



Tips for Teachers: Zoning in the Preschool Classroom

Tips for Teachers is a continuing series of practical strategies that teachers and other caregivers can use in their classrooms and other early learning settings. These Tips are based on research evidence and professional knowledge.

Zoning is a technique used in early childhood classrooms in order to organize teachers and the environment. Typically a chart is created which specifies which teacher is in charge of which area, as well as what their duties are during the transitions before and after the activity. Many preschool classrooms have only two or three adults available throughout the day. In order to maximize a classroom's effort to provide responsive and organized teaching, it is important that each adult knows exactly what their duties are during each activity of the day. Creating a classroom zoning chart can be highly beneficial to the lead teacher, as well as a boost to the confidence of her/his assistant teachers. Zoning allows for every member of the team to be accountable and informed. Other benefits of using zoning in the preschool classroom include:

- Limiting the amount of time that children are waiting or doing off-task (i.e. whining, wandering around, arguing, acting out...) Zoning helps adults to spread themselves out around the room and be available to children.
- Zoning helps all staff members become more efficient and effective in completing tasks and supporting child engagement.
- With Zoning, classroom tasks can rotate through various staff members from week to week, which helps to build confidence and provides each staff member with a sense of ownership in the management and running of the classroom.