

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE JOINT ACTION ROUTINES

(From Snyder-McLean, Solomonson, McLean and Sack, 1984)

1. Obvious unifying theme or purpose so that the actions of different children engaged in the routine will be related and the theme will be meaningful and recognizable to all participants. There are 3 general types of routines:

- preparation or fabrication of a specific end product
e.g., food preparation, product assembly
- cooperative turn-taking games or routines
e.g., songs with spaces to fill in, peek-a-boo
- routines organized around a plot or theme
e.g., daily living routines, pretend play scenarios

2. Requirement for joint focus and interaction such that a need for interaction and negotiation is established.

3. Limited number of clearly delineated roles such that at least two different roles which are definable and predictable are assigned (e.g., speaker/listener; giver/receiver).

4. Exchangeable roles such that a child may be assigned to more than one role in the same routine.

5. Logical, nonarbitrary sequence in which the sequence is determined by the nature of the activity and can be predicted by the outcome or product.

6. Structure for turn-taking in predictable sequence so that the children can anticipate when they are supposed to wait and when they are supposed to initiate their turn.

7. Planned repetition used over time to establish role expectancy and sequence predictability, and used within a daily time block to offer each child several turns.

8. Plan for controlled variation by introducing novel elements against a background of familiarity and expectancy to evoke spontaneous comments.

- interrupt routine or violate expectation
- omit necessary materials
- initiate routine and "play possum"
- initiate old routines with new contents
- introduce new routines with old content