

# In Training

Further your career, improve your practice



## Train your team

**Sandhya Godhania explains how taking training in-house can help leaders to inspire their staff and improve practice...**

It might sound obvious, but the secret to 'outstanding' early years practice lies in having highly motivated staff who are passionate about engaging children and families. However, achieving a high level of commitment from your team can prove challenging. To succeed, it's important to have leaders working with their teams in your rooms. These leaders can gain a sound understanding of practitioners' strengths and weaknesses – through observations, mentoring and coaching,

which in turn should instigate honest and reflective conversations. Honesty should be embraced and welcomed by leaders and modelled throughout the day.

Of course, training is a fundamental part of engaging practitioners. A leader can organise training, but difficulties can arise when trying to get practitioners to share their knowledge with other staff and implement new ideas. One way of overcoming this is by stipulating that all training must be evaluated constructively; this allows leaders to evaluate whether the training had a significant impact on the practitioners' practice, confidence and knowledge base.

In-house training can also prove to be an effective way of motivating and informing practitioners. The advantage of this approach is that the atmosphere can be relaxed and

In-house training can also prove to be an effective way of motivating and informing practitioners. The advantage of this approach is that the atmosphere can be relaxed and informal

informal, encouraging team members to ask questions and allowing them to question the theories they are being introduced to. In-house training also means the trainer is aware of which training methods to use to have maximum impact – i.e. taking into account the different learning styles, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Initiating reflective conversation after a training session can lead to mind mapping, which in turn can help motivate and engage practitioners, allowing discussion to develop holistically. This empowers practitioners, while documenting action points, which can be collectively discussed at room meetings to ensure that ownership is not the preserve of one practitioner but of the whole team.

Remember, leaders are perfectly placed to demonstrate the very best practice, as well as to keep practitioners inspired and motivated by taking part in training themselves. Ensuring that each practitioner is treated as an individual, and recognising that everyone has different motivators, will help leaders keep their team focused on delivering best practice.

**Sandhya Godhania is staff coordinator at Training Depot Day Nursery in Luton.**

## Further opportunities...

### Archimedes

Archimedes offers a unique approach to education, play and training for those seeking excellence, individuality and authenticity. The company pioneers innovative certificates and qualifications in outdoor learning to meet the increasingly complex needs of children and adults growing up in society today. For more information on the training available, visit [www.archimedes-training.co.uk](http://www.archimedes-training.co.uk)

### University of Chichester

The University of Chichester leads the South of England Consortium in delivering Early Years Professional Status, working across London and the South-East. The application process for those wishing to begin their qualification from January 2013 is now open. For more information, visit [chi.ac.uk](http://chi.ac.uk). See *TN 2.4* to read about one Chichester student's experiences!

### Playing to Learn

Playing to Learn is offering a range of new short courses for autumn and winter. Courses available in October, November and December include 'Before They p-p-pick up a pencil – Developing fine motor skills', 'outdoor mathematics', 'Scooby Doo and Daleks too! Developing child-led literacy' and 'Outdoor creativity'. Courses cost just £25 and are delivered by *TN* regular Kirstine Beeley. Visit [playingtolearn.co.uk](http://playingtolearn.co.uk) for more details.