Finding the Fuel for Learning:
The Neurochemistry of Social Engagement (Part 1 & 2)

SEE-KS
Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills

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Presented by Emily Rubin
For freely accessible tools:
https://tinyurl.com/SEE-KSformsSY25

Finding the Fuel for Learning:
The Neurochemistry of Social Engagement (Part 1 & 2)

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In today's session, we will freely accessible strategies and tools for:

- ☑ **measuring learner engagement** in standards-based instruction and natural classroom routines, and
- ☑ **identifying instructional strategies** to increase engagement at *universal* and higher tiers of support.

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A Note about Identify-Affirming Language

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Identity First Language

Person First Language

image credit:

Do you need to Level UP or Level DOWN to create an energy match?

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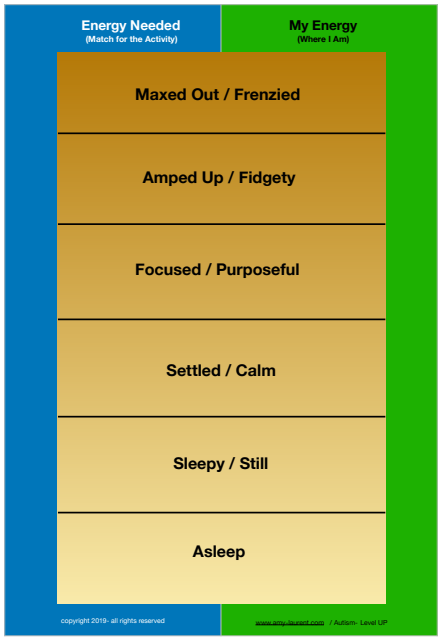

Reflection Time

How "many" levels are between where your Energy is and the Energy match for the activity?

For freely accessible tools, visit:
https://autismlevelup.com

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Our agenda and your tool for self-regulation…

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9:00 - 11:45am P. 1 of 2 - *"The Why"* *- Current developments in social neuroscience - "why" social emotional engagement is a powerful "fuel" for learning.*

A freely-accessible tool for measuring engagement will be shared.

11:45 - 1:15 Lunch, Exhibits, & Networking

1:15 - 4:00pm P. 2 of 3 - *"The What"* *- Fostering social emotional engagement within a universal design for learning framework – "what" instructional strategies are designed to enhance learner investment, independence, and initiation.*

A freely-accessible tool for enhancing engagement will be shared with participants.

The "Why" of Social Emotional Engagement

Engagement & Relationships = Learning

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- While our focus is often on critical outcomes, such as cognitive and academic milestones, we need to understand what enables a "readiness to learn."
- We must understand why some learners may or may not be compelled to *actively engage* in instruction.
- Let's talk a bit more about the neurochemistry of learning…

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What "sparks the drive" for learning?

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What "sparks the drive" for learning?

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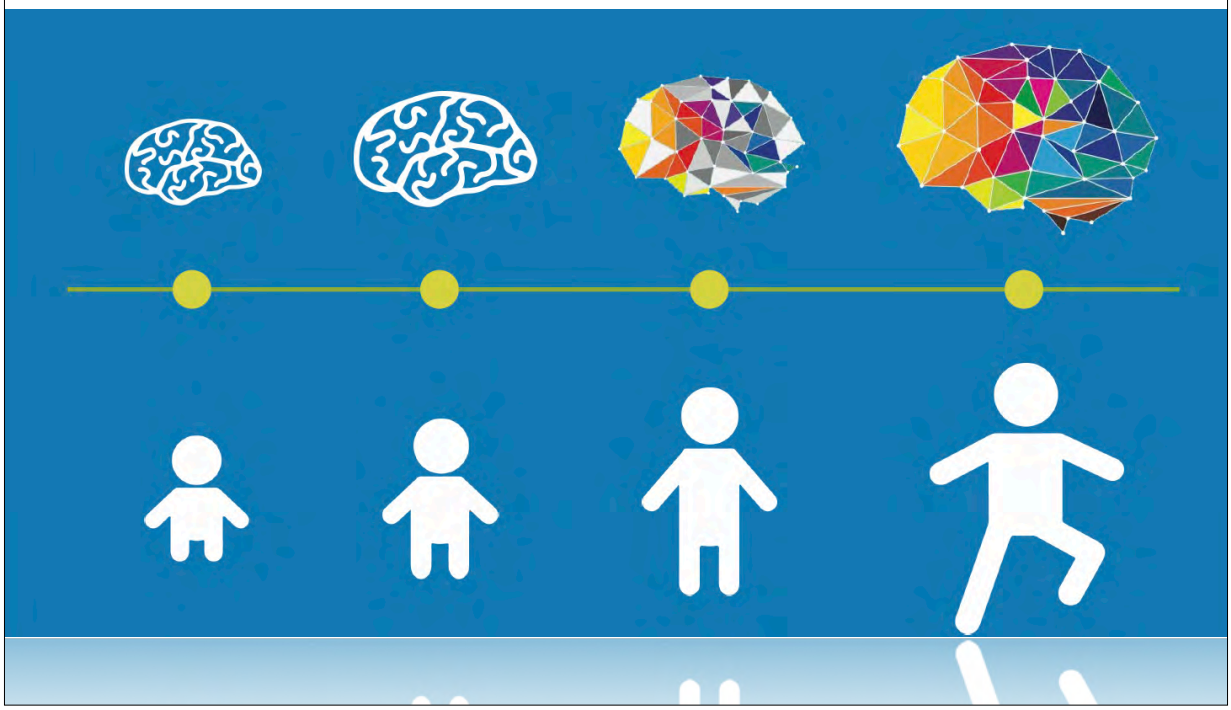

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What is the fuel for learning?

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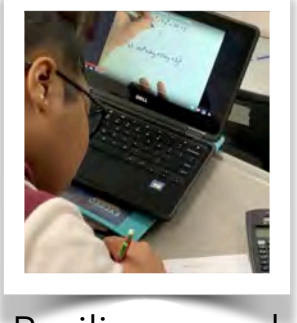
We are "brain architects" who can "fuel" the brain

Social Safety & Connection

Language Competency



Resilience and Self-Management

oxytocin, opioids, and dopamine

oxytocin, opioids, and dopamine

Chevalier, et. al. (2012). ***The social motivation theory of autism.*** Trends in Cognitive Sciences., Vol. 16, No. 4

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Neurodivergent learners = Different neurochemistry

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Autistic individuals tend to show less neural sensitivity to social stimuli (Elsabbagh, et al., 2012).

Neurodevelopmental differences contribute to preferential attention for nonsocial stimuli, such as objects and patterns, along with less orientation to social engagement (Klin, Lin, Gorrindo, Ramsay & Jones, 2009).

Neurodivergent learners = Different neurochemistry

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Acquisition of skills related to non-social stimuli may advance more rapidly than orienting to people, initiating with people, using language to engage with people, and predicting what others are thinking.

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Neurodivergent learners = Different neurochemistry

- Neurodivergent learners may also process speech sounds differently. While some children hear speech and show preferential attention to this stimuli, neurodivergent learners may just hear sounds.
- This makes the intentions of individual words more ambiguous.

Neurodivergent learners = Wired differently

- As children with differences in these areas mature and "brain architecture is formed," neuroimaging has shown that autistic children and learners with social and emotional learning differences tend to process social stimuli in regions typically used to process images and sounds that are non-social.
- This makes NTs less predictable in all the ways. This contributes to autistic individuals' thought processes related to predictions of actions, intentions, and emotions being more intellectualized.

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The neurology of social engagement

A child with learning bias for social stimuli

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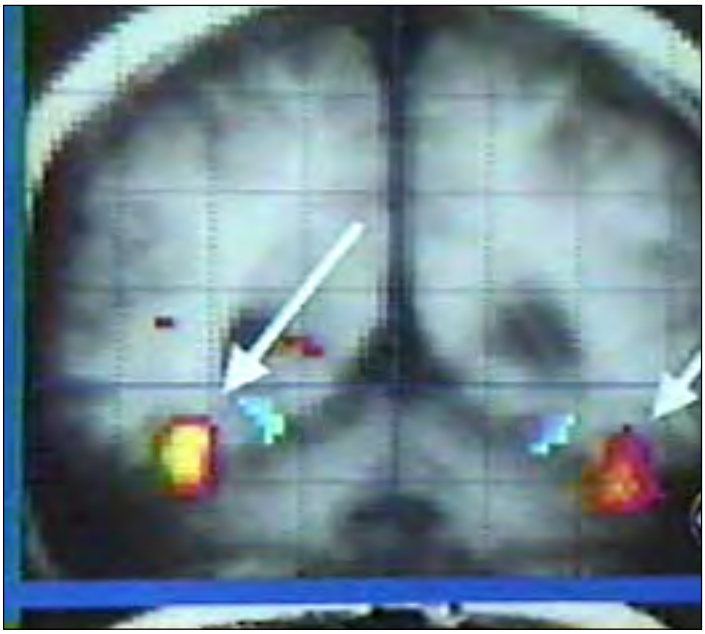

Shultz, et. al. (2000, April). Archives in General Psychiatry, Vol. 57, 331 – 340.

