

# Empowerment in Childcare

## P4 What is Empowerment?

‘Giving children involvement in decisions that affect them, appropriate to their age and level of understanding.’

**Tassoni, P (2013, pg 84)**

Empowering babies and children means the adults giving the children choices and letting them to be able to do different things and try new things as they get older.

Adults in the setting or in the home environment need to make sure they give the children choices which are made for their age and what stage of development they are at.

The adults need to make sure they are letting the children know about what happens if they make the wrong decision. An example of this is if they decide to draw on the walls.



## Reason why settings empower children

The children in the setting have a right under the United Nations Convention are to be told and showed things which might or might not happen or that might affect them in their future.



### **Valuing and respecting children**

When the adults in a setting are listening and understanding how children feel with the use of empowerment the children will feel part of a setting and they will also want to take in the activity that is in that setting.

The children in the setting come together at registration asking them what news do they have to share or how do they feel today and what activities they have done in that day. The children are showing respect to each other when they are in the setting because they are being empowered by the teacher to do so.

### **Helping children to respect themselves and others**

When the children in the setting they are being respected by the staff who are in the setting they are more likely to show respect to the other children who are in that setting.

This shows empowerment by the teacher giving the child a chance to make friends and interact with other children.

### **Involving children in decision making**

The adults show empowerment by making it so the children have choices, for example the children could have a choice of what activities they won't do and how they do it.

### **What are the benefits of empowerment on all round development?**

#### **Physical**

The way in which empowerment helps with a child's physical development is it helps them to learn new skills and try out new things. Another way it helps with a child's physical development it promotes the child's fine motor skills by the child lifting and pouring things and it also promotes a child's gross motor skills by them being able to go and play with whatever they won't.

#### **Intellectual**

Intellectually it will help the child by allowing them to be more involved in decision making in what they would like to do, this will help the child to be more independent. Another way in which it helps with the child is it helps the

child to develop logic and helps their thinking skills so they can tackle different activities such as puzzles. When the children are making their own decisions about what they want to do it will help them to learn what decisions are right and wrong.

### **Emotional**

When the child is in control and they are understanding what they have to do they will feel a lot happier in themselves. The child will also have a high esteem because they are being valued and being able to be the things they won't do.

### **Social**

Socially the children in the setting are working together and when they are they can help other children and share toys with each other. They also are thinking how the other children are feeling.

### **P5**

The adults in the setting have big impact in the way that children are empowered. The adults can empower the children by letting them have decisions on what they won't do.

**According to Tassoni, P (2013 pg87)** 'Adults can empower children by giving them choices, being respectful and encouraging children to be actively involved in what is happening'

When we empower children it is important that we know the age of the child and know what stage of development they are at so that empowerment is effective for them. Empowering children can be at any age and the children do not have to be a certain age even babies are empowered.

### **Empowering children according to their age**

#### **Care routine**

The care routines include dressing, washing and going to the toilet or have their nappy changed.

The way the care routine can empower babies in a private day nursery is the children will be encouraged to hold their own nappy or cream when they are getting them changed which helps them to be involved, it also helps to get the baby involved in what they are doing which will make the baby feel important.

In a primary school the children from a young should be encouraged to get themselves dressed for P.E. **for example letting the child put on their own shorts and t-shirt and when they put on their shoes let them tying them.** They should also be able to get their own coats on and off for example zip or button their coats up when they go out to play outside.

In the care routine in any setting it is very important that when they are doing that physical care routine the child's privacy is respected, this means that when a baby is having its nappy or when a **child is getting changed for P.E. make sure they are not being watched.**

### **Mealtimes**

At mealtime it is important that the adults in the setting ensure that they give the child choices and make sure it is them who are making the decisions about what they want to eat and when they are eating the ensure they are allowed to feed themselves. **It is also important that the children are aware of the choices are and that it's their choice what they have.**

In the setting of a private day nursery they can build on the child allowed to feed itself by the adult knowing when the child is finished with its bottle. Another way the adult can encourage the baby to feed themselves is by provide food which is easy for the baby to hold and easy for them to eat. **It is important when the child is in the setting and they are eating when they have finished with some food let n their plate the staff in the setting do not force the child to keep eating.** With young children the adults could give them things to help them to eat easily.

The way the children are empowered at mealtimes in a primary school is they are encouraged to set the table with no help from the adults **which will encourage the child to take responsibility for what they do at home.** Another way the children are empowered at mealtimes is they are given a choice of what food they would like to eat.

## **Child-initiated play**

The adults in private day nurseries and primary schools should provide the children with different resources and areas to play; **this should encourage the children to choose what they would like to do in the setting. The staff ought to join in with the children when they are playing but only once the child has started to play.**

## **Involving children in planning/feedback**

When the adults in the different early years settings feedback they should make sure that the children are asked to give some feedback to the staff, the feedback will be what they have done in that day **and what they have enjoyed and how they would change it.** The adults will want to know what the children have enjoyed and what particular activity they enjoyed the most.

