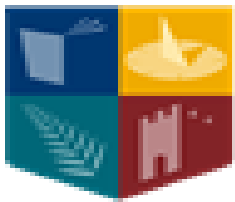




Intentional and relational pedagogy: The role of the adult in the classroom

Iram Siraj, Professor of Child Development University of Oxford
Research Professor, University of Maynooth, Dublin.

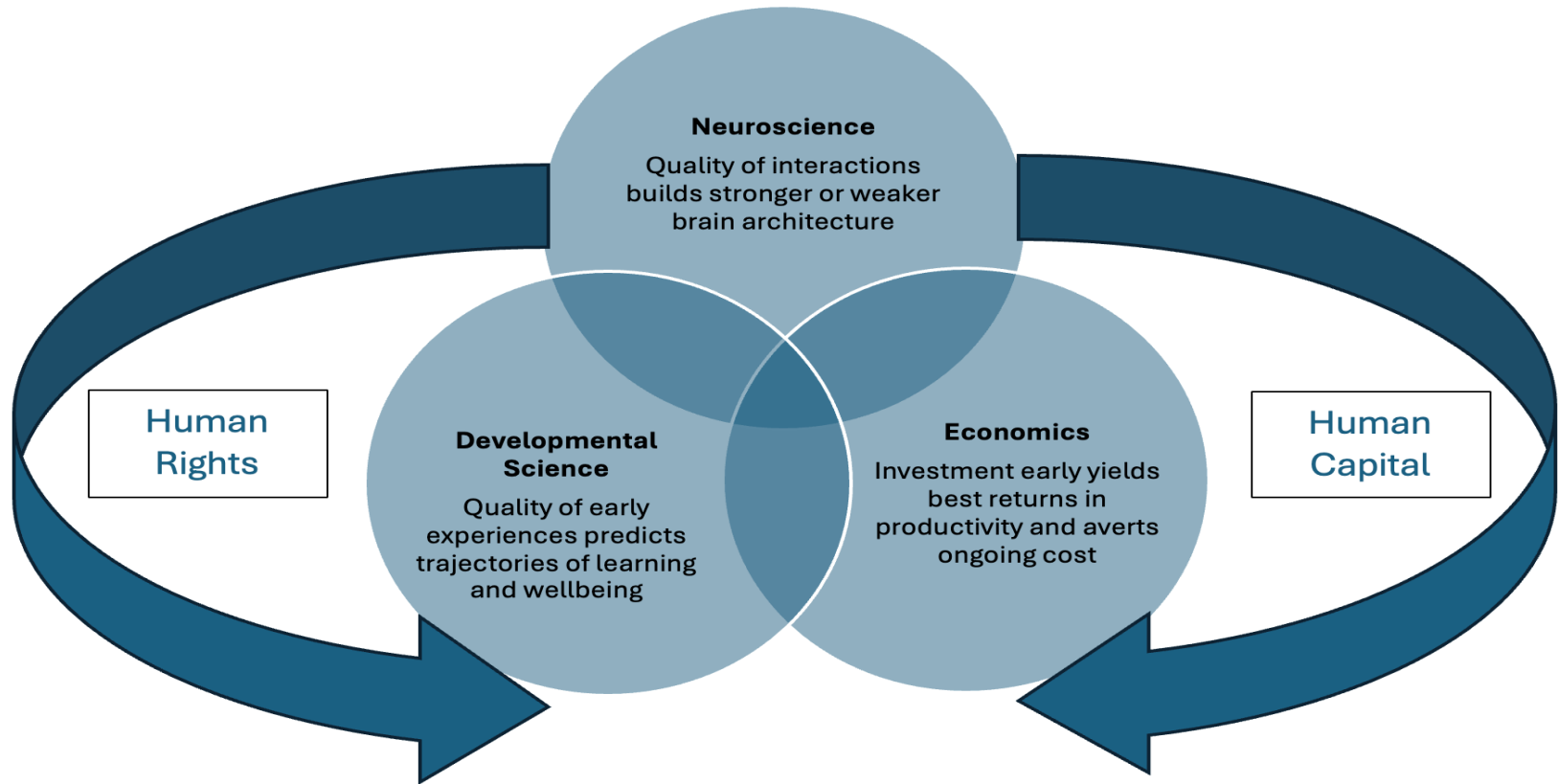


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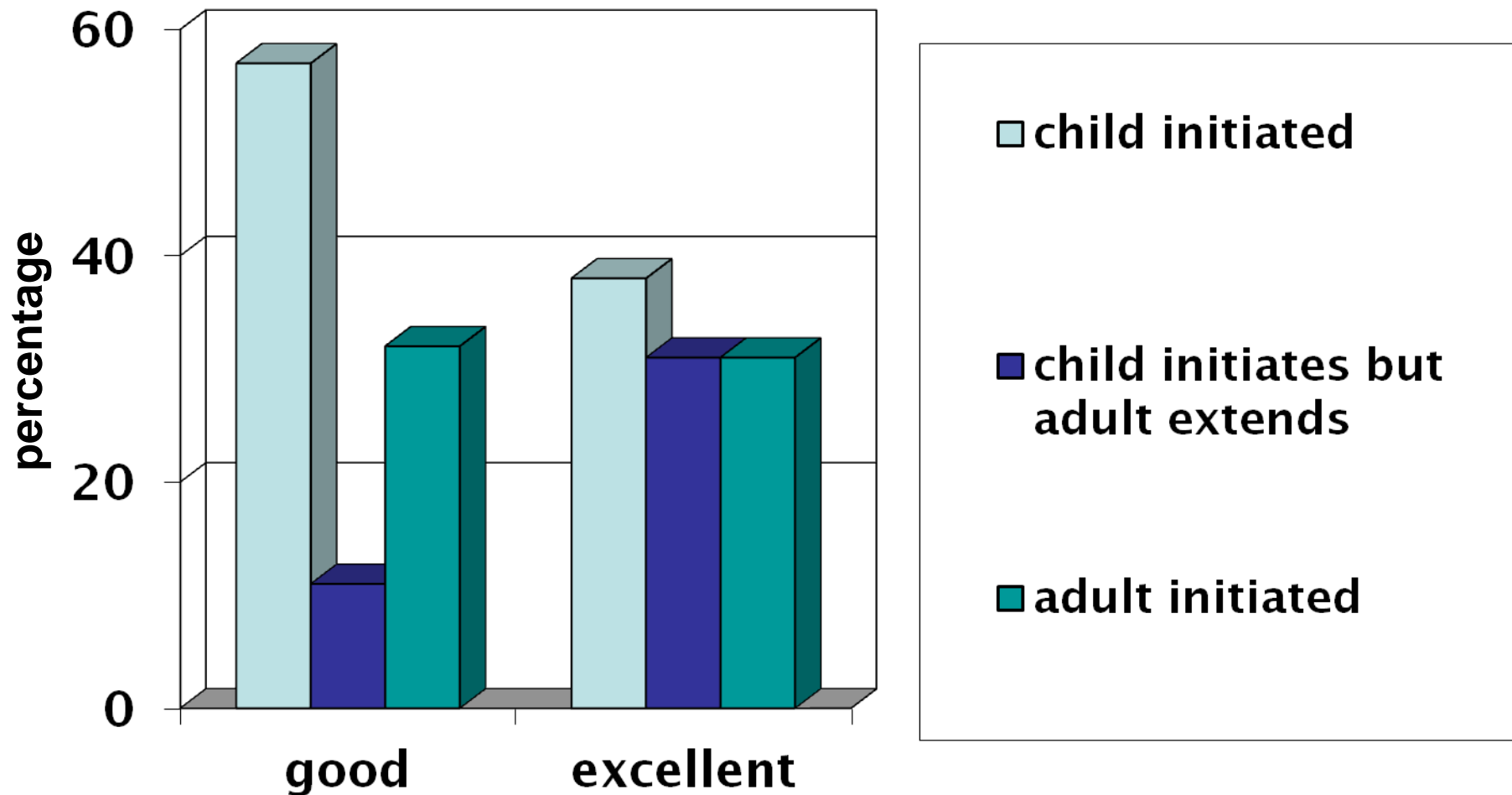