The neurology of social engagement

A neurodivergent learner

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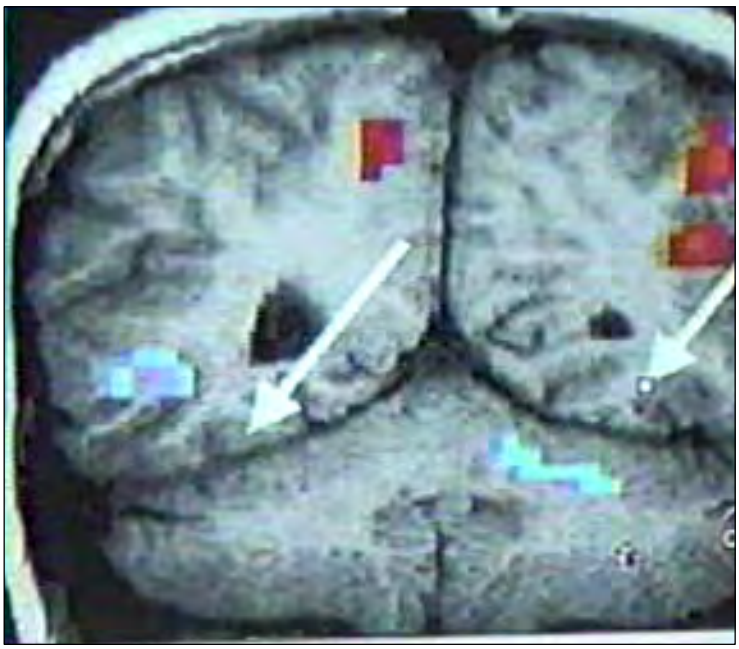

Shultz, et. al. (2000, April). Archives in General Psychiatry, Vol. 57, 331 – 340.

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What is the impact of neurodivergent learning styles?

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Two key take aways

1) Social stimuli needs to be desirable

2) Social stimuli needs to be predictable

Embedding learning standards in the context of meaningful activities.

How do we know our learners are fueled for learning?

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We can measure a learners' social engagement, so we know when our environment matches our learners' needs.

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Social Engagement Ladder

Location: Date:

Activity: Time of Day:

Educator(s): Data Collector(s):

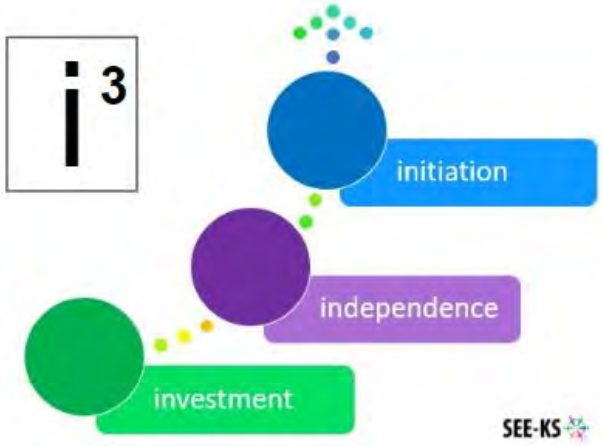
Fully Engaged (4)
Frequent spontaneous initiation, consistent independent engagement with materials, frequent expression of positive emotional investment

Mostly Engaged (3)
Occasional spontaneous initiation, occasional independent engagement with materials, occasional expression of positive emotional investment

Partially Engaged (2)
Responsive or non-spontaneous initiation, compliant with directions, seldom shares expression of positive emotional investment

Emerging/Fleeting (1)
Intermittently responsive without initiation, dependent on direction, minimal expression of positive emotional investment

No Focus (0)
Non-responsive, not engaging with targeted materials, and not sharing any emotion or expression, possibly out of the room



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We need to see our learner's <u>investment</u>

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Our learners need to...

- **"be hooked"** in a given activity (showing interest, positive emotion and shared attention), and

- **sustain that attention** within a given activity (showing persistence, resilience, and re-engagement).

We need to see our learner's <u>independence</u>

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Our learners need to...

- **"know what to do"** in a given activity (understanding what's next, making transitions, and adjusting to the shared expectations of one's interactive partners), and

- **understand what is being taught** in a given activity (showing an understanding of the concepts we are teaching).

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When we see engagement, our students are understanding what is to do…..

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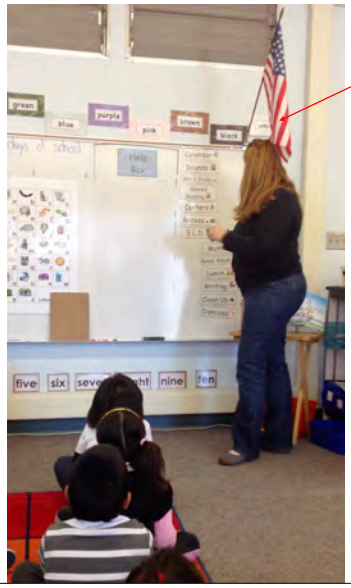
…by providing visuals for the sequence & the steps within activities



What do we get to do today?

What do we get to do right now?

We need to see our learner's initiation

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Our learners need to…

- **"show what they know"** in a given activity (by sending messages, either verbally or nonverbally), and

- **share their ideas with a range of partners** (both peers and teachers)**.**

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SEE-KS Social Engagement Ladder
Completed Sample

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So, our engagement data might look like this with an average of 2.9.

This lesson brought the "fuel" for learning!

SEE-KS Social Engagement Ladder
Completed Sample

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Our engagement data might look like this with an average of 1.9.

There are opportunities here to enhance engagement.

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To access forms and materials

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For freely accessible tools and additional information, visit: https://tinyurl.com/SEE-KSformsSY25

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<u>What</u> enhances engagement?

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Our Goal – *Social Engagement!*

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Next…let's consider when our students are above a "2."

***What** is happening?*

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Social Engagement Ladder

Location:	Date:
Activity:	Time of Day:
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Finding the "Fuel" for Learning through
a Universal Design for Learning

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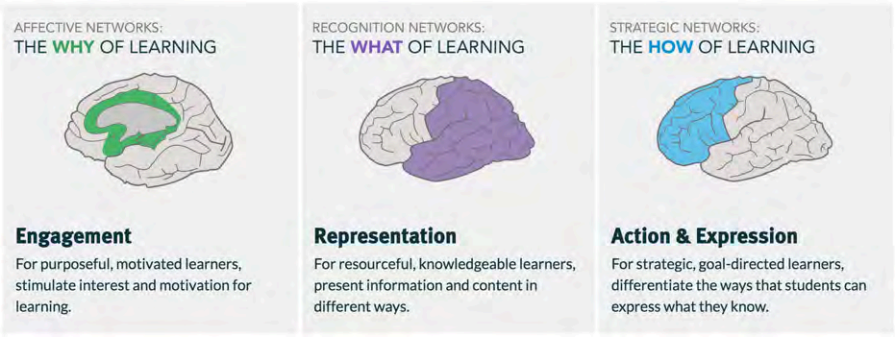
Section A: Engage INVESTMENT

Section B: Access INDEPENDENCE

Section C: Express INITIATION



To learn more: www.cast.org

The **SEE-KS Quick Reference** provides a reference to UDL strategies to enhance engagement

