

Engagement Check Supplement

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Background

The ***Engagement Check*** (McWilliam, 1998), a modification of the Planned Activity Check (Risley & Cataldo, 1973), is designed to measure group engagement. It is an observational tool that determines the percentage of children engaged during activities.

Definition

Engagement is defined as attention to or active participation in classroom activities as reflected by manipulating, vocalizing, looking, approaching, or affective expression. Engagement requires that behavior is both developmentally appropriate (appropriate for the child's developmental age and abilities) and contextually appropriate (appropriate to the activity being conducted and the expectations of the situation).

Procedure

Group engagement coding consists simply of counting the number of children visible in one pass and then counting the number of children **nonengaged** (i.e., wandering aimlessly, crying, fighting) in a second pass. From this, the percentage of children engaged at each observation is calculated. The session score consists of the average of the observations made in a session. The ***Engagement Check*** coding sheet is a convenient form for recording data and calculating engagement percentages.

Frequency and Duration of Checks

For *research* purposes, checks should be conducted every 15 seconds for 15 minutes totaling 60 observations per session.

For *supervision, evaluation, and self-evaluation*, there should be no more than 5 minutes between checks, for a total of at least 20 observations per session.

Data Summation

To calculate e_t , the **% Engaged** at time t , use the following:

$$e_t = \left[\frac{\# \text{ Present} - \# \text{ Nonengaged}}{\# \text{ Present}} \right] 100$$

To calculate \bar{e} , the **Average % Engaged** across a total of T periods, use the following:

$$\bar{e} = \sum_{t=1}^T \frac{e_t}{T} \quad (\text{i.e., sum the \% Engaged and divide by the total number of observations})$$