Effective adult pedagogy (from REPEY study, Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002)

Five areas were identified in adult behaviours which were particularly important:

- **Quality of the adult-child verbal interaction.**
- **Knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.**
- **Knowledge of how young children learn.**
- **Adults skill in supporting children in resolving conflicts.**
- **Informing parents of your educational and care aims and helping parents to support children's learning at home.**

Adults **extension and guidance** within activities



Heavily focussed on interactions

Children's interactions with educators and peers, more than any other program feature, can determine what children learn and how they feel about learning

(Driscoll et al., 2011; Epstein, 2014; National Research Council, 2000; Pianta, 2012).

Intentionality (Pianta, 2003)

'Directed, designed interactions between children and teachers in which teachers purposefully challenge, scaffold and extend children's skills'

This can include a strong play pedagogy.

**From: Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2009) 'Early Childhood Education' in;
Maynard, T. & Thomas, N. (Eds.) *An Introduction to Early Childhood Studies*,
(2nd Edition) London: Sage Publications (in press)**

Table 1: OECD Curriculum Outlines

	Teacher's initiating activities	Teacher's extending activities	Differentiation and Formative Assessment	Relationships and conflict between children	<i>Sustained Shared Thinking</i>
EEL ^[1]	"Introducing new activities"	"Enriching interventions"	"Observe children"	"Work out sustaining relations"	"Engagement"
High Scope	"Sharing Control"	"Participation as partners"	"Plan - Do - Review"	"Adopt a problem solving approach"	"Authentic dialogue"
Reggio Emilia	"Development of short and long- term projects"	"Sustaining the cognitive and social dynamics"	"Teachers first listen don't talk"	"Warm reciprocal relationships"	"Reciprocity of interactions"
EPPE/ REPEY	<i>Correlations found with effective practice</i>	<i>Correlations found with effective practice</i>	<i>Correlations found with effective practice</i>	<i>Correlations found with effective practice</i>	<i>Correlations found with effective practice</i>

Quality of *relational pedagogy* matters: Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett)

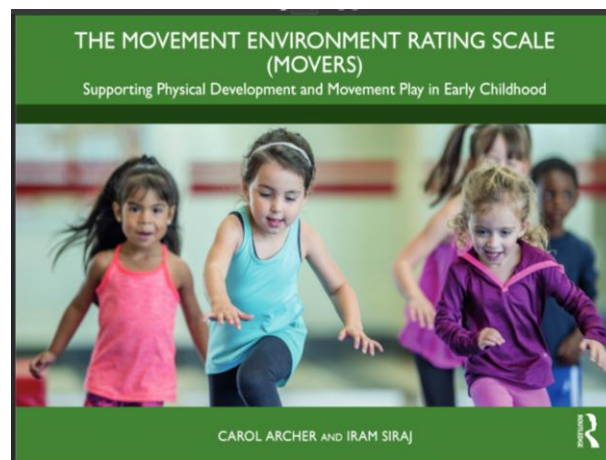
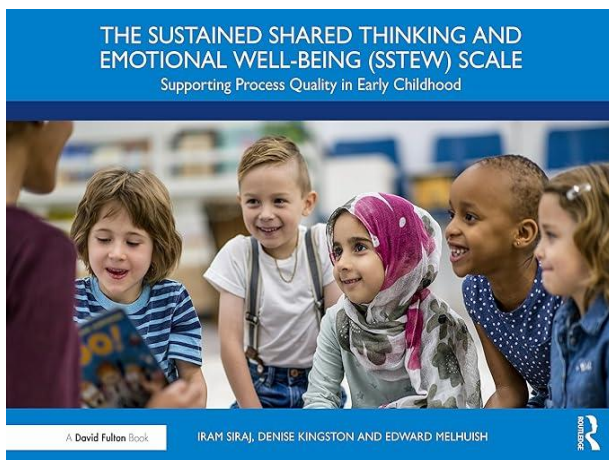
- Positive relationships is a subscale made up of 10 items indicating warmth and enthusiasm interaction with children by the caregiver.
- Punitiveness is a subscale made up of 8 items indicating harsh or over-controlling behaviour in interaction with children by the caregiver.
- Permissiveness is a subscale made up of 4 items indicating avoidance of discipline and control of children by the caregiver.
- Detachment is a subscale made up of 4 items indicating lack of involvement in interaction with children by the caregiver.