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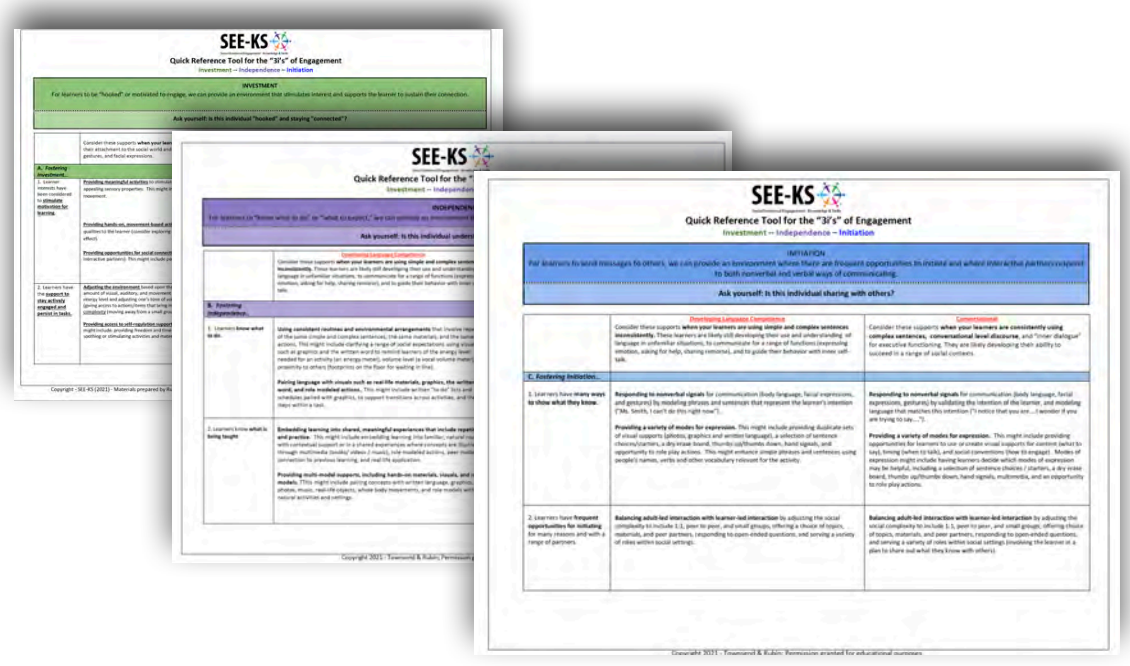

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The **SEE-KS Quick Reference:**

Provides universal instruction designed for language levels

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Before Words

Emerging Language

Developing Language

Conversational

Enhancing INVESTMENT

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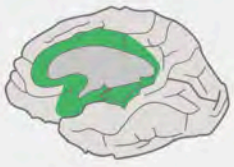
Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills

Section A: Engage INVESTMENT

AFFECTIVE NETWORKS:
THE **WHY** OF LEARNING



Engagement

For purposeful, motivated learners, stimulate interest and motivation for learning.

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Enhancing INVESTMENT

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Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills

Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills (SEE-KS)
Essential Universal Design for Learning Supports – Mentorship Form *(Version 9/30/2021)*

① **Location:** **Date:**
Mentee(s): **Mentor / Observer(s):**

② **Activity:** *What was the mentee hoping the child/children would do?*	③ **What is working** (mentee's perspective)	④ **Opportunity to enhance:** **Investment / Independence / Initiation** (circle one that the mentee (s) wishes to explore)
		⑤ **Possible Next Steps** (generated during collaborative discussion)
A. Investment can be enhanced when the…	③ **What is working** (mentor's observation)	
1. Child / Children's interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning and interacting.** 2. Child/Children have the **support to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks**		
B. Independence can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children **know what to do.** 2. Child/Children **understand what is being taught.**		
C. Initiation can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children have **different options for showing what they know and what to say.** 2. Child/Children have **frequent opportunities for initiating in everyday activities.**		

⑥ **Action Plan for Next Step(s):** SEE-KS Mentorship Steps: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

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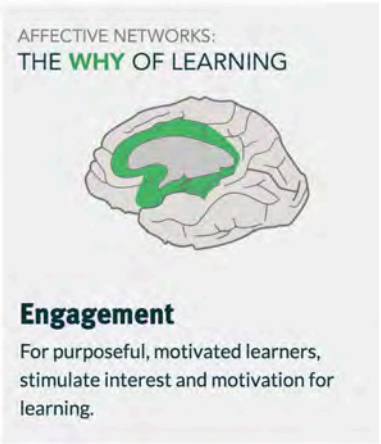
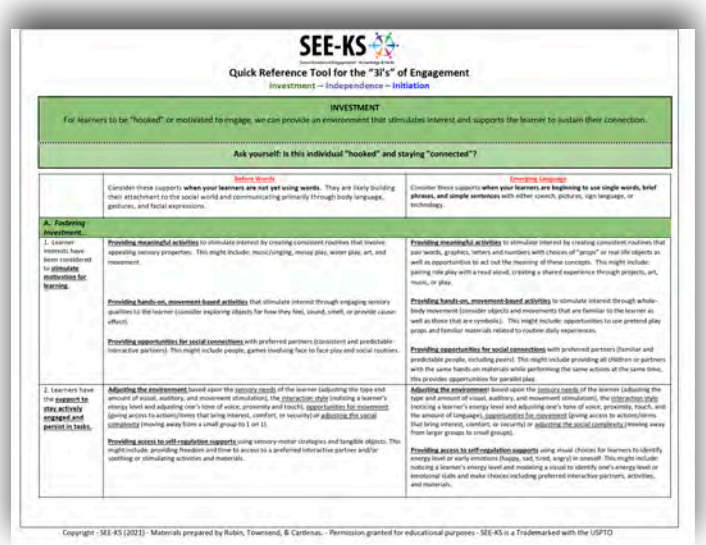
Section A: Engage INVESTMENT

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Quick Reference Tool for the "3I's" of Engagement
Investment → Independence → Initiation

INVESTMENT
For learners to be "hooked" or motivated to engage, we can provide an environment that stimulates interest and supports the learner to sustain their connection.

Ask yourself: Is this individual "hooked" and staying "connected"?

	Before Words	Emerging Language
	Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
A. Fostering Investment…		
1. Learner interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning.**	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that involve appealing sensory properties. This might include: music/singing, messy play, water play, art, and movement. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** that stimulate interest through engaging sensory qualities to the learner (consider exploring objects for how they feel, sound, smell, or provide cause-effect). **Providing opportunities for social connections** with preferred partners (consistent and predictable interactive partners). This might include people, games involving face to face play and social routines.	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that pair words, graphics, letters and numbers with choices of "props" or real life objects as well as opportunities to act out the meaning of these concepts. This might include: pairing role play with a read aloud, creating a shared experience through projects, art, music, or play. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** to stimulate interest through whole-body movement (consider objects and movements that are familiar to the learner as well as those that are symbolic). This might include: opportunities to use pretend play props and familiar materials related to routine daily experiences. **Providing opportunities for social connections** with preferred partners (familiar and predictable people, including peers). This might include providing all children or partners with the same hands-on materials while performing the same actions at the same time, this provides opportunities for parallel play.
2. Learners have the **support to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks.**	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity and touch), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from a small group to 1 on 1). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** using sensory-motor strategies and tangible objects. This might include: providing freedom and time to access to a preferred interactive partner and/or soothing or stimulating activities and materials.	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity, touch, and the amount of language), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from larger groups to small groups). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** using visual choices for learners to identify energy level or early emotions (happy, sad, tired, angry) in oneself. This might include: noticing a learner's energy level and modeling a visual to identify one's energy level or emotional state and make choices including preferred interactive partners, activities, and materials.

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Enhancing INVESTMENT…*before words*

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….we foster investment with hands-on materials, messy play and exploration with different textures (e.g., art, building, cooking, music, etc.)

Enhancing INVESTMENT…*emerging language*

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Enhancing INVESTMENT…*developing language*

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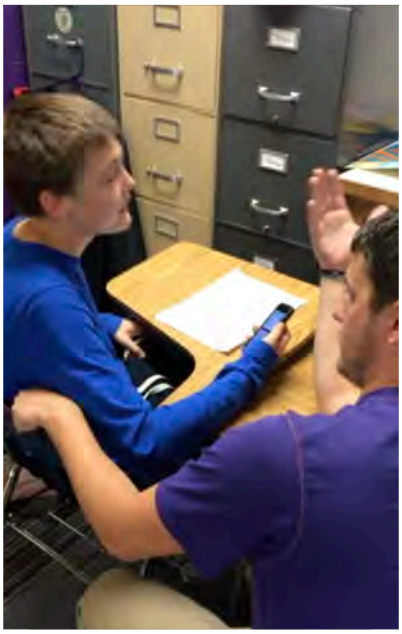
….we foster investment by embedding math standards in meaningful application.



Enhancing INVESTMENT…*conversational*

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….we foster investment in our writing lessons by embedding role-play and hands-on materials.

Crime Scene Investigation
Who assassinated
Abraham Lincoln?

