborative project involving university researchers and research students and a home-based early childhood education and care service in the community. Amanda Clifford assisted with evaluating benefits of adapting Tender Shoots for professional development in home-based ECE on educator-child oral language interactions outside of shared book reading and children's broader developing competencies as part of her PhD research in the Department of Psychology. Elaine Reese, Elizabeth Schaughency, and Jane Carroll were involved with development of Tender Shoots, and Dione Healey was the developer of ENGAGE.

Abstract:

OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

This study explored whether a professional development module that supported rich interactive shared reading and reminiscing (RRR) benefitted educator-child reminiscing and children's socio-emotional development.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/EVIDENCE BASE

Rich parent-child conversations about past experiences - or reminiscing - can support children's language and socio-emotional development. Interactive shared book reading in which parents attend to socio-emotional experiences of story characters can serve as a conduit to reminiscing conversations about past experiences. Previously, parent education that promotes rich reading and reminiscing has been found to benefit both parent-child interactions and children's development. Less research has examined emotion rich interactions in early childhood settings, particularly in home-based early childhood education and care (ECEC). To date, little is known about whether similar education programmes can support home-based educators' reminiscing interactions with the children in their setting.

METHODOLOGY/RESEARCH DESIGN

Twenty-five home-based educators and 41 preschool-aged children participated in one of three professional development modules, supported by supervising Visiting Teachers. RRR aimed to support educators' interactions with children by providing prompts in storybooks to scaffold emotion-rich oral language interactions during repeated shared book reading. The end of each story book contained prompts for educator-child conversations with their children about a past shared event related to the story. Before and after participation, educators and children participated in a reminiscing interaction. Children completed a series of socio-emotional tasks, and parents and educators completed ratings of children's socio-emotional development.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

Findings demonstrated benefits of participating in RRR for children's contributions to recorded reminiscing interactions. There were also benefits found for children's developing socio-emotional competencies.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Results support extensions of Tender Shoots RRR to home-based ECEC. Future research could explore adaptations for centre-based ECEC settings and supporting teachers of children with learning support needs.