Impact of quality as measured by the Caregivers Interaction Scale (Jefrey Arnett, 1989) on cognitive and social behaviour outcomes

	Pre-reading	Early number concepts	Independence & Concentration	Co-operation & Conformity	Peer Sociability
Positive relationships	+	+	+	+	+
Punitiveness	-	-		-	
Permissive	-	-	-	-	
Detachment	-	-		-	-

CLIQRS – Curriculum, Leadership Interaction Quality Rating Scales

A family of quality rating scales (QRSs)



Teachers College Press

<https://www.routledge.com/The-Sustained-Shared-Thinking-and-Emotional-Well-being-SSTEW-Scale-Supporting/Siraj-Kingston-Melhuish/p/book/9781032460499>

CLIQRS includes these subscales to support academic, social/emotional and physical development of children and pedagogical leadership of staff

Using appropriate scales by well-trained and reliable research/support teams

SSTEW

Based on observation – 4 sub-scales

- Building trust confidence and self-regulation
- Supporting and extending language and communication
- Supporting learning and critical thinking
- Planning and authentic assessment

Siraj, Kingston and Melhuish (2024)

Pedagogical Leadership in the Early Years - PLEY

Based on self-evaluation – 5 sub-scales

- Self-reflective leadership
- Leading others and managing change
- Intentional and relational learning and pedagogy
- Curriculum and Continuous Improvement
- Diverse partnerships and contextual literacy

Siraj & Kingston (2025)

ECQRS-EC

Based on observation – 4 sub-scales

- Language and literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and the environment
- Diversity

Sylva, Siraj, Taggart & Kingston TCP/Routledge

MOVERS

Based on observation – 4 sub-scales

- Curriculum, environment and resources for physical development
- Pedagogy and physical development
- Supporting physical activity and critical thinking
- Parents/carers and staff

Archer and Siraj (2024)

Example of the CLIQRS Rating System

Inadequate

Minimal

Good

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Principles underlying of the SSTEWS Scale

- Relational and intentional pedagogy
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Appropriate teaching and learning strategies
- Sustained Shared Thinking

Some first steps to supporting SST

- **Step one:** observe, wait and listen before you act, focus on what the child is doing and think about how you are feeling and what you want to achieve
- **Step two:** establish a connection with the child. The child should know you are there, that you are interested in them and what they are doing and that you want to spend time with time them (trust, security and safety)
- **Step three:** Use the materials in the same way as the child and wait for play openings (pauses looks at you for acknowledgement and/or help)
- **Step four:** Encourage children to solve problems for themselves and extend learning. Encourage the child to try new things, think creatively and find their own solutions (Look at the slide encouraging for further examples of practice)

Sam the Intentional Educator

During free play **Brendon**, aged 5, stands at the water tray soaking a sponge in the water and squeezing it out. Educator, **Sam** kneels beside him and imitates his actions

Brendon (after re-soaking the sponge): 'Its really heavy!'

Sam: 'I wonder what makes it heavy?'

Brendon: 'I think it's the water'

Sam: 'How can you tell?'

Brendon (thinks for a moment then squeezes out the sponge): 'Hey its lighter now! The water! The water makes it heavy!' (He fills then squeezes out his sponge again, as if to make sure) 'Now you make yours lighter'

Sam: 'How?'

Brendon: 'Squeeze out the water' (Sam does so) 'There you go.... Now your sponge is light like mine'

Sam then turns to **Joon**, aged 4, and holds out two sponges. When **Joon** takes one of them **Sam** pours water on to soak it. He puts a lighter drier sponge in **Joon's** other hand and gestures to show that the wet sponge is heavier. **Joon** has watched his friend **Brendon**, so now he squeezes out the wet sponge and weighs both sponges in his hands to feel the difference, smiling with his newfound understanding.