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Enhancing INVESTMENT…*conversational*

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The Classroom Regulator

www.autismlevelup.com

Sensory System	Tools and Strategies	How it changes my energy...			How much I like it...		
		Soothing	Neutral	Alerting	Yuck	Okay	Awesome
Physical Location	front of room						
	back of room						
	middle of room						
	near window						
	near door						
	cubby / independent work station						
	assigned seating						
	choose your own seat						
Subject	math						
	science						
	English						
	social studies / history						
	art						
	physical education						
	music						
	foreign language						
Ways to Demonstrate Learning	reading (silent)						
	teacher calling on me unexpectedly						
	volunteering answers						
	writing in the moment / showing						
	hand signals						
	turning in assignments						
Location	classroom						
	cafeteria						
	gymnasium						
	library						
	bathroom						

Enhancing INDEPENDENCE

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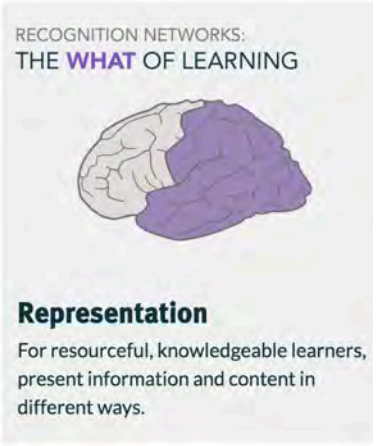
Section B: Access INDEPENDENCE



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Enhancing INDEPENDENCE

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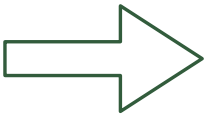

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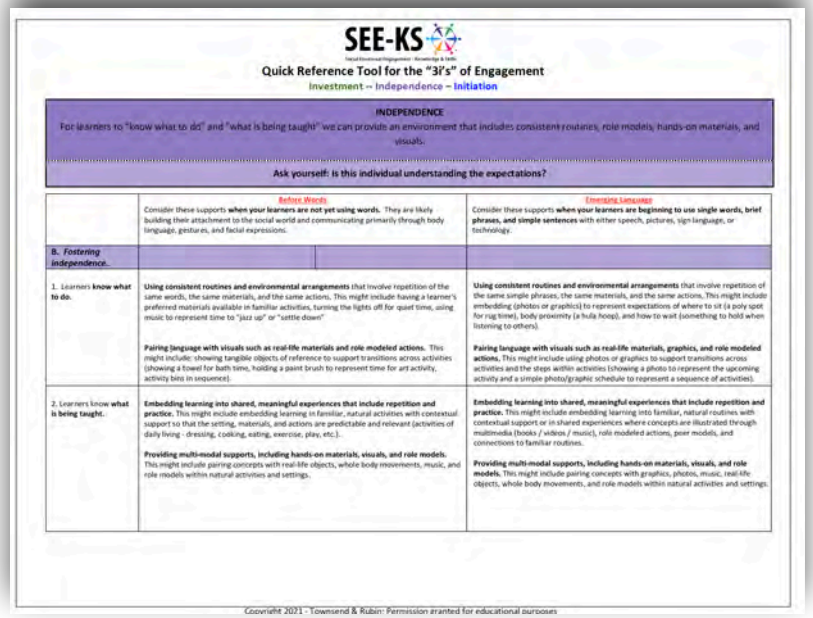
Section B: Access INDEPENDENCE

RECOGNITION NETWORKS:
THE **WHAT** OF LEARNING

Representation
For resourceful, knowledgeable learners, present information and content in different ways.



SEE-KS
Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement
Investment ↔ Independence ↔ Initiation

INDEPENDENCE
For learners to "know what to do" and "what is being taught" we can provide an environment that includes consistent routines, role models, hands-on materials, and visuals.

Ask yourself: is this individual understanding the expectations?

	Before Words: Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	Emerging Language: Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
B. Fostering independence…		
1. Learners **know what to do.**	**Using consistent routines and environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same words, the same materials, and the same actions. This might include having a learner's preferred materials available in familiar activities, turning the lights off for quiet time, using music to represent time to "jazz up" or "settle down" **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials and role modeled actions.** This might include: showing tangible objects of reference to support transitions across activities (showing a towel for bath time, holding a paint brush to represent time for art activity, activity bins in sequence).	**Using consistent routines and environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same simple phrases, the same materials, and the same actions. This might include embedding (photos or graphics) to represent expectations of where to sit (a poly spot for rug time), body proximity (a hula hoop), and how to wait (something to hold when listening to others). **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials, graphics, and role modeled actions.** This might include using photos or graphics to support transitions across activities and the steps within activities (showing a photo to represent the upcoming activity and a simple photo/graphic schedule to represent a sequence of activities).
2. Learners know **what is being taught.**	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning in familiar, natural activities with contextual support so that the setting, materials, and actions are predictable and relevant (activities of daily living - dressing, cooking, eating, exercise, play, etc.). **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** This might include pairing concepts with real-life objects, whole body movements, music, and role models within natural activities and settings.	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning into familiar, natural routines with contextual support or in shared experiences where concepts are illustrated through multimedia (books / videos / music), role modeled actions, peer models, and connections to familiar routines. **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** This might include pairing concepts with graphics, photos, music, real-life objects, whole body movements, and role models within natural activities and settings.

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Enhancing INDEPENDENCE…*before words*

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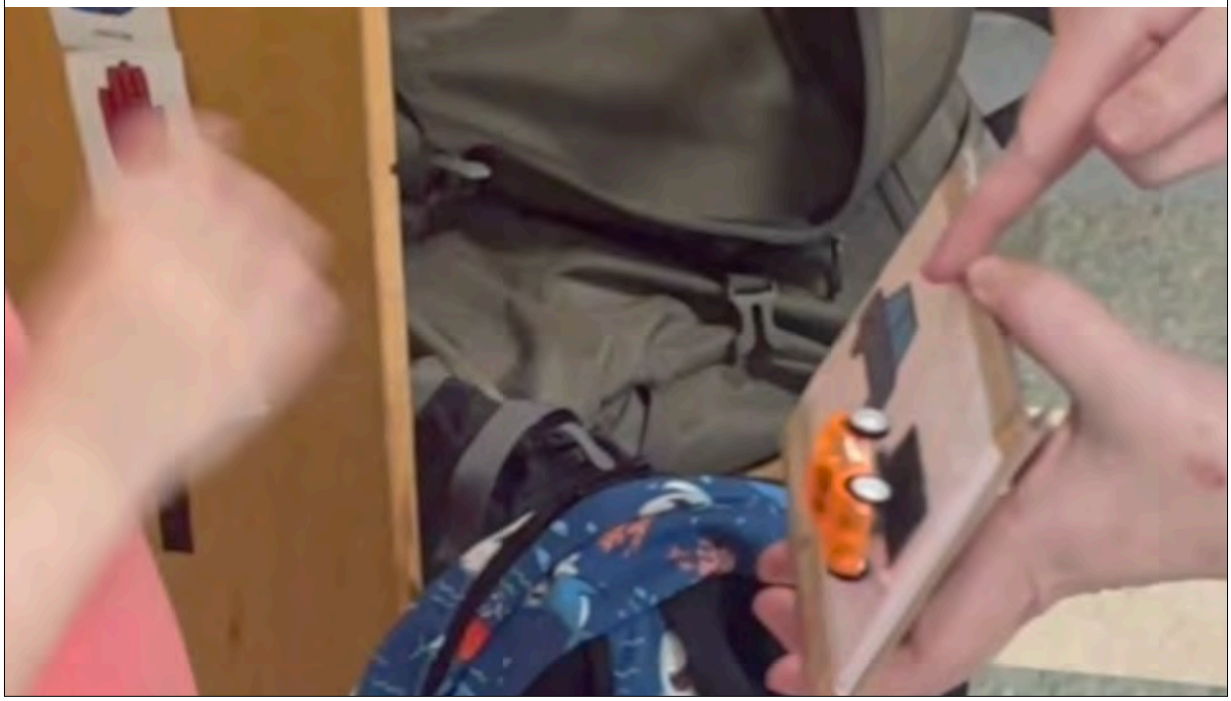

Enhancing INDEPENDENCE…*emerging language*

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Enhancing INDEPENDENCE…*developing language*

