

Indicator #26
Engagement, Attention and Persistence

Student attends to tasks, activities, projects and experiences for an extended period of time, even if challenging and despite interruptions.

Research

Children demonstrate engagement in the classroom through their curiosity, effort, and persistence. Research shows a significant correlation between high levels of engagement and improved achievement when being measured through observations and interviews with students and teachers. Children with low levels of engagement are at risk for disruptive behavior in the classroom. Kindergarten teachers must use an array of engagement strategies to help children stay on task. Each student has a different way of learning and engaging so the teacher must observe and teach children the skills necessary to engage and stay on task. Research also tells us that disengagement increases as children progress from elementary to middle and high school. As important as engagement is for student's success as learners, strategies for promoting engagement are not emphasized in the vast majority of schools.

Jablon, J. R., & Wilkinson, M. (2016, March). Using Engagement Strategies to Facilitate Children's Learning and Success. *Beyond the Journal*. Retrieved June 06, 2016, from <https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200603/JablonBTJ.pdf>

Engagement and Attention
AL.2.PK.A

Work toward completing a task, even if challenging, and despite interruptions.

The learner will:

- Persist in self-selected activity even in a distracting environment or when task becomes challenging

The learner may also:

- State when they are being distracted
- State when they are frustrated by a challenge
- Move away from distractions in order to complete a task

Effective Practices:

- Save children's work for later completion if transition to a new activity is necessary
- Show flexibility during transitions to allow children who are working on a project time to complete it
- Encourage children to complete tasks that are challenging
- Help children learn to identify when they become distracted
- Allow ample time for children to complete tasks and activities in which they are engaged
- Minimize interruptions and disruptions for children who are concentrating on a specific task or activity
- Redirect children back to the task at hand when they become distracted
- Explicitly teach children simple strategies for staying engaged (e.g. move away from a noise)

ACTIVITIES

Activity:

In the beginning of the school year, the teacher will set-up exploration stations in preparation for math stations or literacy centers. At these stations, students will have the opportunity to explore math or literacy manipulatives. While the students are exploring, the teacher will observe which students are actively engaged. Examples of manipulatives are tangrams, pattern blocks, magnetic letters, unifix cubes, etc.

You can also add a self-help station to the above. Dolls with zippers, buttons, snaps or dressing boards. Watch to see how persistent the children are or do they give up easily.

Activity Prompts:

When students are off task, the teacher can prompt or re-direct using positive reinforcement.

Extension Activity:

- a) The teacher can start the year off using a timer/bell system in five-minute intervals to build up stamina.

Evidence Collection Strategies:

- The teacher observes and documents students' ability to stay on task and persist.

Home School Connection:

- Encourage families to engage their child in activities that require persistence and/or teamwork.
 - ✓ Board games
 - ✓ Puzzles with many pieces that may not be completed in one attempt
 - ✓ Small household chores
 - ✓ Legos
 - ✓ TV/Technology breaks

Activity:

The teacher provides experiences that require students to work on a task for extended periods of time until completion. For example, a modeled writing lesson may take several days to complete with the group. The teacher will continue to explain that students can revisit the task until it is complete.

Evidence Collection Strategies:

- Teachers will observe and document students' ability to continue with task despite frustrations or interruptions.

Extension Activity:

During one-on-one teacher conferencing, the teacher encourages students to revisit a piece of work to make it better. Students may add details to their writing, correct grammar or punctuation, or fix spelling errors.

Home School Connection:

Encourage families to engage their child in activities that require persistence and/or teamwork.

- Board games
- Puzzles with many pieces that may not be completed in one attempt
- Small household chores