

## 1

## Leadership

Seating is in groups of three or four.

The Guide conveys a warm message of invitation covering four topics in this order:

**Commonality:** we share a common background now that we have come this far in the Modules. We have studied positives, playfulness, and talking informatively, essential tools in facilitating learning.

**Possibility:** we now endeavor to use ourselves to build the essential dispositions of learners. Dispositions are those attitudes and ways of thinking about oneself that characterize eager learners. They want to get into new things, do positive things with each other, and keep working until they finish. An ability to influence dispositions to learn is a mark of the greatest teachers.

**Opportunity** this is our chance to study these dispositions together, become keenly aware of them, and make a difference for a child or group of children.

**Commitment** I invite you all, one more time, to do the work that enables us to contribute to each other,

## Outline

**OPENING** Sharing time to find out who is here, where they work, something new that has happened to them recently.

*This Module has two investigations for each of the three concepts in the title. The first of each pair is designed to help the group construct together an idea of what the idea means, the second to see it in action with children.*

*Just as the word “dog” can call up a wide range of experiences, emotions, and knowledge, the concepts we are studying have depth beyond the simple word.*

*Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance are the key dispositions to learning, more essential, really, than the reciting the alphabet or knowing how to count. Each child’s life is changed when they live every moment enabled to take initiative, behave cooperatively, and persevere.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****1. Concept of Initiative**

*Each week the Guide reads the assignment sheet aloud as the participants follow along, pausing to elaborate as necessary.*

*A very short, approximately one minute, video of children playing without an adult present can be helpful for people to find examples of initiated actions, such as when a child enters an area and starts to play or starts talking to another child.*

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

**1. Concept of Initiative****INDIVIDUAL RECORD**

Each participant fills out the top information portion and hands it back to the Guide.

A short video excerpt of children playing together without an adult present can be helpful.

## 2

### Leadership

The Guide moves from group to group to listen without joining in. The Guide's nearby listening is not to control or make sure people are on topic, but to keep knowledgeable of what is happening. Teachers need time to talk and freedom to talk about what they want to talk about.

### Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share what you were able to see this boy and girl choose to do.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION** 10 minutes

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What did you notice about initiative?**

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

### ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME

#### 2. Initiative Study

*A pause at the end of the first paragraph of the Assignment can allow each person to list the times of the day in their work with children.*

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

### Preparation

Handouts:

#### 2. Initiative Study

A pack of small size sticky notes for each person.

## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of **NOTICING INITIATIVE** generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

I noticed a quiet child who always waited for me to start things. I want her to have more initiative when she plays. I am concerned about her.

I saw lots of different kinds of initiative. Children approach things in different ways.

I saw a group of close friends constantly initiating with each other, oblivious to everyone else and a boy who harasses others until some group lets him play.

It seems the more active, highly initiating children expand and energize the play of others.

I'd like to talk about aggressive children. They initiate a lot, but not necessarily in socially acceptable ways.

I enjoy watching energetic, highly initiating children.

I have a child who turns away, says no to others, and refused to do what others suggest. Is this initiative? It surely seems to be done on purpose.

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Leadership

Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share your sorted categories of initiative.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION** 10 minutes

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What categories of initiative do we have?**

**What are the key ideas you want to remember about initiative?**

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME**

**3. Concept of Cooperation**

*After reading the problem, participants mark the examples they think are actions for mutual benefit and share their choices with each other.*

*The items were chosen to show subtleties of cooperative acts. All can be thought of as cooperation.*

*As usual, participants will be making their own decisions in the context of the children they know.*

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

Preparation

Handouts:

**3. Concept of Cooperation**

'Initiative' construction from last session

## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of **CATEGORIES OF INITIATIVE** generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

Doing something that is

- a unique/inventive use
- a divergence from the norm
- self monitoring and taking responsibility for one's own needs
- an exploration
- a way to make a transition into something new
- a celebration of an event
- an instance of imagination at work that is unforgettable.

From doing this study...

- I got a different perspective on what children are doing.
- Now I look at the children more positively.
- I see adults actually stopping kinds of initiative that I value now.
- I see, too, how I have created dependence in children before.

## 4

## Leadership

Central activity is to construct an understanding of the combined ideas of

- 1) mutuality (actions for mutual benefit in the immediate situation) and
- 2) altruism (kind actions freely given, selflessly, without regard to what comes in return which might result in future kindnesses coming back or flowing on)

If we can incorporate both ideas in one word, that would help us support actions, which help children work together and which help the community at large treat each other well.

"Cooperation" is one word we can use to incorporate these ideas.

## Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share your collection of cooperative acts and hear those of others.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION** 10 minutes

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What is cooperation? What do we mean by that word?**

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****4. Cooperation Study**

*The assignment sheet offers four ways to keep records, with increasing information gathered on each. Participants only have to choose one system, whatever seems workable to them.*

*The essential differences are that System A is a counting method and the others offer ways to record duration. Any system the participants want to devise is acceptable as long as it causes them to reflect upon each day for each child.*

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

**4. Cooperation Study**

Initiative definition created last session.

## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of a **DEFINITION OF COOPERATION** generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

When we use the word “cooperation” we don’t mean the children are conforming or doing what adults want.

When we use the word “cooperation” we mean children:

Work together with others towards a common end or goal, jointly causing something to happen.

Talk together to solve a problem or discuss what to do.

Act out of concern for others by offering help, making allowances for others, doing things for others, and being inclusive of others,

Adjust their own actions to accommodate the actions of others, as in turn taking or doing what others suggest

And one can see enjoyment in acting together, the pleasure derives from the presence of other children.

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## Leadership

Some of the key ideas that participants may have discovered:

- Cooperation increases with age.
- Younger children are more defensive and defiant.
- When children approach six years old there appears to be an expectation of cooperation.
- Children who are not included in cooperative activity do things that indicate they may be anxious or stressed.

The discussion may uncover an understanding of a window for developing the desire and ability to cooperate with others.

They may see how conflicts between young children are opportunities for learning. Those children that work through those “traumas” learn about being cooperative.

## Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share your chart of cooperative actions.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION** 10 minutes

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What do the cooperation data say?**

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****5. Concept of Perseverance**

*The Guide can illustrate how to keep track of a sequence of short time segments using a stopwatch or a clock with a second hand. These times are in minutes and seconds:*

Start time: 10:25 a.m.

0:15, 0:43, 0:12, 1:45, 3:15, 0:39, 2:11

Stop time: 10:45 a.m.

*The total elapsed time (20 minutes in the example) can be used for computing percent of time engaged. Each of the short “focused engagement” times can be used to count the number of activity changes (7 in the example), added together to determine total engaged time (9 minutes), and divided by total time to compute the percentage of time involved ( $9 \div 20 = 45\%$ ).*

*This level of precision and calculation is not required for this investigation. The illustration provides information for those who are interested in a more complete mathematical description of the child's engagement. The participants need only record times as best as they can and answer the questions on the assignment sheet.*

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

**5. Concept of Perseverance**

"Definition of Cooperation" generated last time.



## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of **OBSERVING COOPERATION** generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

### Observations:

The data showed me who can really cooperate and who I need to work with more.

Some children cooperate with only one friend.

Children who did not get marked placed themselves away from situations where cooperation could occur, possibly to avoid situations that could demand of themselves that they cooperate.

School is a place that honors all cultures and is the place for us all to come together to work as a team to benefit our lives and each person's future.

### Question:

If children were left alone, would they naturally see cooperation as beneficial, or would they become aggressive and coercive?

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## Leadership

Once people have timed children in their play they become more aware of signs of the ending of engagement. They may discover that the ending of the time of engagement is the opportune moment to extend activity.

Strategies for extending engagement also are interesting to discuss. Often the same things we do to make it fun for toddlers to continue to play can be used to help older children remain engaged also.

## Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share two things: the full chart of cooperative actions and your data on engagement times of an active child.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What can we do to extend time of engagement?**

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****6. Perseverance Study**

This one may take some work to put together. Some ideas are offered. There may be other ways to provide a difficult, long-duration, job for a child to do.

Emphasize that the task here is to carefully watch a child struggle and NOT help. The time between when the child first is having trouble and giving up or the time between first having trouble and succeeding is what we are studying. The participant's job is to let what happens simply happen. The tendency we have is to step in and help, but this is not the time for that.

We want everyone to bring back at least one detailed story of a tough struggle for a child including what happened and specific measures of how long the struggle time lasted. The stories of several children would be even better, if possible.

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

**6. Perseverance Study**

"Observing Cooperation" from last session.

## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of a **EXTENDING ENGAGEMENT** generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

We can provide materials based upon looking at the children's interests.

If I play with the children when materials are new, the next day they can take the initiative themselves and be more creative.

I can limit distractions, such as reducing the group size.

Having enough materials is important, so when a new child joins, the first child doesn't have to lose or give up space.

Take time to observe closely. Children are different. You can get more information if you watch carefully.

Model excitement and enthusiasm and then respond warmly afterward.

Be flexible with the schedule to allow enough time to become engaged.

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## Leadership

This session reviews the entire Module, constructing together a definition of the three essential dispositions of learners. These are examples of the ideas in each cluster that may be raised by the group.

These are healthy qualities for being successful in life.

We can see them better so we can help them develop.

These provide children with a sense of individuality and independence.

Showing an example of a previous Learning Story, especially one with a parent response, can be helpful in developing standards of quality, as well as help define what “meaning” and “opportunities and possibilities” looks like.

## Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share what children did when confronted with difficulties.

*This is a time to mark the individual record of the participants who completed the task as assigned.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

*On a board or large sheet of paper compile the group's ideas about this question:*

**What can we generalize about children's struggles?**

**SUMMARY**

*Under three columns on the board or three sheets of paper headed by the words Initiative, Cooperation and Perseverance the group summarizes the concepts we have been studying in this Module, creating lists such as these on the next page.*

*This compilation is another addition to each participant's portfolio.*

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****7. Project of Understanding**

*The participants may want to discuss each component of the Learning Story. Time will be available in the next session for a more complete discussion after participants have had a chance to work on it some. For now the focus is upon choosing a child to watch closely.*

Most people choose a child who is passive, isolate, or gives up easily.