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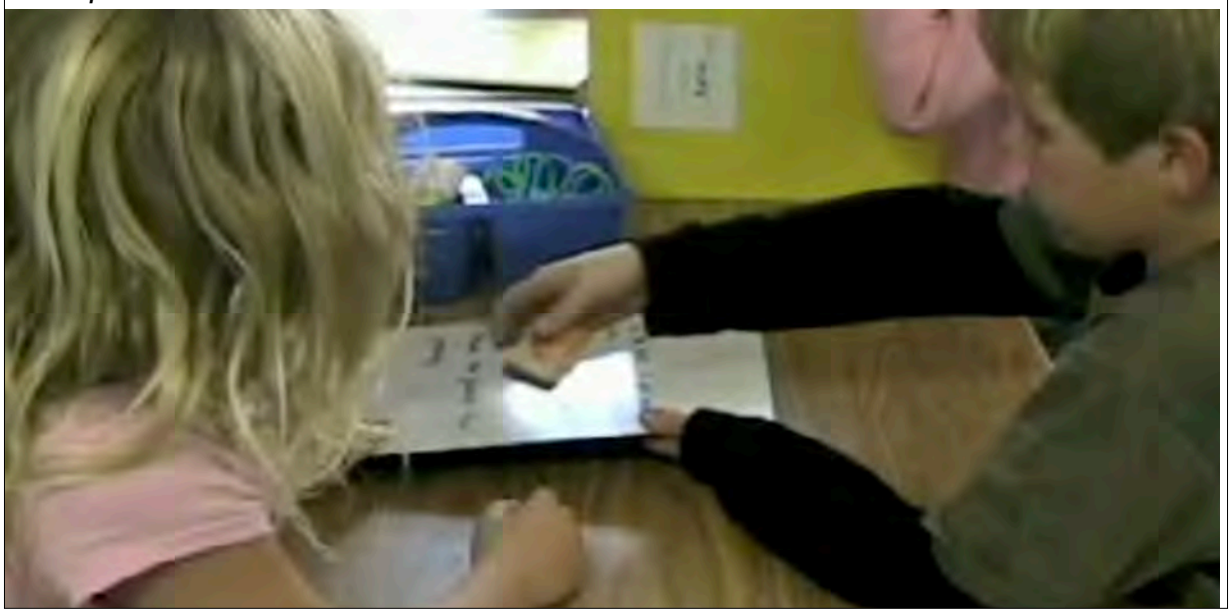
…by providing multiple modalities for the sequence & the steps within activities



Enhancing INDEPENDENCE…*conversational*

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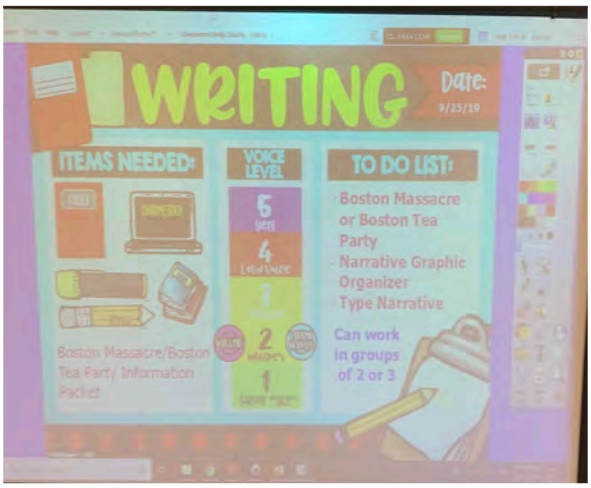
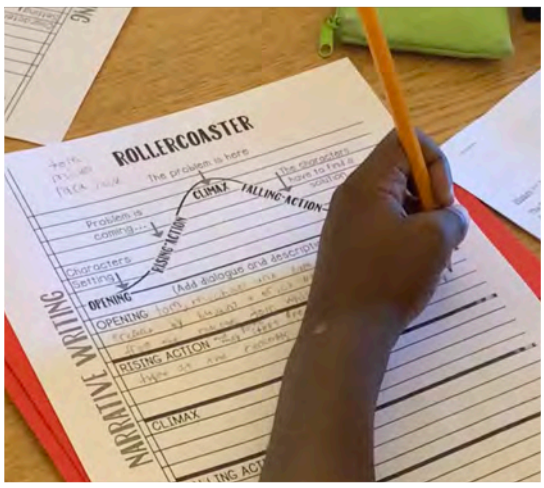
…by presenting information in different ways.





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Enhancing INITIATION

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Section C: Express INITIATION

STRATEGIC NETWORKS:
THE **HOW** OF LEARNING

Action & Expression

For strategic, goal-directed learners, differentiate the ways that students can express what they know.

Enhancing INITIATION

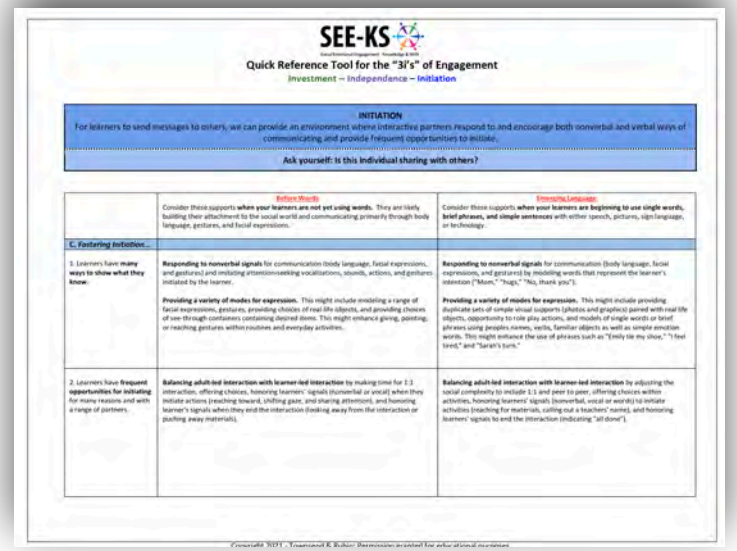
SEE-KS Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills

Section C: Express INITIATION

STRATEGIC NETWORKS:
THE **HOW** OF LEARNING

Action & Expression

For strategic, goal-directed learners, differentiate the ways that students can express what they know.



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Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment – Independence – Initiation

INITIATION

For learners to send messages to others, we can provide an environment where interactive partners respond to and encourage both nonverbal and verbal ways of communicating and provide frequent opportunities to initiate.

Ask yourself: Is this individual sharing with others?

	Before Words Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	Emerging Language Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
C. Fostering Initiation...		
1. Learners have **many ways to show what they know.**	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, and gestures) and imitating attention-seeking vocalizations, sounds, actions, and gestures initiated by the learner. **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include modeling a range of facial expressions, gestures, providing choices of real-life objects, and providing choices of see-through containers containing desired items. This might enhance giving, pointing, or reaching gestures within routines and everyday activities.	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, and gestures) by modeling words that represent the learner's intention ("Mom," "hugs," "No, thank you"). **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include providing duplicate sets of simple visual supports (photos and graphics) paired with real life objects, opportunity to role play actions, and models of single words or brief phrases using peoples names, verbs, familiar objects as well as simple emotion words. This might enhance the use of phrases such as "Emily tie my shoe," "I feel tired," and "Sarah's turn."
2. Learners have **frequent opportunities for initiating** for many reasons and with a range of partners.	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by making time for 1:1 interaction, offering choices, honoring learners' signals (nonverbal or vocal) when they initiate actions (reaching toward, shifting gaze, and sharing attention), and honoring learner's signals when they end the interaction (looking away from the interaction or pushing away materials).	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by adjusting the social complexity to include 1:1 and peer to peer, offering choices within activities, honoring learners' signals (nonverbal, vocal or words) to initiate activities (reaching for materials, calling out a teachers' names), and honoring learners' signals to end the interaction (indicating "all done").

