

Parent Conference Assignment

The parent conference I attended was in the Magnolia room on 11/13/15 at 8 am. Teacher Ashley led the conference and we were discussing Eva with her mom Emma. The purpose of the meeting was for a progress report, or check in, on how Eva is doing. We talked about how Eva is very compassionate and smart. She likes to be on her own or interact with one other child or teacher but is very self-sufficient. She is also very smart for her age and is a fast learner and always curious. She likes to ask questions about what others are doing or what things mean. Teacher Ashley offered Emma some food at the beginning. There was a very fun and easy vibe throughout the meeting. Emma is a child development major and has an older son who has gone through the program and Magnolia room, so she knows the teachers, other children and how the program works very well. She also knows where her child should be developmentally and is able to understand the notes teacher Ashley was giving her in child development terms. I would say about 75% of the conversation was done by Teacher Ashley while the other 25% was done by Emma. I learned that unlike some children, Eva interacts the same way at home as she does at school. I also learned that they are very family and education oriented. They read a lot of books at home and always try to incorporate learning. I learned that Emma is a child development major at Chico State and has a son in kindergarten. I also learned that both Eva and her brother are compassionate about others, but when they get hurt themselves, they don't tell anyone and try to hide it. The teachers in Magnolia try and help Eva by interacting with her and trying to get her to tell someone when she is hurt. She is also at a higher educational level than a lot of the other children so they are trying to challenge her academically when they get a chance to. I learned that parent conferences can be stressful and sometimes intimidating but they are interesting and interacting with the parents and seeing where this child comes from is fun. Teachers spend time preparing for these conferences. They collect samples such as art, writing or any other work the child has done to show the parents. They also go over things that child has mastered and things they need to work on. Communication is also key. A parent needs to be able to communicate what they want out of the teachers and if they have any specific areas they want their child to work on. I think Ashley did an amazing job with this conference. It was the first one of the morning but she was energized and ready to go. She gave some great information and made sure she let Emma talk as well. If I had been the parent, I would've tried to talk a little more. She talked every so often and I know it's hard to think on the spot but I would maybe try and come prepared with things I want my child to work on. I would rate myself as a 2 in my ability to perform a parent conference alone. I am usually very good with parents but when it comes to talking to them about their children, I want to be able to give them constructive information without offending them. I am fairly confident I would be able to do this but not very confident because I think I need to work on my language a little more. I also don't know enough about where exactly each child should be developmentally to confidently talk about it to parents. One thing mentioned in the article that teacher Ashley did a good job of was starting the meeting by describing Eva's strengths, interests and abilities. This lightens the mood in a positive way before giving points of improvement. One thing mentioned in the article that was not

followed in the conference I observed was the seating arrangements. The article states to not sit behind a table or desk and sit next to each other if possible. In my conference, Teacher Ashley sat on one side of a large table and Emma sat on the other. There was definitely room for them to sit next to each other so I think that's one thing that could've changed. I learned that parent-teacher relationships are very important in programs for young children. These parents are trusting you to watch over, teach and interact with their child when they aren't able to, so it's important to form that trust and bond with the parents and make sure they are as comfortable as possible. Also with an open and trusting relationship with parents, they may be more open to suggestions or constructive criticism in an instance such as parent conferences. They also may be more willing to implicate changes at home if you have that relationship. Overall, a good parent-teacher relationship forms a strong base for a child's education.