



“The first five years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out.”

-Bill Gates, Sr.

ECQuIP Express

Weekly Newsletter

On April 30th the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children held their annual spring leadership conference. Gigi Schweikert was the featured speaker. In this week’s newsletter, I will be referencing her Winning Ways book “Becoming a Team Player.” This book is one in a series of books she has written for early childhood professionals.

When you really care about children, you care about how your team functions, because it takes a team to care for children. If you, as a team player, take responsibility for your actions and professionalism, your team improves. Isn’t that what everyone wants?

In Gigi’s book, she refers to 10 simple yet powerful steps to being a team player. Typically we all entered this profession because we LOVE working with children and we might not have given much thought to how much time we would be spending working with other adults. Children deserve to be surrounded by adults who are committed to making their team, or work family, as strong and functional, and loving as it can be.

Gigi’s top 10 ways that you and others in your program can be a winning team:

1. Be respectful and professional

- Ask yourself, “Does it really matter? And the next question to ask yourself to assist you with the answer is “How

does it affect the children?” These simple questions can help guide your actions as team member and as a professional.



2. Encourage others

- Have you ever just written a short note of encouragement to team member? Try it! “I’ve learned so much from you!” “I’m so glad we work together.” Or “This program just wouldn’t be the same without you.”

3. Appreciate the lives of others

- There is a lot going on in our world and in the lives of our team members. Take the time to appreciate and understand the personal priorities of the members of your team.

4. Take care of yourself

- What things do you do to take care of yourself so you are well rested, alert and focused to care for the children in your program? How can you care for others if you aren’t taking care of yourself?

5. Don't gossip

- Gossip is saying something about someone else that you would not say directly to that person. When you talk about members of your own team—your work family—you can really do some damage.

6. Share your talents

- Make a list of the things you do well. How can you share those talents in your program?

7. Be a problem solver

- Be a hurdle jumper, not a barrier spotter. Barrier spotters can point out every problem but they don't make efforts to help solve it. Hurdle jumpers see solutions even before problems occur and are the ones who step in to help when she/he sees a teacher struggling.

8. Arrive on time

- When you are late to arrive to work or return from your break, you bring down the whole team---everyone is affected.

9. Get organized and return things you borrow

- Gigi's hint: "when you are organized and prepared, you don't have to borrow as many things. When you don't have to borrow as many things, you don't have to return as many things." Makes sense to me😊

10. Don't judge others

- Try to understand instead of judging. Everyone has a story. Get to know your co-workers/work family. Express a genuine interest in the

people you work with. Don't allow anyone in your work family to make judgement about anyone else on the team. You are all each other's biggest cheerleaders.

I have literally just covered the very tip of the iceberg on this topic but I hope I have provided enough information for you to be able to reflect on your role as a team player in your program. It takes all of you working together to provide the best possible environment for the children and families you serve as well as a healthy place for you to work😊

"Good teamwork starts with your conscious decision to do your best regardless of how others perform." Gigi Schweikert