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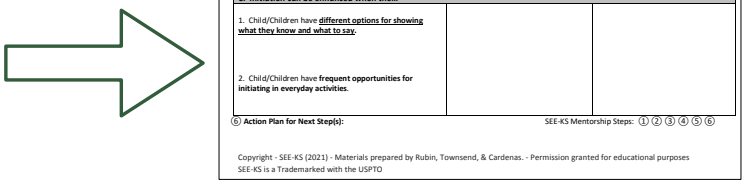

Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills (SEE-KS)
Essential Universal Design for Learning Supports – Mentorship Form *(Version 9/30/2021)*

① **Location:** **Date:**
Mentee(s): **Mentor / Observer(s):**

② **Activity:** *What was the mentee hoping the child/children would do?*	③ **What is working** (mentee's perspective)	④ **Opportunity to enhance:** **Investment / Independence / Initiation** (circle one that the mentee (s) wishes to explore)
		⑤ **Possible Next Steps** (generated during collaborative discussion)
A. Investment can be enhanced when the…	③ **What is working** (mentor's observation)	
1. Child / Children's interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning and interacting.** 2. Child/Children have the **support to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks**		
B. Independence can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children **know what to do.** 2. Child/Children **understand what is being taught.**		
C. Initiation can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children have **different options for showing what they know and what to say.** 2. Child/Children have **frequent opportunities for initiating in everyday activities.**		

⑥ **Action Plan for Next Step(s):** SEE-KS Mentorship Steps: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

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Enhancing INITIATION…*before words*

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Enhancing INITIATION…*emerging language*

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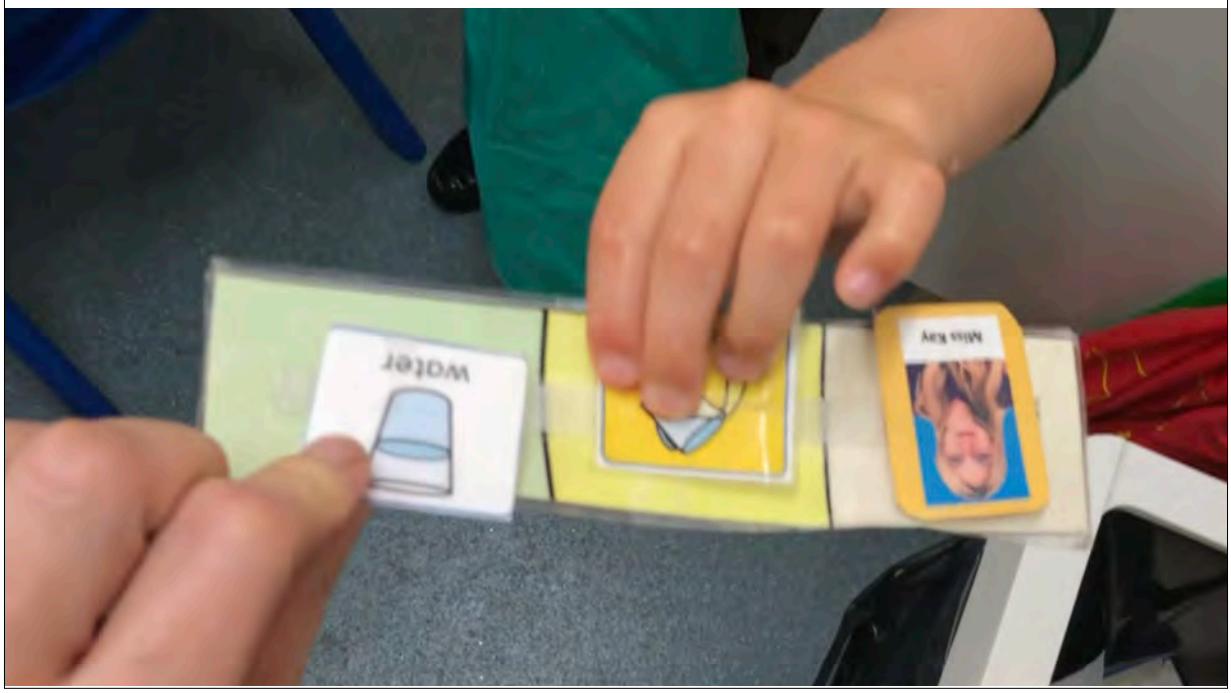

Enhancing INITIATION…*developing language*

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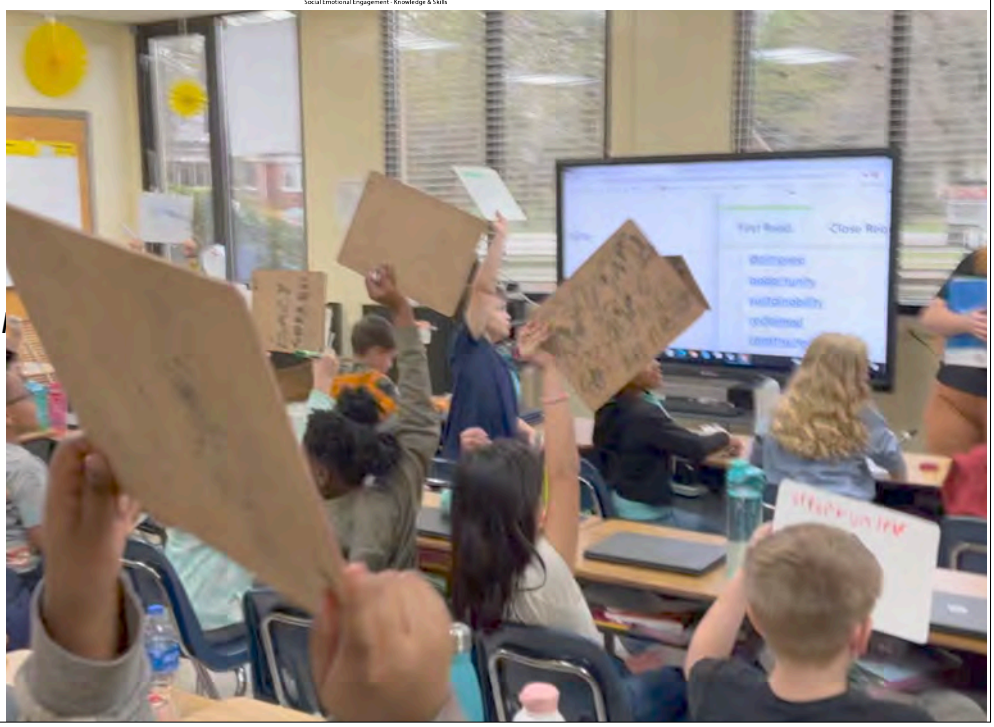
…by providing options for physical action by varying response methods



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Enhancing INITIATION…*conversational*

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By finding the fuel for learning & emotional well-being, we can create positive learning environments to…

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Increase investment by *fostering engagement in multiple ways.*

Increase independence by *providing information in multiple ways.*

Increase initiation by *fostering multiple means of action and expression.*

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To learn more

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To learn more Social Emotional Engagement (SEE-KS), contact:
emily@CommXRoads.com

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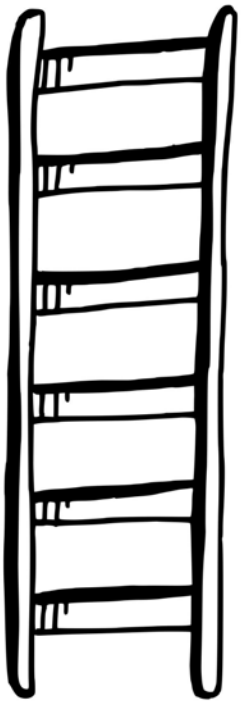
Social Engagement Ladder

Location:	Date:
Activity:	Time of Day:
Educator(s):	Data Collector(s):



Fully Engaged (4)
Frequent spontaneous initiation, consistent independent engagement with materials, frequent expression of positive emotional investment

Mostly Engaged (3)
Occasional spontaneous initiation, occasional independent engagement with materials, occasional expression of positive emotional investment

Partially Engaged (2)
Responsive or non-spontaneous initiation, compliant with directions, seldom shares expression of positive emotional investment

Emerging/Fleeting (1)
Intermittently responsive without initiation, dependent on direction, minimal expression of positive emotional investment

No Focus (0)
Non-responsive, not engaging with targeted materials, and not sharing any emotion or expression, possibly out of the room

Learners	Multiplied by	Equals	
	4's		Total # of Learners
	3's		Total Engagement Divided by Total # Above
	2's		
	1's		Equals Average Level of Engagement
	0's		

Learning Environment Sketch Space

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Social Engagement Ladder: Individual Version

Name: **Date:**

Observers:

Criterion	
4	**Fully engaged**. The individual is: a. spontaneously initiating (sending messages) via a high frequency (nonverbal or verbal means), b. demonstrating independence (seems to know what to do), and c. highly emotionally invested (as evidenced by frequent expression of shared positive emotion).
3	**Mostly engaged.** The individual is: a. spontaneously initiating (sending messages) on occasion (through nonverbal or verbal means), b. demonstrating some independence (seems to know what to do), and c. emotionally invested (as evidence by occasional expression of shared positive emotion).
2	**Partially engaged.** The individual is: a. predominantly responsive to others' bids for interaction (through nonverbal or verbal means), b. follows adult or peer directions to engage, and only seldom shares positive emotion.
1	**Emerging/Fleeting.** The individual is: a. only intermittently responsive to adult or peers' bids for interaction (through nonverbal or verbal means), showing no initiation, b. reliant on following directions to engage with targeted materials, and does not share positive emotion.
0	**No focus.** The individual is: a. not responding to adult or peers' bids for interaction (through nonverbal or verbal means) and is showing no initiation, b. is not yet following teacher or peer directions to engage with targeted materials, and is not yet sharing emotion.

