

Child Assessment institute 2009

Collecting Child Assessment Information Systemically Across Typical Routines and Activities

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Different strategies can be used during classroom routines, choice time, and activity time to collect information on children that represent their range of behavior and skills.

Anecdotal

A narrative account of an observation that tells who, when, where, and what, but not why. It can record children's interests, abilities, or something of note that happened. That conclusion or inference is separate from the observation.

Feb. 12, 2009

In the block area, Kelly built a tower with six small rectangular blocks and then said to Marcus and Jacob, "Help me find the other rectangles." Together they looked for more rectangular blocks.

Class List Log

Format used to record one or more short, specific pieces of information about each child present on that day. The focus is determined in advance and the same for each child.

Date 9/29/08

Observer: Karen Smith

Observing: Separation from parent

Amy Kissed Mom goodbye

Brad Asked to watch Dad from window; quiet. Joined others after a few minutes

Checklist

A predetermined list of criteria against which the observer answers *yes* or *no*. A valid child development checklist records the accepted developmental milestones or sequences of knowledge, skill, and behavior.

Item	Evidence	Date
Large Motor Development		
Walks down steps alternating feet		
Runs with control over speed and direction		
Jumps over obstacle, landing on two feet		
Hops forward on one foot		

Frequency Counts

Measures repeated actions of a child or the whole group. Can be used to document the frequency of negative behaviors and track the decrease as appropriate strategies are applied.

Child's Name	Prosocial: Helping, sharing, hugging, kindness	Antisocial: Hurting, hoarding, name calling, rejecting another
Kara	x x x x	
Jacob	x x	xx
Ella		xxxx
Kenneth	xxx	x

Time Sampling

Tracks children's choices, their playmates, and the time spent in one area. It can give quantitative information about attention span and indicates children's interests. It can also show popular and less popular areas of the classroom.

Class AM Fours

Date: March 4, 2009

	9:30	9:35	9:40	9:45	9:50
Maniuplatives	Jon Katey Ben	Jon Katey	Jon Katey	Jon	Jon
Art Area	Melissa Tashi Caleb	Melissa Tashi Caleb	Melissa Tashi	Melissa Tashi	Melissa Tashi
Blocks	Shauna Kelly Jason	Shauna Jason Ben	Caleb Jason Ben	Caleb Jason Ben	Eric Jason Marcella
Science		Kelly	Shauna Kelly		Caleb

Rating Scale

Gives a range of criteria from which to choose rather than just the decision of *yes* or *no*. They are most reliable when the criteria is clearly defined and easily identified by the observer.

Literacy Rating Scale

Child's Name Jake Adams

Interest in books

No interest, avoids <i>9/10/08</i>	Only if adult-initiated <i>10/17/08</i>	Brings books to adult to read	Looks at books – self-initiated
Listening to books			
Wiggly, no attention <i>9/21/08</i> <i>10/1/08</i>	Intermittent attention <i>10/21/08 Can't last through whole story</i>	Listens in one-on-one situation	Listens as part of a group, tuning out distractions

Media

Use of audiotaping, videotaping, photography to capture authentic work of children. With written work, teacher would document the children's process or direct language interactions.

Work Sampling/Portfolios

Samples of children's work done at home or in the classroom that provides information about the child. Work can be dated and collected over time to show progress. Work can be saved in a portfolio for each individual child.

Information that can be in a portfolio can include:

Activity choices

Photos of child doing activities

Books made by the child

Dictations

Art projects, especially individually created

Examples of child's writing

Written observations

Audio tapes of child

Charts and graphs made with the child

Photos of block structures or other 3D items

Drawings

Displays of skill level

Developmental checklists

Videotapes of child

ABC Analysis

Recording of a specific behavior that identifies the **Antecedent**, **Behavior**, and **Consequences**. These can be reviewed by staff to determine the areas that can be changed to better impact positive behavior.

