

Moving forward with Partnering in Play

Overview

Adults in High Scope classrooms partner in play with children at Work Time and Outside Time. By observing, supporting and entering children's play, adults have the opportunity to discover children's interests, how a child constructs their knowledge, their point of view, as well as their play and social skills levels. Adults are then able to scaffold learning through supporting and gently extending children's play in meaningful ways as children carry out their intentions. Adults supervise through interaction while building positive, authentic relationships.

Strategies to support children while partnering in play include:

1. Observe and listen before (and after) entering children's play.
2. Assume roles as suggested by children.
3. Follow the children's cues about the content and direction of the play.
4. Imitate children.
5. Match the complexity of the play.
6. Offer suggestions for extending play.
7. Stay within the children's play theme.

Goals for moving forward

1. Practice S.O.U.L. (Silently Observe to Listen and Understand) before and after entering children's play.
2. Reflect on the developmental trajectory of play levels to best support children where they are to then be able to extend play appropriately and individually.
3. Examine materials in interest areas several times a year and make any changes needed to best support a range of play levels.
4. Be thoughtful and mindful about your own play preferences and barriers that may inhibit fully partnering in play with children, and challenge yourself to be a play partner in areas where you feel less confident.

Implementation plan

1. Explore helpful resources: [High Scope video](#), [High Scope video 2](#), and articles to read, including [High Scope Extension edition on play](#), [SOUL](#)
2. Target specific strategies to support children while partnering in play (see list above) to practice during Work Time. Take note of how children respond and play as you use the strategies.
3. Make a list of the children in your classroom. Make a plan to partner with each child at Work Time every week, joining them where they are. Use the strategies and make note of individual interests and strengths.
4. Use the attached self-assessment to gauge your comfort level with being a true Partner in Play.

Partner in Play Strengths and Needs Assessment

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Read each statement and consider your comfort level in using these effective practices. Choose one or two to focus on for this coaching period.

Practice	I need some help to use this practice effectively.	I am becoming comfortable using this practice.	I am confident using this practice.	I would like to focus on this practice as my goal.
1. I offer the children an organized environment with sufficient numbers of accessible materials arranged to support all types of play for individuals and small groups.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
2. I remain at the children's physical levels while partnering or interacting.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3. I remain observant of children and move about the classroom with individual and small groups of children.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
4. I observe and listen to the children before and after entering play.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5. I play in parallel with the children, using the same materials in similar ways.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
6. I imitate children's actions and take cues and direction from the children.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

7. I acknowledge and comment on children's actions and ideas.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
8. I extend play by respectfully offering suggestions within the child's play theme.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9. I individualize play partnerships by using children's words and match the child's complexity of play.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No