



What you will learn about Observation and Documentation

QRIS Indicator for Step 5 Child Growth, Development, and Learning: Weekly documentation of each child's progress in daily routines is on file.

QRIS Indicator for Step 5 Strengthening Families and Communities Standard: Two parent teacher conferences are offered during the year.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT CAN BE USED TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

"Assessment of children's development and learning is essential for teachers and programs in order to plan, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom experiences they provide." (NAEYC, 2009, p. 22)

"Observe, recognize, and support children's unique ways of approaching new information and expressing themselves; taking into consideration their temperaments, inclinations, and attitudes." (Early Learning eGuidelines, Essential Practices, Cultural Context)

What does this look like in practice?

- Teachers use reflections from observation to make changes to the environment, schedule, methods, etc. as necessary to improve effectiveness for the group and for individual children.
- Teachers connect curriculum topics to children's interests, what children can do, and what children know and to cultural and social contexts of the children's lives.
- Teacher's assess children on an ongoing basis (i.e. observe, ask, listen in, check) during daily activities, including play (NAEYC, 2009, p.180).
- Teachers document children's learning and development, including in written notes, photographs, audio recordings, and work samples and use the information to shape their teaching moment by moment and in planning learning experiences (NAEYC, 2009, p.180).

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: DOCUMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT CAN BE USED TO SHARE CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESS, OR INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice: "Teachers and families share with each other their knowledge of the particular child and understanding of the child's development and learning as part of day-to-day communication and in planned conferences." (NAEYC, 2009, p.23)

What does this look like in practice?

- Teachers and families regularly share information in ways that are clear, respectful and constructive.
- Teachers and families make decisions together regarding goals and approaches to learning.
- Families are regularly informed about how their children are doing in all developmental domains.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: DOCUMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND CAN SERVE AS EVIDENCE FOR MEETING LEARNING STANDARDS.

"Curriculum should be linked to and guided by early learning standards and the standards recommended by professional groups in the various disciplines when these standards are of high quality and are achievable and challenging for preschoolers." (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE 2002; 2003)

What does this look like in practice?

- Teachers write early learning standards on activity plans.
- Indicate standards met or addressed in postings of photos of children at work and play.
- Provide explanations of standards involved with observation records, photos and work samples.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT CAN BE USED TO IDENTIFY CHILDREN THAT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS.

DEC Recommended Practice, C15, "Recommended practices are used to teach/promote whatever skills are necessary for children to function more completely, competently, adaptively, and independently in the child's natural environment."

What does this look like in practice?

- Teams observe children in the settings in which they regularly spend time to identify skills children need for participating actively in the activities and routines of those settings (DEC, 2005, p. 85)
- Teams consider multiple methods for documenting children's progress, such as frequency counts, per opportunity probes, work samples, checklists, videotapes and photographs (DEC, 2005, p. 84)

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT CAN SUPPORT EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS WITH GETTING TO KNOW EACH CHILD IN THEIR CARE

Core consideration in developmentally appropriate practice: "What is known about each child as an individual---referring to what practitioners learn about each child that has implications for how best to adapt and be responsive to individual variation." (NAEYC, 2009, p. 9)

"Observe, recognize, and support children's unique ways of approaching new information and expressing themselves; taking into consideration their temperaments, inclinations, and attitudes." (Early Learning eGuidelines, Essential Practices, Cultural Context)

What this looks like in practice:

- Teachers use observation, interviews, examination of children's work, individual child assessments, and talking with families to get to know each child.

REFERENCES:

- DEC (Division for Early Childhood). (2005). *DEC recommended practices: A comprehensive guide for practical application in early intervention and early childhood special education*. Missoula, MT: Division for Early Childhood.
- Gronlund, G. (2006). *Making early learning standards come alive: Connecting your practice and curriculum to state guidelines*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- NAEYC & NAECS/SDE (National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education) 2002. *Early learning standards: Creating the conditions for success*. Joint position statement. Online: www.naeyc.org/dap.
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