

Conversation to Strengthen Your Relationship with Your Student: Us Time

Why Do It?

- Helps teachers and child to build a warm, secure relationship and feel safe and calm, even when things are stressful
- Reduces child attention-seeking behavior and improves their cooperation
Improve child's self-esteem

Things to Do Before Having Us Time

- Decide on a weekly or daily time when you and the child can hang out for 5-7 minutes. You can decide together, so that the child has a feeling of choice.
 - *Every day at 3:15 before dismissal; Every Wednesday before recess*
- Avoid choosing a time that ends with something the child doesn't like to do (don't try to do Us Time before a subject the child struggles in or dislikes)
- Make sure that it is a time you can stick to each day/week. The important thing is it happens no matter what.
- Pick a space in the school or your classroom where you won't get distracted or pulled into other things.
- Tell the child, "We are going to have some Us Time together every day/week. This means that it will just be you and me talking together for 5 minutes. You can help me choose the day, time, and where we hang out."

What to Do

- Even if the child has had a 'bad day' or recently broken a rule, still have Us Time at the scheduled time. Say, "It's time for Us Time. [And if needed, "There may be a consequence for your actions, but we will take care of that after our time together.]" Genuinely delight in them even if you're frustrated at them.
- Start with an open-ended, neutral question or topic to discuss (Google "get-to-know-you questions" for more ideas!)
 - *If you could have any superpower, what would you pick? What would you do?*
 - *If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be? What would you see?*
 - *What's been your favorite part about your week?*
- Try to use one Conversation Skill (see page 2) at least every 30 seconds
- When special time is over, say, "Us Time is finished for today. We will do it again (tomorrow, Friday, another day). I love talking with you!"

What NOT to Do!

- Refrain from trying to give the child advice or change the way they think during this time (*that is okay at other times, but this is just for unconditional acceptance*).
- Refrain from criticizing or redirecting the child

Remember....only 5 minutes per day!

Us Time PRIDE Skills

POSITIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Tell your child exactly what you like about their idea	Teacher: If you could have any superpower, what would you pick? Child: I want to be able to fly! Teacher: That is such an awesome superpower. You could go wherever you wanted so quickly!
REFLECT: Repeat what the child says.	Child: I would be able to see the whole world below me Teacher: You could see the whole world. That would be quite a view!
INQUIRE: Ask questions to further promote the conversation	Teacher: Where would be the first place you go? Child: The beach Teacher: Interesting! What would you do when you got there?
DESCRIBE: Describe what they are talking about	Teacher: You are thinking of so many things to do at the beach!
ENJOY: Act happy & warm when you talk!	Smile a lot 😊 Put excitement and genuine enjoyment in your voice.