Observation of Peer Engagement Codebook

When conducting playground observations, observers should arrive at the child's school with ample time to locate him/her. Remember to bring a clipboard, a stopwatch, a writing instrument, observation sheets, and sunglasses. In order to protect the confidentiality of the child and to avoid questions from other children (e.g. "What are you doing?" etc.), observers should wear sunglasses so children cannot see where you are looking. Should a child inquire about what you are doing, reassure him/her that you are watching kids play fun games and that he/she should go play.

Observers watch for 40 seconds and code for 20 seconds.

Engagement States:	
Solitary/isolated	Child plays alone with no mutual eye gaze with other children. If the child is engaged SOLELY with an adult (e.g. teacher or paraprofessional, yard assistant, etc.) then the child is considered "solitary or isolated".
Onlooker	Child has one-way awareness of another child. It appears the child is watching another child or group of children or a game with interest OR the intent to participate.
Parallel	Child and peer are engaged in a similar activity but there is no social behavior. A common example is when two children are digging side by side in the sandbox but there is no social communication, awareness, or reciprocity.
Parallel aware	Child and peer engaged in similar activity and mutually aware of each other during activity.
Joint engagement	Child and peer direct social behavior, e.g., offering objects, conversing, toy-taking, and other activities with a turn-taking structure. Children may be physically fighting or engaging in otherwise inappropriate behavior and still be considered joint engaged.
Games with rules	Child participates in organized sports such as 4-square, basketball, or handball and/or engages in fantasy or pretend play OR a fantasy game that the child or his/her peers have created provided all children are playing by a set of rules that the children have specified. A game has to be with ANOTHER child. Typically, waiting in line is considered part of a game if the child is attending to the children that are currently playing. If the child is staring off or not attending to the game, then standing in line WILL NOT count as "Games with Rules". There has to be a clear indication that the child is waiting for his/her turn. He/she may converse in line and "on topic" with the other children and still be considered part of a game because the child is playing his/her role and appropriately waiting for a turn (handball, tetherball, 4 square are good examples).
Discrete Behaviors:	
Initiates	(|) General Initiation – These are initiations by the child that are not specifically directed to anyone in particular. Often, children will have something to say and are looking for someone to share it with, but don't seek out another person to engage with. For example, a child could scream out "Rockets are so fast!" and no one would be around to hear him/her despite the attempt.

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	(+) Child directs communication to a peer/peers—e.g., offers toy, greets, asks to play game, comments, states facts, etc. and the peer responds with a nonverbal gesture or verbal language. Responses can be negative in content (e.g. "I don't like you", "You smell", 'shakes head no' etc.) and still count as a (+) response from a peer. (–) Child directs communication to a peer/peers and the peer does not respond or ignores the child. Typically, the target child will speak to someone's back and will not get a response.
Response to Social Initiation	(+) Child responds to overture of peer with a nonverbal gesture, or verbal language (–) Child misses an opportunity to respond to a peer with a nonverbal gesture or verbal language.
	***If the child is engaged in a conversation, record in the appropriate column whether individual initiations and responses within the conversation. For example, if the child starts the conversation then responds to the peer's response, then that would be coded as a (+) in the "Chi Initiations" column and a (+) in the "Chi Response" column. during that interval and then not marked unless there is a break in the conversation which then resumes in the same observing interval.

Comments:

This is an opportunity to record any qualitative data that may provide a context for the child's engagement during recess or lunch. Ideally, a person who did not observe the interaction should be able to read the comments and determine what happened at this particular recess period. Record what the child is doing (e.g., playing handball, drawing, walking, engaging in self-stimulatory behavior, talking with a friend ,etc.) and any other notes that may be helpful in understanding the child's playground behavior. Make note of who the child engages with – gender of peers, classmates, peer models, aides etc. and any interesting or atypical behaviors.

Global Rating (regardless of time intervals)

1) **Child Behavior Rating**

These are behaviors that the child may demonstrate to other children on the playground.

a) **Amount**: this is coded by checking off any of the strategies listed and defined below. Any behavior that is observed no matter the duration or the frequency should be recorded.

   i) *Initiated to another Child*
   This occurs when the child makes an effort to engage another child or group of children in a conversation or an activity/game. This can be done by asking a question (e.g. do you want to play with me, can I play too, did you have a good weekend, etc.), using a nonverbal gesture (e.g. tapping another child on the shoulder, waving them over with a hand gesture, joint looking etc.), offering an object (e.g. sharing a ball, pass them a note, etc.)

   ii) *Responded to another Child*
   This occurs when the child responds to another child or group of children in a conversation or an activity/game. This can be done by answering a question, complying with someone's request (e.g. joining a game when asked, giving a ball, drawing a line in the sand, etc.), using a nonverbal gesture (e.g. signing 'okay'), continuing a conversation (e.g. making a comment to someone else's comment).

