

Guidance for use of the video *Fostering Essential Dispositions in Young Children*

About the video:

- The teachers and children featured in this video work and learn at one early childhood center situated on a university campus in northeastern Connecticut. The teachers work in either toddler or preschool classrooms. The ideas conveyed are applicable to children in other types of early childhood settings as well.
- After a brief introduction, the video contains six segments – one for each of the dispositions. In each segment, a classroom teacher describes how children express these dispositions and shares some of the ways that children are supported in this area. Each of the segments are also available as separate videos and can be accessed from the website.

Major points of the video:

- As adults support children in acquiring new skills and new knowledge, it is also important for them to think about the dispositions that children bring to learning.
- The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards outline six “essential dispositions” that adults should support in children in order to foster their competence as learners.
- Across all ages and domains early learning experiences should support children to be: Inquisitive, Creative, Flexible, Critical Thinkers, Purposeful and Reflective, and Social Learners.
- These essential dispositions are the foundations that set children up to be lifelong learners.

Considerations when using this video to support professional development:

- Although the construct of dispositions is difficult to define, it is useful to distinguish between the knowledge and skills children are learning and their tendency to think or act in particular ways while learning.
- The specific dispositions referenced in this video are those listed in the CT ELDS document on page 10. There are many other dispositions that could be considered. *It will be useful to emphasize that this is not an exhaustive list.*
- This video focuses on the ways these dispositions are seen in young children. *It might be worthwhile to also discuss what these same dispositions look like in the adults who care for them.*

Talking points:

- Adults can either support or deter children from developing these dispositions. What are some strategies that would promote the essential dispositions? In what ways can adults structure the schedule, materials and environments of young children in order to best support them? What types of practices are likely to undermine the development of these dispositions?
- How can we teach skills and knowledge in such a way that children will develop the dispositions needed to use and apply what they learn?
- Which of these dispositions may come naturally to young children? What kinds of experiences are likely to encourage the further development of these tendencies? Why might it be important to facilitate other dispositions that might not be as instinctive for children?
- How might adults make their own dispositions more noticeable so that children will benefit from their example?

HANDOUTS

- List of [resources](#) for further reading.
- List of [teaching strategies](#) to support the development of the essential dispositions in young children.
- A [worksheet](#) for a homework assignment / pre-work

Ideas for using the video have been organized by setting and for various audiences. → Some of the strategies may be useful across settings, or could be modified to suit the needs of a particular group.

