

KEI Indicator #2
Self-Awareness

Student demonstrates awareness of self and one's own preferences.

Research

Self-awareness becomes evident in the first year of life for children. Infants show facial expressions when viewing themselves in mirrors which show the first stage of awareness of one's self. By the toddler stages of life children begin developing awareness of own interests and start showing preference about favorite toys, books, and activities. By ages 5 children develop the skills to differentiate between themselves and other peers. At this stage a child develops likes and dislikes based on confidence from previous experiences. Developing self-awareness for children is important especially when dealing with learning and attention expectations they will find in kindergarten. Children with a strong sense of self-awareness do a better job of keeping track of what they are doing in the classroom and they can monitor themselves during activities. This type of thinking and awareness helps facilitate a child's ability to judge their own performance and behaviors as well as their ability to appropriately respond to different social situations. Self-awareness facilitates the capacity to learn from one's mistakes, accept criticism, and listen to and understand others feelings. All of these skills are essential for learning.

Rochat, P. (2003). Five levels of self-awareness as they unfold early in life. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 12(4), 717-731. doi:10.1016/s1053-8100(03)00081-3

Pre-kindergarten Standard:

Influences of Personal Traits on Life

16.1.PK.B

Recognize that everyone has personal traits which guide behavior and choices.

The learner will:

- Choose materials and activities independently demonstrating confidence in own abilities

The learner may also:

- Know and state independent thoughts and feelings
- Show pride in own accomplishments
- Choose materials and activities based on preferences and personal interests

Effective Practices:

- Provide children with opportunities to make decisions and choices
- Ask children to share opinions about classroom activities and other experiences
- Graph children's likes and dislikes
- Share enthusiasm and describe child's abilities and preferences
- Display children's work at their eye level
- Ask children about their decisions (e.g. "Why did you decide to play with Legos today?")

ACTIVITIES

Activity:

Use a guiding question with a chart to give students opportunities to make choices about likes and dislikes. (The question might be: "What is your favorite ice cream? Chocolate, Vanilla, or Strawberry.") The question is displayed for students to see and students record their response on the chart. Identify and discuss results of the question.

Materials:

- Chart paper or chalk/white board
- Writing utensils

1. Provide multiple opportunities for students to express how and why they made their selection.

Activity Prompts:

Teacher will ask children, “Why did you make that choice? Can you please explain?”

Extension Activity:

1. Extend the question of the day activity by allowing children to “turn and talk” and share their partner’s opinion aloud.
2. Have students review the final chart to explore mathematical concepts of more and less.

Evidence Collection Strategies:

Observe students ability to make a choice and explain how and why they made their choice.

Home School Connection:

Encourage families to give their children opportunities to:

- Express their opinion.
- Make choices (clothing, meals, and activities).

Activity:

Teacher leads students in an activity called “Me Too”. This can be a quick morning activity or a transitional activity. The students stand on the perimeter of a rug or make a circle. The teacher starts by stating something that he or she likes and the students think about if it applies to them or not. If it applies to them, the students will then step into the middle of the rug or the circle. Then the students will then each have a turn to lead the activity by supplying the statement.

Activity Prompts:

We are going to discuss our summer vacation. If you did what I did step into the middle and say “Me Too”. For example, “I went to the beach”, “I went swimming”, the objective for the first round is to include large groups that will agree. For the second round discuss what you have done that would be unique to you and that most of the students have not done. (Example - “I went skydiving”.) The teacher would then call on students to lead the activity by giving a statement that has not already been used by another student.

Additional Support:

If a child is entering the circle on every statement the teacher would then pull them aside after the activity and discuss and encourage them to share what a few of their favorite things are. Guide them to only step in the circle next time if they really agree with the statement.

Evidence Collection Strategies:

Observe and record children’s ability to show self-awareness.

Home School Connection:

Have children try “Me Too” at home

Activity:

Roll & Tell (a twist on show and tell): Have the students sit in a circle and roll a ball across to each other. When they roll the ball to each other the students will share something about themselves. Teachers will provide prompts for students to focus on. (e.g., likes and dislikes - favorite foods or toys). Activity can be repeated on different days using different prompts.

Activity Prompts:

Teacher “When you receive the ball, share with the class your favorite food and when you are finished roll the ball to another classmate. Try to choose a different food that hasn’t been chosen by another classmate.”

Evidence Collection Strategies:

Observation of children's ability to select and share something that is unique to them.

Home School Connection:

- Have the students create an all about me poster to share about themselves.
- Give the child choices at home of things they like to do.

Provide the child with the opportunity to try new things.