## **Caring for the environment**

Adults should make sure that the children are aware of the environment and when they help the adult outside they will get a sense or pride in what they have done for the environment. This will encourage the child to keep looking after the environment when they start to grow up.

## **M3 & D3 - Case study**

**In order to complete the newspaper article on the reasons why adults attempt to empower young children I decided to visit and observe adults working with children. The first setting I visited was a private day nursery. In the baby room the adults encouraged the babies in nappy changing by allowing them to hold the nappy and the cream so they felt involved in the process. During mealtimes the adults encouraged the children to self-feed themselves by allowing them to hold a spoon and try to pick up food, with the careful supervision of the adults. In the older toddler room the children were encouraged to go and get their nappies from their box and support the adult in this particular routine. When the children had finished with certain toys the adults encouraged the children to tidy away and be proud of their environment. I particularly enjoyed watching the children trying to figure out how to solve puzzles with the supervision of the adults. Finally in the pre-school room the children had a fantastic routine of setting the tables ready**

**for snack time and then tidying the area away after. I also noticed during snack time that the children had a selection of different foods and drinks to choose from.**

**The next setting I visited was a reception class in a primary school. When the children entered the classroom they had to self-register themselves by placing their name on the whiteboard. During reading time the children are allowed to go and choose a book to read but also a book they wanted to take home to read with their parents. I also observed the adults encouraging the children to get ready for playtime through zipping up their own coats and putting on their own hats and gloves. During free play all the children had various resources, areas and activities to play with. Finally at the end of the day all the children sat on the carpet and each child had an opportunity to discuss what they had enjoyed most about the day and what aspects they would change.**

When I was in the setting the first way they showed empowerment is when they were changing the babies' nappies. The way in which the staff showed empowerment with the baby is they got the baby to hold the clean nappy or the cream and tell them to pass it to them when the adult was ready. This shows physical development by when the baby is holding the nappy or cream it develops the baby's fine motor skills. Another area of development this shows is intellectual because they are learning how to change their nappy.

This is successful because it is teaching the babies what to do and to do it also its teaching the baby not to be lazy when they get older. This will help the baby to understand they have to do things for themselves.

The next activity I saw which showed empowerment was when it came to mealtime the babies were allowed to feed themselves. The area that self-feeding develops a child's fine motor skills when they are holding the spoon which is their physical development. The activity also develops the child's language skills because they are learn what the name if the food is.

This is successful because the baby is learning manners when they are eating the food with the other children who they are in the setting with. This will also teach the children how to wait for their food as well.

Another way the staff empowers the toddler is when the baby needs its nappy changing the staff would ask the toddler to go and get their own nappy from their own box. One of the areas of development it improves is the toddler's intellectual development because they are learning where the nappies are and also they are following instructions. Another area of development this improves is the toddlers gross motor skills because they run to the box to get the nappy.

The success of the nappy box and the staff telling the toddler to go and get their own nappy is it built independence **by letting them go and get their own nappy from the box**, confidence and understanding of where things go.

When it comes to the times of the day when the toys in the setting have to be put away the adult step back and encourage the toddler to put the toy they were playing with away. The activity helps with the child's intellectual development because the child is building confidence when they are putting the toy back and also they are learning where certain toys go. This also improves the child's social development because they are working with others to put the toys away.

When they put things away themselves this is successfully because they are understanding they have to put things away and they are learning how to clean up after themselves and they are learn that they have to do things for themselves.

One of the activities the children really enjoyed was when they had to solve puzzles, the staff encouraged the children to do the puzzles themselves with little help from the adults. One of areas this activity helps with is their language development because the child can say to the adult what picture it is once they have done the puzzle. Another area is the children will be happy when they have done the puzzle by themselves which improves the child's emotion development.

The children being allowed to do activities on their own is a success in the setting because the children are learning that they don't always need the help from the adults **and they will be able to do things for themselves**.

In the pre-school room of the setting the children in this setting were encouraging the child to set the table ready for them having their snacks. Intellectually this helps the children because they are learning skills for when they are at home with their family. Another area of development it helps with is the child social development because they are working with each other to set the table ready for the meal.

The success of the children doing this by themselves is they are learn to be independent and realising they have to help each other to get jobs done, **they are also learning that it is ok to ask for help if they need it.**

During snack time the children when they sit down are allowed to choose different food that they won't to eat. When the children are picking the different food they will have to say what food they won't which means this will help with the children's language development. Another developmental area it helps with is the child's fine motor skills when they are holding the food.

The success of the children being allowed to choose different foods around the table at snack time is they are learning it's up to them what they won't to eat and they don't have to eat certain foods.

In the setting of the reception class the first activity which showed empowerment which I noticed was when the children come into the class they went up to a board and self-registered themselves. This helps with the child's language development because when the child's puts their name down they are also learning other names of the children. Emotionally it will help the children because when they have done the task they will get a sense of achievement.

The success of this is the children are building confidence and they are learning to do different things interdentally. They are also learning each of the children's names which helps with the child's language development.