Activities	Engagement Rating	What Seems to Be Working?
Activity:		
Activity:		
Activity:		
Activity:		
Activity:		
Activity:		

Please indicate "what seems to be working" in activities that yield a 2 or higher. This refers to supports that fostered the individuals' engagement (e.g., visual schedules, choices offered, a class role, hands-on materials, etc.).

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Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment -- Independence – Initiation

INVESTMENT

For learners to be "hooked" or motivated to engage, we can provide an environment that stimulates interest and supports the learner to sustain their connection.

Ask yourself: Is this individual "hooked" and staying "connected"?

	Before Words Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	**Emerging Language** Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
A. *Fostering Investment…*		
1. Learner interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning**.	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that involve appealing sensory properties. This might include: music/singing, messy play, water play, art, and movement. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** that stimulate interest through engaging sensory qualities to the learner (consider exploring objects for how they feel, sound, smell, or provide cause-effect). **Providing opportunities for social connections** with preferred partners (consistent and predictable interactive partners). This might include people, games involving face to face play and social routines.	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that pair words, graphics, letters and numbers with choices of "props" or real life objects as well as opportunities to act out the meaning of these concepts. This might include creating a shared experience through roley play, projects, art, or music. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** to stimulate interest through whole-body movement (consider objects and movements that are familiar to the learner as well as those that are symbolic). This might include: opportunities to use pretend play props and familiar materials related to routine daily experiences. **Providing opportunities for social connections** with preferred partners (familiar and predictable people, including peers). This might include providing all children or partners with the same hands-on materials while performing the same actions at the same time, this provides opportunities for parallel play.
2. Learners have the **support to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks.**	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity and touch), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from a small group to 1 on 1). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** using sensory-motor strategies and tangible objects. This might include: providing freedom and time to access to a preferred interactive partner and/or soothing or stimulating activities and materials.	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity, touch, and the amount of language), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from larger groups to small groups). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** using visual choices for learners to identify energy level or early emotions (happy, sad, tired, angry) in oneself. This might include: noticing a learner's energy level and modeling a visual to identify one's energy level or emotional state and make choices including preferred interactive partners, activities, and materials.

Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

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Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment -- Independence – Initiation

INVESTMENT

For learners to be "hooked" or motivated to engage, we can provide an environment that stimulates interest and supports the learner to sustain their connection.

Ask yourself: Is this individual "hooked" and staying "connected"?

	Developing Language Competence Consider these supports **when your learners are inconsistently using simple and complex sentences.** These learners are likely still developing their use and understanding of language in unfamiliar situations, a range of communicative functions (expressing emotion, asking for help, sharing remorse), and the use of inner self-talk to guide their behavior.	Conversational Consider these supports **when your learners are consistently using complex sentences, conversational level discourse,** and "inner dialogue" for executive functioning. They are likely developing their ability to succeed in a range of social contexts.
A. *Fostering Investment…*		
1. Learner interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning.**	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that pair books or text materials with learner interests, choices of preferred themes and topics, humor, and real life experiences - something the learner has done before. This might include: sharing personal experiences during a read aloud, engaging in role play/reader's theater, or creating a product. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** to stimulate interest through whole-body movement (consider props and movements that are familiar to the learner as well as those with a symbolic quality). This might include: opportunity to use props and familiar materials related to activities that they have experienced previously. **Providing opportunities for social connections** (familiar and interactive partners, pairing learners with peers). This might include opportunities for children to interact in parallel with one's peers, to take turns with peers, and to take on different roles within activities.	**Providing meaningful activities** to stimulate interest by creating consistent routines that connect with learner interests through choice and real life application - something the learner may do in their life. This might include: embedding writing within a meaningful context of writing a letter or a newspaper submission, using math to create or build something, or applying social studies to a current event. **Providing hands-on, movement-based activities** to stimulate interest through whole-body movement (consider props and movements that will help the learner gain new knowledge and experiences). This might include: opportunity to role play an unfamiliar event using the materials that are needed for that experience. **Providing opportunities for social connections** (interacting with peer partners, competition, and group collaboration). This might include pairing peers in dyads or small groups together to collaborate, to compete against other groups, or having a learner request for peer assistance.
2. Learners have the **tools to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks.**	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity, touch, and the amount of language), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from larger groups to small groups). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** using visuals to support learners to identify their energy level and more complex emotions (frustrated, anxious, irritable, eager, self-confident). This might include: noticing a learner's energy level and giving access to a visual for that learner to indicate their energy level or emotional level and make choices including preferred interactive partners, activities and materials. This might include: offering visual choices for a break, a comfort item, or a peer to assist).	**Adjusting the environment** based upon the sensory needs of the learner (adjusting the type and amount of visual, auditory, and movement stimulation), the interaction style (noticing a learner's energy level and adjusting one's tone of voice, proximity, touch, and the complexity of language), opportunities for movement (giving access to actions/items that bring interest, comfort, or security) or adjusting the social complexity (moving away from larger groups to small groups). **Providing access to self-regulation supports** for learners to identify and share energy levels and express emotion, remorse, and negotiate with others. This might include: noticing a learner's energy level and giving access to visuals or written reminders of how to express one's current state ("I wasn't expecting this today, can we do____ or ____ instead?"), reminders of how to recognize their level of engagement, and identify strategies that might sustain engagement, and self-advocate for these needs. This might include: embedding discussion as to what might be helpful (extra time, alternative seat, a peer to assist).

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Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment -- Independence – Initiation

INDEPENDENCE

For learners to "know what to do" and "what is being taught" we can provide an environment that includes consistent routines, role models, hands-on materials, and visuals.

Ask yourself: Is this individual understanding the expectations?

	Before Words Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	Emerging Language Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
B. *Fostering independence..*		
1. Learners **know what to do.**	**Using consistent routines and environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same words, the same materials, and the same actions, This might include having a learner's preferred materials available in familiar activities, turning the lights off for quiet time, using music to represent time to "jazz up" or "settle down" **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials and role modeled actions.** This might include: showing tangible objects of reference to support transitions across activities (showing a towel for bath time, holding a paint brush to represent time for art activity, activity bins in sequence).	**Using consistent routines and environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same simple phrases, the same materials, and the same actions, This might include embedding (photos or graphics) to represent expectations of where to sit (a poly spot for rug time), body proximity (a hula hoop), and how to wait (something to hold when listening to others). **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials, graphics, and role modeled actions**, This might include using photos or graphics to support transitions across activities and the steps within activities (showing a photo to represent the upcoming activity and a simple photo/graphic schedule to represent a sequence of activities).
2. Learners know **what is being taught.**	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning in familiar, natural activities with contextual support so that the setting, materials, and actions are predictable and relevant (activities of daily living - dressing, cooking, eating, exercise, play, etc.). **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** This might include pairing concepts with real-life objects, whole body movements, music, and role models within natural activities and settings.	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning into familiar, natural routines with contextual support or in shared experiences where concepts are illustrated through multimedia (books / videos / music), role modeled actions, peer models, and connections to familiar routines. **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** This might include pairing concepts with graphics, photos, music, real-life objects, whole body movements, and role models within natural activities and settings.

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Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment -- Independence – Initiation

Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

INDEPENDENCE

For learners to "know what to do" or "what to expect," we can provide an environment that includes consistent routines, role models, hands-on materials, and visuals.

Ask yourself: Is this individual understanding the expectations?