(adapted from Epstein, 2014)

Intentional Educator

Acts with knowledge and purpose to ensure that young children acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions they need to succeed in education and later life.

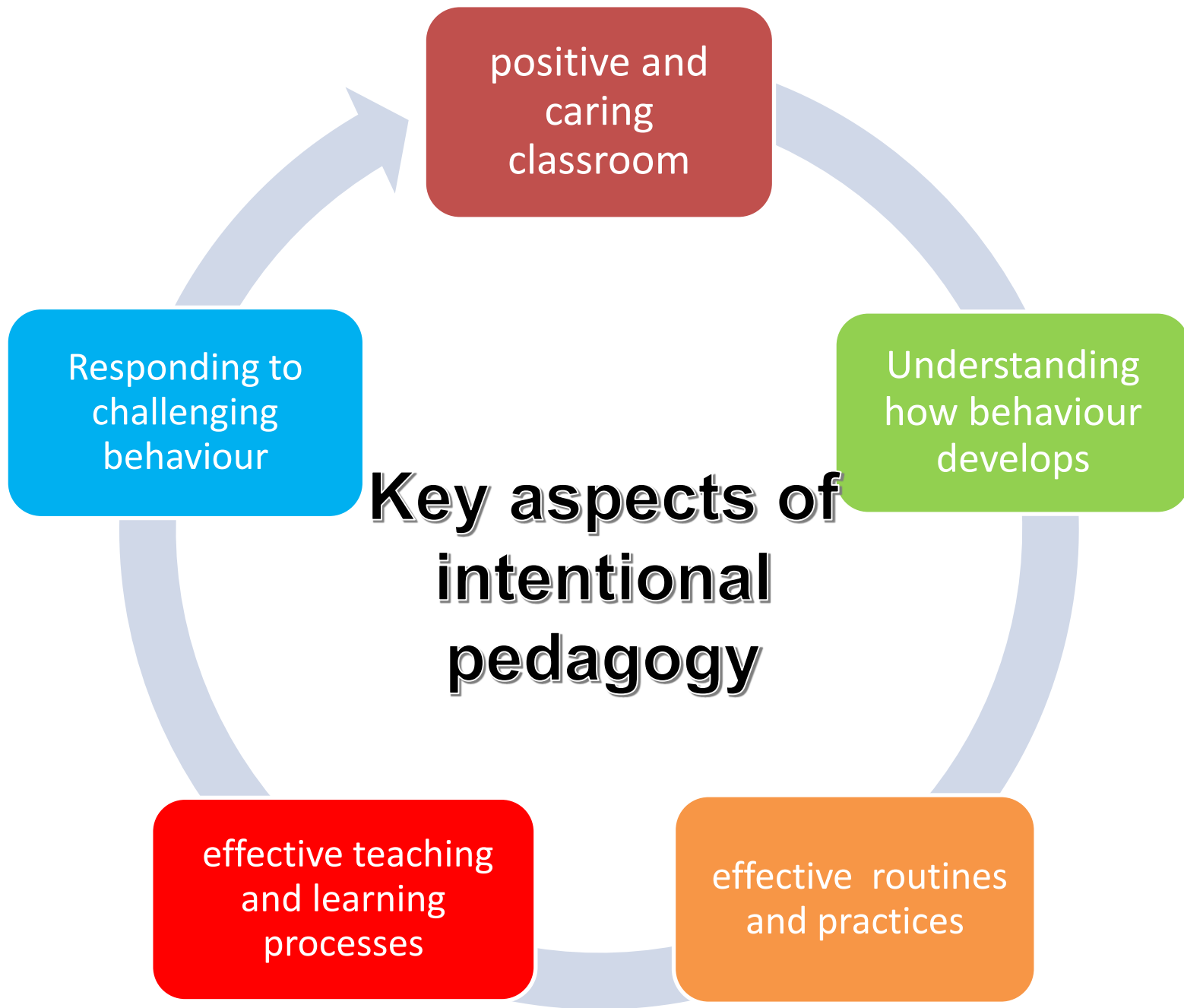
Intentional teaching is planful, thoughtful and purposeful. It requires a wide ranging knowledge about how children learn and develop, a repertoire of different teaching and learning strategies and specific content knowledge about what the children are learning.

