

Weekly Staff Check-In Support Guide

How to Make 10 Minutes Actually Work

These check-ins are not meant to be long or formal. They are meant to be consistent, focused, and supportive.

1. How to Start the Conversation

Many leaders default to: "Everything going okay?"
Instead, use a more intentional opener.

Script options:

- "What's been going really well for you this week?"
- "What's feeling easier lately?"
- "Where are you feeling more confident?"

→ This builds confidence first, not defensiveness

2. How to Surface Real Challenges

Staff often say "nothing" unless guided.

Try:

- "What's been a little frustrating or tricky?"
- "Where are you feeling unsure right now?"
- "Is there a part of the day that feels harder than it should?"

If they still struggle:

- "I've noticed transitions seem busy—how is that feeling for you?"

→ Normalize that challenges are expected

3. How to Coach (Without Taking Over)

Avoid:

- Giving long explanations
- Taking control of the situation
- Overloading with feedback

Instead, give one clear, usable adjustment.

Script formula: "I noticed _____. Next time, try _____."

Examples:

- "I noticed circle time got long—next time try keeping it to 10 minutes and adding movement earlier."
- "I saw transitions were loud—try giving a 2-minute warning and using a song cue."

→ One small change = higher follow-through

4. How to Build Independence (Not Dependence)

Instead of answering immediately, redirect with:

- "What do you think would work?"
- "What have you tried so far?"
- "What would you do next time?"

→ This builds thinking, not reliance

5. How to Set a Weekly Focus

Keep it simple—this is where most people overcomplicate.

Script: "Let's pick one thing to focus on this week."

Examples:

- "Smoother transitions"
- "Keeping circle time shorter"
- "Giving clearer directions to children"

→ One focus = real improvement

6. How to Close the Conversation

Don't just end it—reinforce progress.

Script options:

- "You're doing a great job with ____—keep building on that."
- "I'm excited to see how that works this week."
- "Let's check in next week and see how it's going."

→ This builds momentum and accountability

7. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Trying to fix everything in one conversation
- Talking more than the staff member
- Only giving feedback when something is wrong
- Skipping follow-up the next week

→ Consistency matters more than perfection

8. What This Looks Like in Real Time (Example)

You: "What's been going well this week?"

Staff: "Circle time has been better"

You: "That's great—what's helping it go better?"

Staff: "I've been keeping it shorter"

You: "I've noticed that too. One thing to try next is adding movement earlier to keep them engaged."

You: "Let's make that your focus this week."

Final Reminder

You don't need more time. You need more intentional conversations.

Small, consistent coaching moments:

- Build confidence
- Improve competency
- Reduce your daily stress