



Child Engagement In Learning As An Indicator Of Program Quality

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WHAT IS THE CHILD DOING?

WHAT IS THE TEACHER DOING?

CHILD ENGAGEMENT TYPE AND DESCRIPTION					TEACHER ENGAGEMENT DESCRIPTION & BALANCE DECISION		
# OF CHILDREN	ACTIVE APPROPRIATE	PASSIVE APPROPRIATE	ACTIVE INAPPROPRIATE	PASSIVE INAPPROPRIATE	ACTIVE	PASSIVE	BALANCE DECISION
1	Child is actively engaged in appropriate learning / play				Teacher is actively supporting, participating in learning / play		Maintain support and participation with child as necessary or until child signals desire to learn/play independently (or give child opportunity to maintain or enhance independent engagement)
						Teacher is passively observing, listening, and supervising learning / play.	Continue to observe and listen. Gauge necessity of active support / participation. Consider degree and quality of child engagement in learning (e.g. if quality of engagement is high, step back)
		Child is passively observing, listening to other child(ren) actively engaged in appropriate learning / play			Teacher is actively supporting, participating in learning / play		Maintain active engagement with other children and allow individual child to remain passively engaged. If individual child moves closer in to activity, consider inviting, without requiring, child to join in.
						Teacher is passively observing, listening, and supervising learning / play.	Continue to observe and listen to determine quality of child's passive engagement. If child's passive engagement wanders or if child makes overt moves (or leans in) toward an activity or area, actively engage with child to guide them towards activity and/or other children.
			Child is actively engaged in inappropriate play or behavior		Teacher is actively supporting, participating in learning / play		"Carefully" guide child verbally (e.g. engage in brief rules discussion) and/or nonverbally (model) toward appropriate learning and play in the same activity. If ineffective, shift child and own engagement to different appropriate learning activity and/or play.
						Teacher is passively observing, listening, and supervising learning / play.	Pause (step back) and give child opportunity to shift to appropriate learning activity/play or behavior before actively engaging in guiding, modeling, redirecting.
				Child is passively engaged in inappropriate play or behavior	Teacher is actively supporting, participating in learning / play		If child's passive, inappropriate engagement poses a safety risk to the child or other children (e.g. child standing at bottom of slide), redirect (verbally) and/or model (nonverbally) appropriate learning or play.
						Teacher is passively observing, listening, and supervising learning / play.	If inappropriate behavior does not pose a safety risk to the child or other children, step back and give other children an opportunity to redirect (e.g. remind child of rules) and/or invite child into appropriate learning activity / play.



Intentional



Engagement



Interactions



Genuine

possessing the claimed or attributed character, quality, or origin; not counterfeit; authentic; real





Passionate

having, compelled by, or ruled by intense emotion or strong feeling





Focus

a central point, as of attraction,
attention, or activity





Inherent

existing in someone or something as a permanent and inseparable element, quality, or attribute





Radiation

the complete process in which energy is emitted by one body, transmitted through an intervening medium or space, and absorbed by another body



Intentional

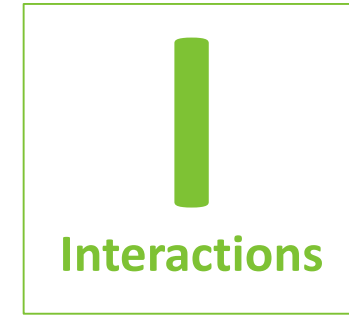
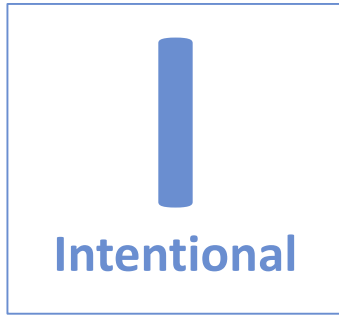
- Who
- Why
- Where
- When
- How



Interactions

- On
- To
- For
- Between
- With

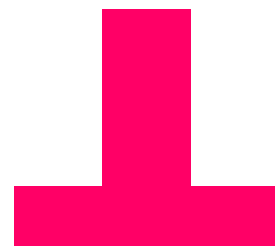




F i n d i n g

Who
Why
Where
When
How

●
Genuine
Passionate
Focus
Inherent
Radiation



B a l a n c e

On
To
For
Between
With



Variations in Children's Classroom Engagement Throughout a Day in Preschool: Relations to Classroom and Child Factors

Virginia E. Vitiello, Leslie M. Booren, Jason T. Downer & Amanda P. Williford
Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27 (2012)



- Engagement with Teacher
 - *Teacher / Child Communication*
- Engagement with Peers
 - *Sociability, Assertiveness and Communication*
- Engagement with Tasks
 - *Self Reliance*
- Negative Engagement
 - *Conflict with Teacher or Peers*

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Activity Settings and Context

- Teacher-Directed
- Free Choice
- Outdoor Time
- Routines & Transitions
- Meals & Snacks

Observed Engagement as an Indicator of Child Care Program Quality

Stephanie Mahler Ridley, R.A. McWilliam & Christie S. Oates
Early Education and Development, June 2010



“When attempting to assess children’s development we need to look at what children are doing in the present and observing engagement behavior affords us that opportunity. Measuring group engagement provides immediate and relevant feedback regarding the quality of the care environment.”

Levels of Engagement

R.A. McWilliam & Amy M. Casey

from *Engagement of Every Child in the Preschool Classroom* © 2008



- Persistence
- Symbolic Behavior
- Encoded Behavior
- Constructive Behavior
- Differentiated Behavior
- Focused Attention
- Undifferentiated Behavior
- Casual Attention
- Non-Engagement

Levels of Engagement

R.A. McWilliam & Amy M. Casey

from *Engagement of Every Child in the Preschool Classroom* © 2008



- **Persistence:** *problem solving, goal oriented*
- **Symbolic Behavior:** *pretending with objects, language*
- **Encoded Behavior:** *social, communicative, contextual*
- **Constructive Behavior:** *intentional manipulation*
- **Differentiated Behavior:** *different and participatory*
- **Focused Attention:** *selective attention to environment*
- **Undifferentiated Behavior:** *repetitive, simple*
- **Casual Attention:** *relaxed, wide ranging attention*
- **Non-Engagement:** *waiting*



Paths to High Quality Engagement

- **Create learning environments that support frequent and long periods of sophisticated engagement**
 - Classroom set-up including materials and centers
 - Outdoor environment including equipment and props
 - Schedule and types of activities
- **Balance intentionality and interactions to promote and sustain sophisticated engagement**
 - Plan, attune, and align with genuine child interests and passions
 - Observe, reflect, and be prepared to respond and interact flexibly (*intentionally* and *unintentionally*)
 - Follow the child's lead





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