Sustained Shared Thinking (Siraj et al 2024)

- Can be verbal or non-verbal.
- Emphasis on “contribution to thinking”
- The educator may ‘stand back’, ‘intervene’, ‘model’, ‘question’ ‘provoke’ etc
- The educator needs to be sensitive not necessarily talkative – the responsive adult who intentionally scaffolds learning.

Encouragement and feedback

- Commenting specifically on what the child has done
- Asking questions to learn more about the child's plans and thoughts
- Repeating children's ideas and imitating their actions
- Writing down or recoding the children's ideas; photographing the children's creations And displaying their work or photographs of work
- Drawing connections between the children's current words and actions and events or information that came up at other times or places
- Referring one child to another for information, assistance
- Sharing children's ideas, contributions and creations with peers, other staff members and family members



The positive and caring classroom: supporting PSED

- Building trust and relationships with and between children
- Supporting behavioural, emotional and cognitive self-regulation, developing choice and autonomy
- Understanding and responding to challenging behaviour

Effective practices and routines in the classroom

- Developing expectations, rules and routines to support behaviour
- Supporting transitions in class
- Engaging whole group/circle time activities
- Collaborative small group work
- Supporting transitions into and between class/school and other major life transitions

Effective teaching and learning processes

- Supporting high quality interactions through encouragement, questioning and feedback
- Assessment for learning/formative assessment
- Differentiation in the classroom
- Working with a critical friend: building reflective practice
- Staff self-care, building resilience and self-regulation
- Support for classroom planning and teaching

Aim of the session

How to intervene sensitively to support children's learning and extend thinking

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xj-bj9Jdvqo>

Blowing bubbles

Understandings Relational and intentional pedagogy

- Developing warm, trusting relationships as the foundation to all learning
- Adults intentionally support learning through interactions, they:
 - encourage, instruct, ask questions, simplify the task, remind children of the goal, make suggestions, model to emphasise key points, give feedback, support planning and evaluation, they scaffold learning.
 - Sensitively withdraw support as the child becomes able to carry out the task for themselves (self-regulating autonomous learners).

Strategies to extend learning:

- Help children see themselves as thinkers
- Respond to curiosity
- Use mirror talk
- Have conversations
- Inspire imaginative play

(NAEYC, 2020, Washington)

Strategies to extend learning:

- Solve problems together
- Use rich vocabulary
- Laugh with children
- Ask questions, and
- Link the new to the familiar

(NAEYC, 2020, Washington)

Establishing and maintaining an interactive environment

- Meeting children's basic physical needs
- Create a warm and caring atmosphere
- Encourage and support language and communication
- Encourage initiative
- Introduce information and model skills
- Acknowledge children's activities and accomplishments – encouragement rather than praise
- Support Peer interaction
- Encourage independent problem solving

Encouraging

- Commenting specifically on what the child has done
- Asking questions to learn more about the child's plans and thoughts
- Repeating children's ideas and imitating their actions
- Engaging in pretend play, following the child's lead
- Writing down or recoding the children's ideas; photographing the children's creations and displaying their work or photographs of work
- Drawing connections between the children's current words and actions and events or information that came up at other times or places
- Referring one child to another for information, assistance, sharing or further exploration together
- Sharing children's ideas, contributions and creations with peers, other staff members and family members

Adult supported role play and intentional and relational pedagogy

DVD clips

Intentional teaching, high expectations and support

Step One: CONNECT

- Creating a positive, caring and calm environment, including positive affirmation.

