Center Time Organization

Claudia Wittich

Community Based Participatory Research

CBPR is a model for conducting research that is focused around the *community*

- CBPR makes sure that community partners are involved in all parts of the research process, including research aims, methods, data collection, analysis and implementation of interventions
- CBPR makes sure that research is focus on helping the community and not just for research's sake
- CBPR identifies community needs, weaknesses and strengths
- All about promoting **CHANGE**

Community-Based Participatory Research

Collaborative Effort

- This process began with discussion with the community member, in this situation that is the primary preschool teacher, Mrs. G
- Working together, we identified classroom needs
- **Classroom weakness/needs:**
  - **Center Time is a chaotic process with students roaming freely between stations**
  - **Students do not understand that options available for center time and how many students are allowed in each center**

Goals

- To give children responsibility for understanding of their choices and ownership of their time
- To reduce chaos during center time and allow teachers to control center time behaviors
- To also help the non-verbal students in class verbalize their choice

How it Works

- We created a tool with the 8 different centers clearly described with large pictures showing the activities offered in each station
- Each student has a clothespin with their name written on it
- Prior to center time beginning, all students come to the carpet and take turns placing their clothespin on the center they want to participate in that day
- Centers are marked closed once more than 4 students are at that center
- Students can also move their clothespin to another station if they want to switch

Pictures of the Chart

Outcomes

- Center time is now a much less stressful ordeal for teachers
- Students were excited about their participation in choosing center time
- The chart is also reusable for new classes in years to come

Improvements

- I noticed that the students were having a hard time grasping and pinching the clothes pins to place their names under the center they wanted to participate in
- To fix this problem and to make the activity easier and more hands on for the students, I attached their names to a velcro command strip sand replaced the clothes pins with those names

What I learned from this experience

- What you, as an outsider, think a community might need does not always match the actual needs of the community
- Simple initiatives can really make a difference in a classroom
- Much of today's current research doesn't really make an active difference in the community
- The needs of the community should always come above the needs of the researcher
- Projects can always be improved after implementation