

### Being Responsive to Children and Families: *Engaging Families*

## ENGAGING FAMILIES IN DONITA'S CLASSROOM

### To partner with families, treat them as:

- **Co-supporters:** Collaborate with families in supporting their children. Learn from families about their preferences, hopes, and dreams for their children.
- **Co-decision-makers:** Collaborate with family members in making decisions about their child's learning goals and curriculum.
- **Co-teachers:** Offer families opportunities to actively participate in learning experiences. Let families choose how they want to be involved.

**Scenario:** *A parent, Ron, says to his child's teacher, Donita, "I'm so worried. All the children do is play all day. Talia is almost five. Are the children going to learn the alphabet and how to write their names?"*

### How can Donita engage Ron as a co-supporter to learn about his hopes and dreams for his child?

*Donita can engage Ron as a co-supporter by asking him what knowledge and skills he hopes Talia will learn while in preschool. She could then invite Ron to observe how the writing center, art area, and other interest areas support his learning goals for Talia.*

### **Reflect with your partner on the following discussion questions.**

What decisions might Donita make together with Ron about his learning goals for his child or the curriculum?

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How could Donita engage Ron (and other children's family members) as co-teachers in pre-literacy experiences?

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