



D.R.O.P. :: Enriching a Sense of Community through Classroom Activities and Actions



This document provides examples of classroom activities and actions that can help to enrich the sense of community in your classroom. Please feel free to add to or modify these activities and actions to fit the needs of the children, families, and cultures of your individual program.

DESIGN A CARING ENVIRONMENT

- Use respectful and encouraging language with your team and the children.
- Request family photos from home to display around the classroom.
- Post children's work and photos of children working together at child's eye level.
- Arrange furniture and materials in a way that promotes close proximity and collaboration.
- Consistently encourage families to stay and be involved at their level of comfort, and have adult-sized furniture available for them in the classroom.

RESPOND TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

- Personally welcome each child upon arrival and say goodbye upon departure.
- Tune into children's daily emotional needs and encourage children to notice the feelings of one another.
- Be present to provide scaffolding when a child is struggling.
- Provide opportunities for children to stay connected to their family and culture at school by encouraging families to bring in toys, books, song lyrics, recipes, etc., from home.
- Allow time for playful and joyful interactions with each individual child.

ORGANIZE AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

- Plan activities that teach children to identify and express their feelings and to identify their peers' feelings.
- Plan activities that encourage children to reflect on how their actions impact others.
- Be aware of problems as they arise and encourage children to be involved in solving them.
- Use role-play and guiding questions to help children work together through the steps of problem solving.
- Design a problem-solving center with visuals of strategies that promote solutions. Display photos of the outcome: children working together successfully.

PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Establish routines, songs, and activities that help children learn one another's names and encourage them to address one another by name.
- Create jobs that children can do together to benefit the whole classroom community.
- Generate community rules together with the children and ensure they are consistently followed.
- Encourage children to help each other by planning times for them to learn from one another.
- Celebrate caring behaviors in thoughtful ways.