Child's Name Henry

Date	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequences
3/4/09	Cameron came over to look at H's block building	Henry yelled at Cameron, tried to hit him with a block	Henry spoken to by teacher; reminded to use words
3/5/09	Alex was next to H in the block area playing with a car	Henry yelled and pushed Alex over, saying, "You're ruining my building!"	Teacher told H to speak to Alex nicely; explained that Alex was not using his blocks.
3/6/09	In the block area, Cerise asked Henry, "Can I play with you?"	Henry yelled, "NO!" and pushed Cerise away.	Teacher came over and told Henry he could not push or yell at Cerise.

Event Sampling

A premade chart that can be used to identify possible causes of negative behavior.

Child's Name: Andrew

Behavior	Time	Location	Children	Antecedents	Results	Consequences
Hitting	9:45	Blocks	Adam	Adam came into block area.	Adam wanted to play with Andrew	Conflict resolution
Hitting	10:30	Playground	Adam	Adam near Andrew's bike	Boys fight about bike	Conflict resolution

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- **Think about how you view observations? Are they an integral part of your day? Do they provide more information about the children in your group? Can you use the information to plan successful curriculum activities for each child? Do you use observation only for recording assessment information? Do you feel you have to plan uninterrupted time to properly observe?**
- **Keep your observations simple.**
If your notes become too detailed, time is taken away from interacting with the children. Develop your own shorthand system for recording quickly. You don't want to view documentation of observations as a burden.
- **Decide who you want to observe**
Plan in advance. Write on your calendar children you will be observing each day for the month. Try to plan on observing a child a week or bi-weekly.
- **Decide what you want to observe**
Plan in advance what you will be observing. Do you have concerns about a child? What areas are of concern? What do you not know about a child? Are there developmental areas you have not observed? Do you want to focus each week on a specific observation?
- **Observe children at various times during the day**
Observe during arrival and departure times with their parents. Observe during daily routines. Note comments the children make when you interact with them. Ask children questions that encourage them to describe their thinking and respond in more than single word answers. Listen as children talk informally with other children and adults in the room.
- **Plan for observations during choice time**
If someone cannot come into your room to give you time for recording observations, observe children while they are independently interacting and learning during choice time. During group or teacher interaction time, jot a quick note to yourself and fill it in at the end of class time.

Ways of Recording Observations

- **Brief notes on mailing labels**
Keep a sheet of mailing labels on a clipboard with a pencil attached. At the end of the week, peel the labels off and place the labels in each child's section of a binder.
- **Index cards kept in a file box**
Record observations on an index card and file the cards in an index file box. Each child is given a labeled section of the file box.
- **Sticky notes kept in a file folder**
Observation notes on sticky paper can be grouped in categories listed on a file folder labeled with each child's name. Attach the sticky notes for each child in the proper category.
- **Additions to each child's portfolio**
Children's observations can be kept in their portfolios. Developing an observation guide can help focus attention on specific areas to observe.

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Additional Resources

For more information on collecting child assessment information and observing children the following resources may be helpful:

Books

The Art of Awareness: How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching by Deb Curtis and Margie Carter (Redleaf Press, 2002)

Focused Observations: How to Observe Children for Assessment and Curriculum Planning by Gaye Gronlund and Marlyn James (Redleaf Press, 2005)

The Power of Observation, Second Edition by Judy R. Jablon, Amy Laura Dombro, Margo Dichtelmiller (Teaching Strategies, 2007)

Basics of Assessment: A Primer for Early Childhood Educators by Oralie McAfee, Deborah J. Leong, and Elena Brodrova (NAEYC, 2004)

Week by Week Plans for Observing and Recording Young Children by Barbara A. Nilsen (Delmar Publishers, 1997)

DVD/VHS

Observing Young Children: Learning to Look, Looking to Learn by Laura Colker (VHS, 30 minutes, Teaching Strategies)

Focused Observations: How to Observe Children for Assessment and Curriculum Planning by Gaye Gronlund and Marlyn James (DVD, 74 minutes Redleaf Press, 2005)

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