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What Makes Conflicts in Our Workplaces Unique? Women, Communication and Problem Solving

Socialization

There is a social construction of gender

- Gender is built by groups of people (societies)
- What is expected of us in terms of how we behave
- How we interact and express emotion
- What we like or don't like
- How we communicate and problem solve

It impacts our thoughts, feelings and behaviors for our entire lives!

How does gender intersect with other cultural identities?

Gender socialization informs everything that we do and how we communicate?

The lasting impacts of gender socialization:

- Impacts our sense of self

- Impacts our sense of what is “normal” for a woman

- Impacts our sense of what is not “normal”



How Does this Impact our Communication Styles?

- It impacts whether we say what we mean
- It impacts what practice we have with a range of communication methods
- It impacts how we resolve conflicts
- Are we Peacemakers?
- Are we Mediators?
- Are we rule changers?
- Are we “Good Girls” ?



Who are the “Mean Girls” and do they become “Mean Women”?

- Playground politics
- Are we conflict avoiders?
- People pleasers?
- Do we focus on impressions?
- Do we need drama?
- Do we gossip?
- Are we passive – aggressive?
- Do we compete with other women?
- Do we trust other women?



Landscape of ECE Environments

- Female workplace
- Culturally diverse
- Generationally diverse
- Lacking mentoring, on-the job training, employee training
- Hiring challenges in CDEV - shortages in the field impact choice
- Impacts of a poor quality hiring pool - costs related to hiring the wrong person
- Educational requirements related to children and CDEV, not adult relationships



Barriers to Change

- Fear and fear of failure
- Lack of cultural awareness of norms in this culture
- Lack of problem solving and communication skills
- Conflicting thoughts
- Indecision
- Stereotypes
- Fear of punishment and discouragement to change
- Competition and jealousy

Gender identity and socialization practices in family

- Gender expectations
 - Men denied access to nurturing, emotional and care.
 - Women denied to power, influence, achievement and independence.

Taking up the role of the father



The Leader Sets the Tone

- Common prototypes in CDEV leadership: Absent Leader, Indirect Leader, Pedestal Leader, Facebook Poster, Leader with Favorites, Revolving Door, Do it and Fixit All, Inexperienced Leader, Martyr, Mother to All
- Linking staff behaviors and culture to leadership styles – Diagnosing Leadership Issues Based on Staff Behaviors
- Toxic Workplaces – Stressful, Demoralizing, Ineffective, Dysfunctional, High Turnover, Stagnant, Illness, Poor Communication
- Female workplaces and playground politics

- Staff behaviors that are barriers to effective workplaces:
- Defensiveness
- Change resistant
- Gossiper
- Playground politics
- Indirect communication
- Poor role models for children



Behaviors to Resolve Conflicts Moving Forward

- Staying focused and calm
- Changing roles
- Assuming responsibility
- Being brave
- Being strong
- Taking risks
- Listening
- Eliminate time wasters
- De-personalizing message



“I once asked a very successful woman to share her secret with me. She smiled and said to me..”

- "I started succeeding when I started leaving small fights for small fighters.
- I stopped fighting those who gossiped about me...
- I stopped fighting for attention...
- I stopped fighting to meet peoples expectation of me...
- I stopped fighting for my rights with inconsiderate people..
- I stopped fighting to please everyone...
- I stopped fighting to prove they were wrong about me....
- I left such fights for those who have nothing else to fight...
- And I started fighting for my vision, my dreams, my ideas and my destiny.
- The day I gave up on small fights is the day I started becoming successful & more content.“ Some fights area waste of time..... Choose what you fight for wisely.