   iii) *Engaged in a Conversation (4+ exchanges) with another Child*
   This code documents whether or not the target child engages in a conversation with another child or group of children. It does not matter who initiated the first exchange, as long as there are 4 consecutive exchanges or more captured in one instance (not spread throughout the observation).

   iv) *Engaged in a Game with another Child or Group of Children*
   This code documents whether or not the target child engages in a game with another child or group of children. The game need not have structured rules like handball, soccer, or hopscotch. It may also include fantasy games of games that the children have created provided all children are playing by a set of rules that the children have specified.

   v) *Observed a Game of another Child/Group of Children*
   This code is used when the target child watches another child or group of children engaging in an activity or game. It is clear that the target child is not participating in the game or activity, rather watching with an intention of participating or with an interest.

   (1) *Amount Rating (RESAM)*: The sum of the number of skills listed above that was demonstrated by the child. RESAM should equal 0 – 5. A "0" is given if none of the skills listed above were seen. A "1" is given if 1 of the skills listed above were seen. A "5" is given if the child demonstrated all of the Responsive Skills. If all 6 skills were seen, also assign a value of a "5".

b) **Quality (RESQ)**
   i) Quality is a rating that reflects the execution ability of the *observed* skills. This is rated on a 1- 5 Likert scale. Do not take in to account any strategies that were not seen – *this is a rating only on the skills that were observed*. This rating requires a clinical

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judgment of the observed skills – how well you believe they were implemented by the child and whether there was any room for improvement. In other words, of the skills (listed above) that *were* displayed by the child, how well were they implemented?

(1)   Poor implementation (less than 25%)

Poor implementation: this is assigned when a child displays a skill(s), but the quality is exceptionally poor. Examples would be when a child attempts to initiate a conversation but only uses one word answers or responses that may be off-topic.

(2)   Less than Adequate (approximately 25% quality)

Less than adequate implementation: more effort and skill is displayed when implementing strategies than a "poor implementation", but the child is still having more than occasional difficulty.

(3)   Adequate (approximately 50% quality)

Adequate: this is assigned to children whose use of strategies may be good in some instances, but they struggle at other times. This is an "average" rating – they generally are in the right direction, but may occasionally benefit from some guidance on use of strategies.

(4)   Good, a couple small errors (approximately 75% quality))

Good: the use of strategies is close to perfect, but there is a small percentage of the time when the child had some difficulty. There should only be isolated instances when additional guidance would be needed for the child to correctly and successfully implement strategies.

(5)   Excellent, flawless implementation (approximately 100% quality)

Excellent implementation: there are no suggestions that you would give on how to improve the quality of the skills displayed. Each skill demonstrated by the child was shown in expert fashion.

c) **Developmental Appropriateness (RESDA)**

   i)   This is a rating of how accurately the child matched the strategies used to his/her developmental level in terms of *amount* and *frequency*. When considering the child's developmental level, include his or her language, attention, communication, play, behavioral, and overall functioning level.

   In this rating, you may take into account any strategies that the child used, but should not have implemented or strategies that the child did not implement but should have. For example, if the child seems to desire social interaction but appear to lack the social skill to initiate on his/her own – this would be a strategy that would be considered "missed" by the child and taken into account as a mismatch of **amount** of strategies. If child did display initiations, but not as often as developmentally appropriate for his/her age – then the child did not match the **frequency** of strategy usage that he/she could have.

   (1)   Poor matching of amount and frequency of strategies used (less than 25% matching)
   This rating is indicated when the child mismatched the **amount** of strategies used by 4 or more strategies; or, if the **frequency** of strategies used was severely lacking.

   (2)   Isolated matching of amount and frequency of strategies used (approximately 25% matching)
   Isolated matching of **amount** and **frequency** is indicated when the child selects one or two appropriate skills, but are missing three to four skills (**amount**). Another example of Isolated Matching is if the child selects appropriate strategies (**amount**) but misses many opportunities to use those strategies (**frequency**).

   (3)   Average matching of amount and frequency of strategies used (approximately 50% matching)
   In this instance, the child accurately matched the **amount** and **frequency** of strategies approximately 50% of the time to his/her developmental level. Another option for this code is that the **amount** of strategies was completely appropriate, but the **frequency** of those strategies being used was poor. The converse would also be true – if a couple of strategies were used with an appropriate **frequency**, but there was another one or two strategies (i.e., **amount**) that could have been used, an average score would be appropriate.

   (4)   Good matching of amount and frequency of strategies used (approximately 75% matching)
   Good matching of **amount** and **frequency** would be an appropriate score either when an appropriate **amount** of skills was used, but there were a couple of missed opportunities for a strategy to be used. Or, perhaps there was only one strategy (**amount**) that was missing from the child's repertoire.

   (5)   Excellent matching of amount and frequency of strategies used (approximately 100% matching)

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