



ARTICLES

Dunst, Carl J., Tara Jones, Molly Johnson, Melinda Raab, & Deborah W. Hamby. 2011. "The Role of Children's Interests in Early Literacy and Language Development." *Center for Early Literacy Learning Reviews* 4(5). http://earlyliteracylearning.org/cellreviews/cellreviews_v4_n5.pdf.

This article describes findings from a study of the relationship between toddlers' and preschoolers' interests and language and literacy outcomes. It highlights how children's interests can be incorporated into early language and literacy learning experiences and activities.

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. 2018. "Understanding Motivation: Building the Brain Architecture that Supports Learning, Health, and Community Participation: Working Paper No. 14." *The Center for the Developing Child*. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/understanding-motivation-building-the-brain-architecture-that-supports-learning-health-and-community-participation>.

This report describes how young children are intrinsically motivated by exploration, active involvement in play, and achieving success or mastery of a task. When children can pursue tasks that are personally meaningful or choose how to complete tasks, they are more motivated to engage and persist.

WEB RESOURCES

The Kids Are in Charge: Children Guiding the Curriculum (Infants and Toddlers)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/teacher-time-series/kids-are-charge-children-guiding-curriculum>

This episode of Teacher Time highlights strategies that implement a responsive curriculum in an infant/toddler environment. It includes examples of teachers guiding the curriculum based on the children's interests. It also describes the three R's—Respect, Reflect, and Relate—and how they fit into the interactions children have with teachers.

The Kids Are in Charge: Children Guiding the Curriculum (Preschool)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/teacher-time-series/kids-are-charge-children-guiding-curriculum-0>

This episode of Teacher Time highlights strategies that use preschoolers' knowledge, skills, and interests to implement a responsive curriculum. It also includes sample videos of teachers creating a responsive learning environment.

Interest-Based Learning: Following the Children's Leads

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/following-childrens-lead>

This 15-minute in-service suite describes ways teachers can build on children's interests, provide children with choices, and encourage children to express their ideas.

Engaging Interactions: Making Learning Meaningful

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/making-learning-meaningful>

This 15-minute in-service suite helps adults make learning meaningful to support children as they understand the world around them. It explores three strategies: link new learning to children's previous experience; relate concepts to children's lives; and provide children with hands-on learning.

BOOK

Institute of Medicine & National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/19401/transforming-the-workforce-for-children-birth-through-age-8-a>

Chapters 4 and 6 provide useful information for education staff about the role of interests in motivation and children's learning. A free PDF download is available on the web site.