

Insights for New Directors: Esmirna Valencia

[Opening Title and Credits]

My name is Esmirna Valencia, and I'm the Executive Director for the Division of Children and Family Services in Riverside County Office of Education. One of the things I wish I would've been told when I was a new director was that I don't have to do everything, and I don't have to know everything. If someone would have told me that from the beginning, I think I would have avoided a few mistakes. But that's what I would tell new directors -- you don't have to do it all. You don't have to know it all.

The way I continue to feel fresh and enthusiastic about the work I do, is that it's a passion for me. I don't really see it as work, although I know it is. What makes it passionate for me is that I see lives transforming, every day. I see it in the children. I see it with the families. Even with the staff. And so, we know that we make a difference.

I also want to make sure that I take care of myself. so that I need to know how to lead myself -- to lead a very healthy lifestyle, to know when it's time to disconnect, and take time to replenish. So, I make sure that I do that, so that I can come back fresh, with new revived, or renewed energy, if you will.

But it's knowing that I make a difference. And everyone I work with, we make a difference in the lives that we touch every day.

[Closing credits]