



# BEAM Newsletter

Bridging Education and Mental Health

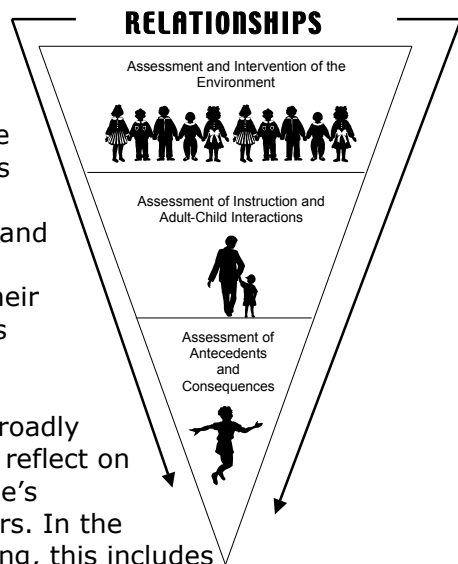


## BEAM topic: Reflective Practice

Teaching can often be a demanding job and there is usually little time during the day for a teacher to sit quietly for a moment to think about his/her interactions with the children and the staff or for teachers to talk to one another or with their supervisor about their day. The importance of having this time is often overlooked and we are just beginning to

understand the need for this reflective time in education. In order to improve practice teachers need to be able to think about their current practice and share their ideas with others who will support and understand their thoughts and feelings regarding their work. This process is generally called *Reflective Practice*.

*Reflective Practice* broadly means being able to reflect on and self-evaluate one's daily work with others. In the early childhood setting, this includes the children and families and the other staff and administration. *Reflective Practice* is a key component of the BEAM model because relationships at all levels are recognized as being important for nurturing healthy social and emotional development in young children. With this in mind, child care centers and preschools could set aside time for their staff to meet regularly to discuss their work and their feelings about how things are going in their classrooms and in their programs in general.



Supervisors can also move toward practicing *Reflective Supervision* where they listen and provide feedback to the teachers, but do not necessarily direct the conversation or use the time to evaluate the teacher's performance. These practices over time help to build strong relationships amongst the staff and help all staff members feel supported in their work. With this foundation of support, teachers can be well equipped to be reflective listeners for the parents and children they work with. In this way *Reflective Practice* is also a *Parallel Process*. In a *Parallel Process* we model the qualities of relationship we want to nurture in another person's relationships. In this example the supervisor models the type of relationship she wants to foster between the teacher and the children. The teacher, in turn, provides a positive relationship with the family of the child, modeling how to be sensitive and responsive, so that the family can develop that kind of relationship with their child. In essence, "We do unto others as we would have them do unto others" (Jeree Pawl).



## Featured BEAM coach: Carrie Johnson



Carrie Johnson has 10 years of early childhood experience through parenthood, home visiting, and volunteer commitments. She is a strong advocate for issues regarding school readiness, educational funding, parent involvement, and community building. She currently spends time training and coaching service providers in the Twin Cities on emergent literacy to shape learning environments and teacher practices. Carrie is a BEAM coach at Northside Child Development Center

## BEAM Tips & Resources:



Being in Charge: Reflective Leadership in Infant/Family Programs  
Rebecca Parlakian & Nancy Seibel 2001

Look, Listen, and Learn: Reflective Supervision and Relationship-Based Work  
Rebecca Parlakian 2001

Zero to Three website: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

## Upcoming BEAM events:

BEAM Directors Forum on May 17<sup>th</sup>. For directors of early childhood programs in Minneapolis. Call or email Lisa Cariveau to register.

## BEAM Contacts:

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## Thank You for your participation in BEAM!

*BEAM is a program at the Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) at the University of Minnesota. The mission of CEED is to improve developmental outcomes for children through applied research, training, and outreach. BEAM is funded by the FY04 federal Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA) Grant provided to the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board. The pilots will run in 2005-2006, with evaluation results available in late 2006.*