**ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN TRANSCRIPT**

Mikayla Cronin: To engage parents what works really well is getting their input into what happens during our sessions. So I lay out the structure of how I'd like the session to go, but I'm very flexible. We know that children don’t always do as they're told and don’t want to do certain things. So I set out the structure and I allow parents input. So if they pick a theme for the day we'll pick a book to match the theme. Then we also pick a craft. So the craft might relate to the book. I allow as much parent input as they want to give me.

Sarah Irwin: So when a new family joins the playgroup we introduce them and we let them know what we do and what we're about. We want to make them feel comfortable because we want them to keep returning. Sometimes that's hard to keep them engaged and keep them coming back. So we let them know that we can support them in any way that they need. We are child focused though, so it is all about the playgroup.

Pam Dunn: When I notice that a mother hasn’t attended our groups for a couple of weeks we - our peer worker usually makes a telephone call just to check in with them and make sure everything is okay. We have a Facebook page and often that works really well. The word drifts through that somebody's been away with illness and that type of thing. So we check in with them.

New mums attending our group usually come through the Mater Mothers antenatal program which is run at our Coorparoo centre. So they come along, they attend classes all through their pregnancy. Once the bubby is born then we try to capture that market and they're welcome to come along to our playgroup with the bubs.

Melissa Hensler: So I promote ownership of this playgroup by just informing and letting the parents know that this is their playgroup. So they can have any ideas they would like to make the playgroup better. They - my parents set up activities that they like to set up. So it makes them feel they have ownership, it makes them feel like they can come in and say, Melissa, can I set this up? That's fine. So it makes them feel like they're running their playgroup; it's their playgroup. Same as the children, it's the children's playgroup too. So it's good to make them feel important and to think, this is my playgroup.

Mikayla Cronin: When a parent comes to playgroup and they walk through the door and they're feeling really stressed, I usually notice it straight away. Being a Mum myself I can gauge those things really well. So I usually say, good morning and how are you going? Often they’ll say, I'm good, and then they’ll go and sit in the corner. So that's where I just observe them for a little bit and see how they're reacting and what's happening.

Then I usually go over and say, I saw that you came in a little bit out of sorts. Are you doing okay today? Then that's where I can offer support, I can offer them networking outside my area. So I think about who else they can go and gain support from. Just let them know that I'm there and I'm an ear to listen to. Because sometimes that's all parents need when they come.

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