

Observation Assessment

Observing children is one of the best methods of on-going assessment of children. Some reasons are:

1. It looks at children in a natural setting.
2. Records what a child CAN DO.
3. Gives information for individualization.
4. Gives staff insight into the child as well as how the program is impacting the child.
5. Gives staff information with which to collaborate with parents regarding their child.
May include the parent's input as well.
6. It helps to identify children that may need special services.
7. Helps to determine if the program is being successful and meeting its goals.

Observation System

1. Teachers are the main people documenting but anyone can make an observation. For example the cook may notice that Johnny is serving himself at the table when previously he refused. The observation might read; Johnny smiled as he spooned the corn on his plate.
2. Use the items on the observation lists as a guide. "Singing to baby doll in housekeeping." Or under language, "I go?" as an example of the type of sentence the child frequently uses.
3. Document any of the items on the lists when you see them. Of course, you can write observation records on a child, in any classroom.
4. Always date the observation and put the child's name on it if you are recording the observation on a sticky note or index card.
5. You may "park" your sticky notes in the observation book until they can be recorded on each child's record or put index cards or other papers in the pocket folder in the front of the book. Weekly document, on the child's record, the observations that have been made.
6. Write what you *see leaving out your own commentary*. Ex. Stopped crying 3 minutes after mom left and did a puzzle, NOT--She was sad and became happy shortly after her mom left.
7. Keep sticky notes or index cards and a pen in your pocket at all times as well as in the classroom.
8. Use the children that are being individualized for as a focus group for the week's documentation and make a minimum of one entry for each child on the observation forms. Note any LAP skill(s) that the child has mastered and document these on the LAP report.
9. The information in the observation book is **CONFIDENTIAL** so please keep your book closed when "outsiders" are in the classroom. Put the book away when your classroom is unattended and parents or volunteers might be walking through.
10. Add additional paper as needed or utilize an observation sheet.