Step Two: BUILD SELF-REGULATION and PSED SKILLS

- Teach children about their emotions, their brain and body and what it needs.
- Teach children how to care for themselves and each other.
- Teach children about their triggers which cause stress or difficulties

Step Three: SUPPORT AND SCAFFOLD LEARNING

- Co-regulate with children until they can self-regulate.
- Teach strategies and use approaches that calm children and support self-regulation and PSED
- Build trust and relationships between the children (Item 1)
Support behavioural self regulation (Item 2)
Support emotional self-regulation (Item 3)
Support cognitive self-regulation (Item 4)

Relational and intentional pedagogy: *the golden thread*

R: Relationships

E: Enabling environments

A: Attentiveness

D: Dialogue

Y: Young citizens



How do the playful intentional teaching moments and experiences support positive wellbeing, attachments, relationships and skills for learning, life and work?

Relational and intentional pedagogy: *the golden thread*

“Intentional teaching: involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and action. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have ‘always’ been done that way.”

BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, pg.17 .



The ShREC Approach (James & Grenier, 2022)

- There is lots of evidence that emphasises the importance and power of high-quality interactions between children and adults.
- Siraj et al (2017) state: *“There is an increasing recognition that the relationship a child has with a teacher or caregiver that is both **sensitive** and **stimulating** is the central and most critical component of early care and education.”*
- But what do these interactions look like in practice? Based on SST (Siraj et al 2002)



HIGH QUALITY INTERACTIONS IN THE EARLY YEARS

The 'ShREC' approach

The aim of the ShREC approach is to provide early years professionals with a simple, memorable set of specific evidence informed strategies that can be embedded into everyday practice.

"When done well, high quality interactions often look effortless but they are not easy to do well."

EEF Guidance Report,
Preparing for Literacy



This resource supports the 'Preparing for Literacy' guidance report.

Sh



Share attention

Be at the child's level. Pay attention to what they are focused on.

R



Respond

Follow the child's lead. Respond to their non-verbal and verbal communications. You could make a brief comment on what they can see, hear or feel.

E



Expand

Repeat what the child says and build on it by adding more words to turn it into a sentence.

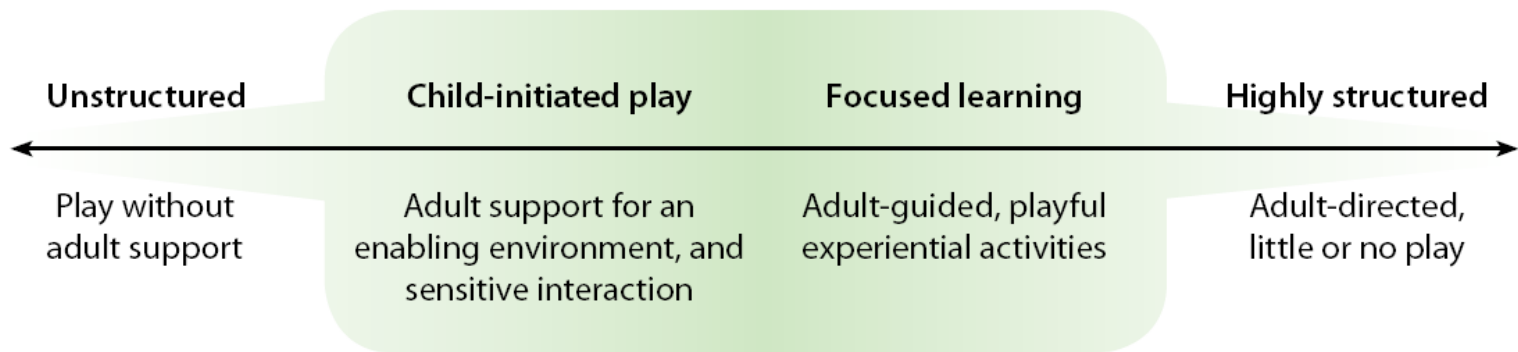
C



Conversation

Have extended back and forth interactions. Give children time to listen, process and reply.

Purposeful play and Child-initiated learning and focused learning (DCSF (2009) *Learning, Playing and Interacting*)



How might you be able to involve parents/carers in this important work? (please think especially about engaging families living with disadvantage)

Through:

- sending games/books home with clear instructions and guidance
- assessing and explaining their child's individual needs
- getting parents to try an self-regulation questionnaire and explaining how this develops
- Explaining the strategies and support their children are receiving

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