**Professionalism in the Workplace**

*Students will understand professionalism by demonstrating knowledge, attitudes, and skills of those individuals who are committed to understanding and working with children and families. Communication (reading, writing, listening, computer, and speaking skills), leadership, research, assessment and evaluation, and collaboration skills are mastered.*

After completing the majority of my coursework in child development, I have a great understanding of professionalism in settings that work with children and families. I would share with this colleague that in order to be successful in an environment working with people, communication and collaboration need to take place. In the workplace, employees, whether they are head teachers or staff members, need to have communication skills. These skills include listening, speaking, and understanding body language. If communication is not present, then conflict in the workplace will arise. This can turn into inappropriate behavior on floor and can be damaging for children’s development. I would share my knowledge about communication and collaboration with this colleague.

Attitude is a major component in being professional in a workplace. When working with children and families, especially, an employee needs to bring a positive attitude to work every day. When someone carries a bad attitude, surrounding people can read that and find that a negative quality. I would discuss with this colleague that, although she has had some negative experiences with her head teacher, she needs to keep a positive attitude in the classroom, like she has been. But, because she has had so many problems with this head teacher, a professional skill that may be useful in this situation is documenting the behaviors of the head teacher and approaching the director with the issue. I would discuss with this colleague that she needs to continue to keep the children first priority and she needs to start documenting the issues she has with the head teacher if she is going to continue to work there.

Leadership is also an important skill that a professional needs to have. In this colleague’s case, she has taken on some leadership roles. She has tried many times to give assistance to the head teacher when she noticed that there were things that needed to be done. She has also taken on the challenging jobs, like toileting, cleaning, and supervising without being asked to. The children have always been her first priority when she has thought about curriculum, activities, and health. A professional in a workplace needs to become a leader to be successful.

In this scenario, the head teacher used the word “bad” to humiliate and label the children. Research that has been done on using value words to describe children. This type of language is not developmentally appropriate when speaking to children. What exactly does “bad” mean? Instead of using value words, a child development professional can explain to the child what they are doing and what they can do instead that may be more appropriate. This research could be used in this specific scenario.

There are components of assessment and evaluation that may be helpful in this type of situation. First, assessment of the classroom needs to take place. According to the colleague, there are food and drinks all over the classroom as well as the environment being left unclean and unsanitized. Also, assessment of the center needs to take place because there is not enough supervision of the children to meet licensing standards. Second, evaluation of the head teacher needs to be administered by the director of the program. From this explanation, the head teacher does not seem fit or qualified to be the supervisor on floor of this program.

Using collaboration as a resource, this colleague could discuss with the director ways of dealing with the conflict that has occurred in this classroom with the head teacher. She can collaborate with the director to find ways of working with the head teacher. From this type of discussion, collaboration with the head teacher and the director should happen. Hopefully, issues can be resolved and collaboration between the colleague and the head teacher can take place.

My suggestion to the colleague as a next step would be to document the issues with the head teacher with pictures and observation notes. Once she has come up with enough evidence, she needs to present her issues with the director of the program. The best advice I can offer is to communicate with the director as well as the head teacher. She needs to remember to speak professionally about the issues she has and to listen respectively to the other side. Also, she always needs to keep the children first priority. I have learned this knowledge of professionalism in my work with children and families. My previous job experiences have been working directly in child care centers, so I have been in contact with many supervisors, staff, children, and their families. Also, through my current internship, I have been shown how to be a leader and carry responsibilities as a teacher in a classroom. In situations, I need to model positive behavior because teacher’s, children’s and families’ eyes are on me.