	Developing Language Competence	Conversational
	Consider these supports **when your learners are using simple and complex sentences inconsistently.** These learners are likely still developing their use and understanding of language in unfamiliar situations, to communicate for a range of functions (expressing emotion, asking for help, sharing remorse), and to guide their behavior with inner self-talk.	Consider these supports **when your learners are consistently using complex sentences, conversational level discourse,** and "inner dialogue" for executive functioning. They are likely developing their ability to succeed in a range of social contexts..
B. *Fostering independence..*		
1. Learners **know what to do.**	**Using consistent routines and environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same simple and complex sentences, the same materials, and the same actions, This might include clarifying a range of social expectations using visuals such as graphics and the written word to remind learners of the energy level needed for an activity (an energy meter), volume level (a vocal volume meter), and proximity to others (footprints on the floor for waiting in line). **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials, graphics, the written word, and role modeled actions.**, This might include written "to do" lists and schedules paired with graphics, to support transitions across activities, and the steps within a task.	**Using consistent routines** and **environmental arrangements** that involve repetition of the same simple and complex language, the same materials and the same actions. This might include providing opportunities for learners to identify upcoming activities, rehearse those activities, and access or create reminders of social expectations such as which topics to choose, when to talk, when to listen, proximity to others, and vocal volume. **Pairing language with visuals such as real-life materials, graphics, written language, multimedia, and role modeled actions.** This might include providing opportunities for learners to use or create visuals or written reminders in familiar and unfamiliar settings to support transitions and participation in multi-step extended activities to guide inner language.
2. Learners know **what is being taught**	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning into familiar, natural routines with contextual support or in a shared experiences where concepts are illustrated through multimedia (books/ videos / music), role modeled actions, peer models, connection to previous learning, and real-life application. **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** TThis might include pairing concepts with written language, graphics, photos, music, real-life objects, whole body movements, and role models within natural activities and settings.	**Embedding learning into shared, meaningful experiences that include repetition and practice.** This might include embedding learning into shared experiences where concepts are illustrated through multimedia (books / videos / hands-on labs), role modeled actions, peer models, connection to previous learning, and real-life application. **Providing multi-modal supports, including hands-on materials, visuals, and role models.** This might include having learners identify preferences for a range of supports including pairing concepts with opportunities for labs, written language, graphics, photos, music, real-life objects, whole body movements, and role models within natural activities and settings.

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Investment -- Independence – Initiation

Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP

INITIATION

For learners to send messages to others, we can provide an environment where interactive partners respond to and encourage both nonverbal and verbal ways of communicating and provide frequent opportunities to initiate.

Ask yourself: Is this individual sharing with others?

	Before Words Consider these supports **when your learners are not yet using words.** They are likely building their attachment to the social world and communicating primarily through body language, gestures, and facial expressions.	**Emerging Language** Consider these supports **when your learners are beginning to use single words, brief phrases, and simple sentences** with either speech, pictures, sign language, or technology.
C. *Fostering Initiation…*		
1. Learners have **many ways to show what they know.**	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, and gestures) and imitating attention-seeking vocalizations, sounds, actions, and gestures initiated by the learner. **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include modeling a range of facial expressions, gestures, providing choices of real-life objects, and providing choices of see-through containers containing desired items. This might enhance giving, pointing, or reaching gestures within routines and everyday activities.	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, and gestures) by modeling words that represent the learner's intention ("Mom," "hugs," "No, thank you"). **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include providing duplicate sets of simple visual supports (photos and graphics) paired with real life objects, opportunity to role play actions, and models of single words or brief phrases using peoples names, verbs, familiar objects as well as simple emotion words. This might enhance the use of phrases such as "Emily tie my shoe," "I feel tired," and "Sarah's turn."
2. Learners have **frequent opportunities for initiating** for many reasons and with a range of partners.	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by making time for 1:1 interaction, offering choices, honoring learners' signals (nonverbal or vocal) when they initiate actions (reaching toward, shifting gaze, and sharing attention), and honoring learner's signals when they end the interaction (looking away from the interaction or pushing away materials).	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by adjusting the social complexity to include 1:1 and peer to peer, offering choices within activities, honoring learners' signals (nonverbal, vocal or words) to initiate activities (reaching for materials, calling out a teachers' name), and honoring learners' signals to end the interaction (indicating "all done").

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Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills

Quick Reference Tool for the "3i's" of Engagement

Investment -- Independence – Initiation

INITIATION

For learners to send messages to others, we can provide an environment where there are frequent opportunities to initiate and where interactive partners respond to both nonverbal and verbal ways of communicating.

Ask yourself: Is this individual sharing with others?

	Developing Language Competence Consider these supports **when your learners are using simple and complex sentences inconsistently.** These learners are likely still developing their use and understanding of language in unfamiliar situations, to communicate for a range of functions (expressing emotion, asking for help, sharing remorse), and to guide their behavior with inner self-talk.	**Conversational** Consider these supports **when your learners are consistently using complex sentences, conversational level discourse**, and "inner dialogue" for executive functioning. They are likely developing their ability to succeed in a range of social contexts.
C. *Fostering Initiation…*		
1. Learners have **many ways to show what they know.**	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, and gestures) by modeling phrases and sentences that represent the learner's intention ("Ms. Smith, I can't do this right now"). **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include providing duplicate sets of visual supports (photos, graphics and written language), a selection of sentence choices/starters, a dry erase board, thumbs up/thumbs down, hand signals, and opportunity to role play actions. This might enhance simple phrases and sentences using people's names, verbs and other vocabulary relevant for the activity.	**Responding to nonverbal signals** for communication (body language, facial expressions, gestures) by validating the intention of the learner, and modeling language that matches this intention ("I notice that you are....I wonder if you are trying to say...."). **Providing a variety of modes for expression.** This might include providing opportunities for learners to use or create visual supports for content (what to say), timing (when to talk), and social conventions (how to engage). Modes of expression might include having learners decide which modes of expression may be helpful, including a selection of sentence choices / starters, a dry erase board, thumbs up/thumbs down, hand signals, multimedia, and an opportunity to role play actions.
2. Learners have **frequent opportunities for initiating** for many reasons and with a range of partners.	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by adjusting the social complexity to include 1:1, peer to peer, and small groups, offering a choice of topics, materials, and peer partners, responding to open-ended questions, and serving a variety of roles within social settings.	**Balancing adult-led interaction with learner-led interaction** by adjusting the social complexity to include 1:1, peer to peer, and small groups, offering choice of topics, materials, and peer partners, responding to open-ended questions, and serving a variety of roles within social settings (involving the learner in a plan to share out what they know with others).

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The 6-Steps of Mentorship Using Appreciative Inquiry

SEE-KS Mentorship Steps: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

Step 1

• Remind everyone that we are using appreciative inquiry. You can say…
  ◦ "We're here to *appreciate* what appears to already be working to enhance engagement in the areas of: *investment, independence, and initiation*."
  ◦ "We will then *inquire* where the mentee sees opportunities."

Step 2

• Ask the mentee to describe the activity that was observed. You can ask…
  ◦ "What were your goals?" (or "What were you hoping the child/children would do?")
  ◦ "What do you feel is already working to enhance engagement?"
  ◦ "Where do you see opportunities? Would it be in the area of *investment, independence or initiation*?
• Recast what you learn. You can say…
  ◦ "So, what I hear you saying is…your goals were…what you thought was working was… and you are interested in exploring how *investment/independence/initiation* might be enhanced."

Step 3
• Mentors will describe what they noticed appeared to be working to enhance investment, independence, and initiation. • Mentors will use the phrase, "I noticed that _____ and this appeared to enhance____."
Step 4

• Ask the mentee to think about which aspect of engagement they see as an opportunity. They can choose one of the following…
  • Investment
  • Independence
  • Initiation

Step 5
• Ask the mentee if they already have an idea where they would like to go or if they'd like to collaborate. • If they would like to collaborate, ask the team to review the *SEE-KS Quick Reference* and then consider next steps to enhance engagement based on what the mentee would like to explore. • Questions to stimulate collaboration might include, "I noticed how effective it was when…. How might this look during [this part]?" or "I wonder if…."
Step 6
• Develop an action plan for next steps. Ask the mentee if they have what they need to "*make it fast and make it last*." If not, it may be helpful to revisit Step 5.

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Social Emotional Engagement - Knowledge & Skills (SEE-KS)

Essential Universal Design for Learning Supports – Mentorship Form *(Version 9/30/2021)*

① **Location:** **Date:**

Mentee(s): **Mentor / Observer(s):**

② **Activity:** *What was the mentee hoping the child/children would do?*	③ **What is working** (mentee's perspective)	④ **Opportunity to enhance:** **Investment / Independence / Initiation** (circle one that the mentee (s) wishes to explore) ⑤ **Possible Next Steps** (generated during collaborative discussion)
A. Investment can be enhanced when the…	③ **What is working** (mentor's observation)	
1. Child / Children's interests have been considered to **stimulate motivation for learning and interacting**. 2. Child/Children have the **support to stay actively engaged and persist in tasks**		
B. Independence can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children **know what to do.** 2. Child/Children **understand what is being taught**.		
C. Initiation can be enhanced when the…		
1. Child/Children have **different options for showing what they know and what to say**. 2. Child/Children have **frequent opportunities for initiating in everyday activities**.		

⑥ **Action Plan for Next Step(s):**

SEE-KS Mentorship Steps: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

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