

LEADERS' *Lagniappe*



ISSUE:
SEPTEMBER
2019

CHILDREN
THRIVE WHEN
TEACHERS LOVE
WHAT THEY DO &
**ARE EQUIPPED
WITH RESOURCES
LIKE CLASS™**



Aloma Bergeron
**DIRECTOR,
SOUTH PLAQUEMINES
CHILDREN'S CENTER**

Aloma Bergeron, the director of South Plaquemines Children's Center, attributes their Excellent rating to keen awareness of their children's development and growth. Bergeron believes children thrive when teachers love what they do and are equipped with resources like CLASS™, Teaching Strategies GOLD®, and Tier I curriculum.

GOLD® is a key lever for promoting children's learning, according to Bergeron.

"GOLD® digs into specific objectives that are developmentally appropriate. In early childhood, sometimes teachers might be under the impression that they are doing color sheets and the alphabet," Bergeron said. "However, GOLD® is in alignment with the **Early Learning and Development Standards**. We expect teachers to use this as a guide along with strong interactions with children."

Bergeron shared her **Top Ten Director Tricks** for using GOLD® effectively in early learning programs:

THE KEY TO
EVERYTHING
IS POSITIVE
RELATIONSHIPS
**BETWEEN
CHILDREN,
PARENTS, AND
TEACHERS.**



1. Learn the GOLD® basics. Aloma is a certified trainer for the GOLD® tool. In Plaquemines, all new network employees must complete a training on GOLD®, and this knowledge of the tool allows them to best support directors and teachers.

2. Train teachers in GOLD® and verify that documentation is being entered regularly. At South Plaquemines, teachers enter two documentation notes per child per week and review these notes weekly to lesson plan.

3. Review the quality of documentation for accuracy and student progress. Bergeron looks for enough supporting evidence for each objective. Her teachers are asked to submit no more than five sentences per objective.

"We want to really describe the objective and make sure that it is developmentally appropriate, as well as seeing that children are where they should be," said Bergeron.

4. Support staff to work towards reliability in GOLD®. South Plaquemines Children's Center staff completes an all-day training in GOLD®, then teachers complete inter-rater reliability training offered on the GOLD® platform. Teachers are encouraged to complete all of the offered Teaching Strategies trainings before the first checkpoint.

5. Review checkpoint data several weeks in advance of checkpoints to ensure that it is correct, and provide feedback to teachers. This gives teachers more time to observe, if needed.

6. Share with parents! Parents love seeing what their child is learning. Teachers are asked to share videos and pictures with parents twice per month. Parents are proud and excited to see progress. By adding parents' emails to the GOLD® platform, they receive updates, and with the app, parents can access the pictures. Sharing documentation also shifts how parents engage with their children as the tool emphasizes developmentally appropriate engagement and learning.

7. Use the Development and Learning reports for parent-teacher conferences. Conferences are an important opportunity to collaborate with families around goals for children.

8. Take advantage of the tools on the GOLD® platform, like the TEACH area. The Pre-k studies available through Teaching Strategies modify lesson plans for teachers' needs and highlight objectives that are being used.

"We use this with our Pre-k network to help weave curriculum and TS GOLD® objectives," Bergeron said.

9. Guide teachers to see the connections between the tools. The curriculum, interactions, and objectives are aligned and work best when used together.

10. Use GOLD® data to support early identification of children needing additional services. By using the CLASS™ profiles at the end of each checkpoint, staff are provided with profiles that depict the level of each child and the class as a whole.

"We can see patterns. The reports help us to see the challenges that we might be noticing in CLASS™. If a parent raises a concern, we can also look for where the child should be. Our knowledge of how children are developing has helped us to connect families to early intervention services," said Bergeron. "Children have been able to get support and many times age out of early intervention. The key to everything is positive relationships between children, parents, and teachers."

Did you learn something helpful?
Want to recommend a leader for Leaders
Lagniappe? Contact
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