

# The California Early Childhood Mentor Program



**A Quality Improvement Initiative**  
Working for Better Child Care Since 1988

**Ready or Not: Touching Base on  
Mentor Seminar Discussions 2009-2010**



**Mentor Seminar Facilitator Web Conferences  
November-December, 2009**

**LO**

Ask if anyone needs guidance on the CCCConfer features (muting, hand-raising, stepping away)

Ask all to mute their phones

## Our Goals

- **A Look at the Line-up:** Introduce & share
- **We Made it to First!** What We've Accomplished
- **Stealing Second:** Seminar Challenges
- **Two-Out Rally:** Successes!
- **Getting our Head in the Game:**  
Renewing the Purpose & the Passion
- **Sliding to Third:** Next Steps



### LO

- First we will share who we are and what are Seminars
- Some of you have come every step of the way with us as we have introduced this Seminar discussion process, learning along the way, but we would like to share the bigger picture of all that has been accomplished in the last six months.
- As we promised during the introductory web conferences earlier this semester, we are holding this series of webinars to learn from one another, refresh in our own minds the purpose and significance of these discussions, and determine what “mid-course corrections” are needed to move the Seminar discussions forward into recommendations that can be summarized to let teachers’ experience and wisdom make a difference far beyond their classrooms.
- We have heard from many of you about challenges you are facing in guiding Mentors through this process. We will “seed the field” with what we have heard and welcome your input and discussion
- We have also heard of rich discussions and excitement about this process. Share your stories with us!
- We have ideas about our respective roles and responsibilities as the year races on, but let’s brainstorm about the support you need to move your Seminars to the next step

## A Look at the Line-up

- **Who's here?**
  - Your college/region
  - Your role(s) with the Program
- **Mentor(s) who attended Mentor Institute?**
- **Describe your Seminar**
  - Size
  - Share highlights of your discussions so far

LO

## Made it to First Base!

- **June 5-6:** Introduced the process at the Mentor Institute
- **July 27:** Presented to Mentor Caucus Steering Committee monthly conference call
- **August 27- October 7:** 10 Web conferences, 46 Seminars represented
- **September 10:** Facilitator Guide first draft completed
- **September 11- present:** Office Hours every Friday
- **October 10:** Presented to CAEYC T3
- **November 3:** Ready or Not materials added to Seminar Facilitator Website Area
- **November 17:**  
Workshop accepted for April CAEYC!

**EMM**

# Stealing Second

## Seminar Challenges:

- Getting stuck in present-day
- Getting “Hooked on the Book”
- It’s all about ME
- Getting off track
- Getting it down on paper
- More?



## EMM

•Several Seminar Facilitators have shared with us that they are having trouble getting their Mentors to focus on the future. The issues of what children need and what teachers need to know can bring up deeply-held feelings about how much knowledge teachers bring to their craft and how little it is appreciated or compensated in the present.

•Both Seminar Facilitators and members of the Mentor Caucus Steering Committee tell us that Mentors are struggling to understand and generally dislike the academic language used in the book. Unfortunately, this struggle leads some Mentors to equate the Seminar discussions with the book, seeing it as a tedious assignment rather than an opportunity for empowerment.

•Some Facilitators tells us that their Mentors begin the discussion about what children need, but often end the discussion about what teachers need.

•The challenges facing ECE are large and many. Seminar Facilitators have shared with us that once the challenges of the book are introduced, they find it difficult to keep the Seminar discussion on track.

•Written feedback we have received leads us to believe that while “the grid” can be helpful for introducing the general format of discussion, it is less helpful as a note-taking guide. We recognize now that the cells of the grid address one or more topics each and in order to clearly convey the decisions, choices, and recommendations of each Seminar, we need to clarify what is needed so that, in the end, we can attempt to synthesize the decisions, choices, and recommendations of all 65 Seminars into a unified voice.

## Two-Out Rally

### Successes!

- Rich discussions
- Opportunities to reflect & consider “big picture” ideas
- Post-its!



### LO

•Many Facilitators have reported that introducing the challenges presented in Ready or Not has provoked rich discussions and provided Mentors with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of teachers’ knowledge and abilities for children.

•Susy Power Cobb, Mentor and Seminar Facilitator for the College of the Sequoias, shares:

“I was set on Nurturing Loving Care being the most important. However, as we discussed Family Support, my eyes were opened to a new way of thinking.”

•Mary Sypkens, Coordinator and Facilitator for Victor Valley shares:

“ . . . I passed out sticky notes and asked Mentors to write their comments on those and put them up on large pieces of paper with the different areas we were to discuss. Then, I read through those and invited individual Mentors to make further comments. This was helpful because we have such a large group of Mentors, and as always, there are some who just don’t get to speak up as much as others . . . This gave everyone a voice. It made it easier for me too, as I wasn’t trying to capture everything they were saying as we went along, and could type up the notes later.”

# Getting our Heads in the Game

It's not about the book, it's about the message

To “hear” Mentors’ voices, we need 3 things:

1. The power of numbers
2. Discussions on focus & in format
3. Notes that clearly capture each Seminar’s issues, decisions & insights



## EMM

We can't argue: the book is a “hard read.” We suggest that you use it as a reference, not as a discussion tool. We worked hard to create a discussion tool for the Seminars. It is critical to communicate to Mentors that many of the pressures they are under exist because teachers did not have input into the policies being made. This is their chance! Without going to Sacramento or having to deal with all of these frustrating people who don't “get it!” If Mentors can follow this step-by-step process rather than engage in the huge issues that lead them into boxed curriculum and DRDP excesses, THIS PROCESS can help future teachers and children.

In order to “hear” Mentors’ voices: we need three things:

1. For as many as possible, if not ALL Mentor Seminars to be discussing these issues—we need the power of numbers to make the strongest policy statement,
2. For the Mentor Seminar discussions to follow the general pattern set out in the initial web conferences held & the Seminar Facilitator Guide,
3. For the notes from these discussions to clearly capture each Seminar's issues, decisions, and insights

An analogy to consider is that we need the largest chorus possible to make teachers' voices heard, so we need everyone to be using the same song list and we need to be able to understand the words.

# Sliding to Third

## Next Steps for you as Facilitators

- Share the passion!
- Keep the discussion on track
- Share notes with us
- Bring your questions & ideas to Office Hours



## Next Steps for us at “Mentor Central”

- Expand “the grid” to assist in note-taking
- Write a 1-page “Why are we discussing Ready or Not?” for the Mentor website page
- Put all Ready or Not materials on the Mentor website page

LO

## We're your Bat Boy

- **Ongoing Web Conferences**
- **Facilitators Website Log-on Area**
  - [www.ecementor.org](http://www.ecementor.org), participants' logon, seminar facilitators, ID: seminarfacilitator password: cecmp
  - PowerPoint presentations for Web Conferences
  - Article by Ready or Not authors
  - Facilitator Guide
  - Frequently Asked Questions/Voiced Concerns
- **“Office Hours”**
  - Every Friday 1-2pm (last for 2009: December 18)
  - Call 1-888-886-3951, Passcode: 703826

EMM

# Thanks, Team!



## LO

- Thanks for participating!
- We'd really appreciate your sending us a brief email as soon as we all hang up and log off to let us know your thoughts about how this session went
- We will integrate your comments and suggestions into a revised Mentor Seminar Facilitator Guide and get that up on the website as soon as possible. We will email you to let you know when it's up.
- Any last questions, thoughts?
- To exit, hang up your phone and close out this screen

•THANKS!!