



DR. RICK'S PLAY PROJECT CONSULTANT TIPS

WHEN THE PARENTS ARE NOT PLAYING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL

- ✓ **Catch parents being successful and compliment them** especially when they wait, get circles, create engagement, and having fun. Show them on the video!
 - Remember the feedback sandwich: one positive comment, one constructive comment and one positive comment.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to **be gently directive**.
 - "OK, Mrs. Smith, let's go for a few more 'circles'."
 - "Let's wait and see what HE wants to do."
 - "Let's try some theme and variation by figuring out five things we can do here."
- ✓ **Model and rehearse**. Show the parents what to do by doing it (on video too). Then ask them to do what you did (reassuring them that it's ok to make mistakes and that this work is not as easy as it looks!).
- ✓ **'Go theoretical'—share what YOU are thinking** in terms of PLAY Plan strategies, methods, and techniques and the model. Educate!
 - "In our model we don't drill for results. Circle 1 Methods say that we have to follow the child."
 - "I'm just waiting here, *being with*, Jacob to see what his idea is. Then I'm going to use the *Rabbit Hole Techniques* to get him engaged."
- ✓ **Direct the parents** to 'the child's attention and the child's intention.'
- ✓ Distinguish between the **parents' ideas** and the **child's ideas**.
 - "It's ok to have your own ideas I just want you to be aware of whose idea it is."
 - "Singing a song was YOUR idea. Let's wait and see if Jacob comes up with his own idea. There, did you see that? He threw himself on the couch. THAT was his idea. Let's go with that and give him some deep pressure."
- ✓ **Use the video during a visit** to show them what they did well (or could have done differently!) and give them feedback.
 - Distinguish between (the interactional) **process** versus than the **content** (of what is happening).



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- ✓ **Define the terms** of The PLAY Project clearly.
 - Make sure parents know what the FDLs are and how to work with each level.
 - Quiz them in a fun way. "Do you know your levels yet?"
 - Define 'circles', 'intention', 'cues', 'following the child's lead.'
 - Define: Zone of proximal development i.e. playing too high, too low, or just right.
 - Use the ***glossary***.
 - Make sure parents know what '***technique***' you're referring to.
- ✓ **Ask for feedback** when you feel like things aren't going well.
 - Use the satisfaction survey.
 - *Report on your feelings*: "Can we talk about how The PLAY Project is going? I'm feeling a little worried about how we're doing together."
- ✓ **Blame yourself** ("It's me; not you"). Never blame the parent. There's always a reason for their behavior.
 - "I'm not sure I'm making myself clear."
 - "I feel like I'm not helping you very much here."
 - "What can I do to make this better for you?"
- ✓ **Join their wishes**. "I know that you want Johnny to talk and I do too but if you play too high and don't fill in these lower levels, he won't make progress as fast as he can."
- ✓ **Invoke trust and openness** by being open to feedback.
 - "We've been working together now for 4-5 months. Please tell me what you need from me. I'm here for you."
 - **Poll the parents** about their feelings: "How are you holding up?" and/or about their life events, family: "You have so much going on!"
- ✓ **Just be honest (with a smile)**. Once you've established trust you can be bluntly honest with a little sense of humor: "You were off there, Mom! Way too high!"