If you can, others here would love to see photos next time.

**SHARE** You have time now to talk about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

**7. Project of Understanding**

‘Extending Engagement’ construction from last session

## Session Guide

## D4 — Attending to Initiative, Cooperation, and Perseverance

Example of lists generated by one group. Every group is different and constructs understanding uniquely. No group will create an identical list.

What we can generalize about children's struggles:

Children need latitude and options to look for other solutions; adults usually offer only one way.

We have to stand back and recognize that the process has as much value as the outcome.

Children have different standards about when something is done.

Initiative

Starting something on one's own

Offering ideas

Taking on problems

Stepping into difficult situations

Asking others

Cooperation

Two or more people accomplishing something together

Helping out another

Joining others in an activity

Encouraging others

Getting things for others

Following others suggestions

Perseverance

Getting a hard or long thing done

Sticking with it to the end, even when emotional

Coming back after a rest to try again

Saying, "I'll try this later."

Saving work to come back to

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## Leadership

The intent is to let the groups help each other focus the project on a particular child. The group now becomes an audience for telling the story to, so each person can gather more ideas.

The guide's role is to try to listen to everyone and ensure that every participant is on track. When helping, the role is to offer alternatives as choices, rather like a menu at a restaurant. The guest can select the meal of his choice from a range of selections. Offering several (four or five) alternate choices avoids the pitfall of giving advice or telling participants what to do.

Some participants may need reflective listening, paraphrasing, and examples to draw out from them a clearer distinction of what is going on.

The difficult distinction for some people is that one is *waiting and watching closely*, not cueing, asking or offering. The idea is to be behind the child, not in front. The child acts, and the story honors the child's cooperation with others or perseverance.

Ideally the stories should appear simple and elegant. When the background is white, the text printed neatly or computer printed, with no colors or fancy additions, the message is conveyed that the story is about the child, not the adult's cleverness. The story should speak for itself.

## Outline

**SHARE** You have time now to share about your project.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME**

*Project of Understanding is due.*

*The most effective Learning Stories contain photos, descriptions, and the exact words of the children, so a tape-recorder or video recorder is a valuable resource.*

This Learning Story has a particular format: it tells a story beginning with initiative, and it adds two additional sections. The first, "What does it mean?" asks for a deeper and wider perspective about the events. The final section, "Opportunities and Possibilities", conveys how teachers or parents can offer additional experiences in the near future and anticipate potential developments over time.

In the next session you have an opportunity to share with others what you are working on. It may help to hear their experience.

This is what is required to complete the Module. You show that (1) you can create a Learning Story beginning with child's initiative, (2) you can observe a child's cooperation or perseverance, (3) you can convey the meaning, opportunity and possibility of those events, and (4) you can share the story with the child, family and us.

**SHARE** You have time now to talk to each other about doing this.

## Preparation

Handouts:

"Defining Initiative, Cooperation and Perseverance."

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## Leadership

The role of the Guide is to ensure that participants meet the standards of performance in order to complete the Module.

Projects must meet all four criteria:

- ☐ Create a Learning Story
- ☐ Be about cooperation or perseverance
- ☐ Clearly conveys what it means as well as the opportunities and possibilities it points toward
- ☐ Shared with this group, the child, and family members.

Clap and cheer.

## Outline

**PRESENTATIONS OF PROJECTS**

*On the **INDIVIDUAL RECORD FORM** is a space to briefly describe each person's project and check off that it meets the criteria for performance.*

*Projects that may not be complete can be shared in the next session.*

**SUMMARY**

What opens up for you from seeing everyone's work?

Can you imagine what the world would be like if every child had parents and teachers who really understood this?

**ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME****8. Expression of Understanding**

You know how delightful the different expressions are when each of us uses his or her own way to convey understanding.

**SHARE** You have time now to talk to each other about your Expression of Understanding.

## Preparation

Handout:

**8. Expression of Understanding**

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Leadership

This is the final celebration that marks the transition into becoming an early childhood educator.

Clap and Cheer.

When signed and dated, with all information complete the **INDIVIDUAL RECORD FORM** becomes the certificate of completion and certifies 30 hours of education (10 in session time and 20 equivalent hours on-the-job).

Outline

**PRESENTATIONS**

- (1) Projects that were not ready last time.
- (2) Expressions of Understanding.

*On the **INDIVIDUAL RECORD FORM** is a space to briefly describe each person's Expression of Understanding and check off that it was shared with the group.*

**SUMMARY**

Congratulations on completing the final step in Connecting to Children.

*You may want to read to the group the introductory page at the front of this Guide with the title **CONNECTING TO CHILDREN**.*

You now know what it is like to enter the profession of early childhood educator. You have joined the ranks of those adults who are acting, not from habit, but from a study of what is best for each child, the group of children, and our mutual welfare.

I invite you to spend the time to compile all your work in all of the Modules. This is a significant accomplishment in your life and in the lives of children.

Preparation