Initiation

Some children following an acquired brain injury will be less likely to initiate or start many activities.

What you might see	What this could mean	Strategies
 Child displays passive behaviour. Child is remaining alone rather than seeking out friends. Child has trouble getting started on an assigned task. Child is not contributing to class discussions. Child will tell what they are going to do but not follow it through. Child is needing prompts to maintain task activity. 	 Difficulty initiating activity. A specific language problem attention or memory difficulty and child may not know what is required. Consider that the child may be depressed. 	 Consistently praise and offer a positive reinforcement for specific behaviours that the teacher wants to encourage. Provide activities that are engaging and interesting to the child. Having a predictable, consistent routine will reduce the child's need to initiate activities. Provide a clear structure outlining the steps of the activity to assist the child in commencing and maintaining the activity. Provide a self-monitoring cue card for the child's desk or diary for the child to refer to— 'Do I know what I am supposed to be doing?' — 'Have I started the activity?' 'Am I still working on the activity?' 'Do I need to ask someone so I understand what to do next?' Set group work where the child has an assigned role and responsibility, or another peer as buddy to help reinforce participation. Provide "getting started" prompts. Prompts may be necessary at any point where there is a significant change in the activity. Refer to school counsellor or rehabilitation team for assessment of depressive symptoms.