



## **Observation & Child Assessment 0-5**

### **GENERAL / APPROACH**

All education staff will observe children and write observations. Observations need to contain the facts, be specific, include the mood (tones of voice, facial expressions, body language, etc.) and a beginning, middle and end. Observations are entered by the Teacher, Specialist, and Teacher Assistants, as time allows. During Initial Home Visits, observations are collected through the ASQ, ASQ-SE, and then starting from the first day of class. Documentation of observations will be entered in My Teaching Strategies within 24 hours by Teacher/Specialist or Teacher Assistant. Group observations will need further editing to identify specific information about each child. A preliminary level needs to be assigned at this time.

Observations, Portfolio and Assessment information is used to develop curriculum plans including individualization and the environment. Valid and intentional planning that includes periodic family input is essential to good planning for the child's future growth. It is important to do quality assessment continuously in order to provide the appropriate selection of activities that will support the child's growth and development.

During Initial Home Visits, Teachers will invite and assist family members to create an account in My Teaching Strategies (if Wi-Fi is not available, Teachers can set up an account at the center). Teachers will encourage families throughout the year to electronically accept the invitation in their email (invite expires in 30 days). Teachers will electronically share all information with families. Family members can share written observations, photographs, and videos through the Family Portal in My Teaching Strategies. Teacher/Specialists will collaborate with families to assess progress, establish goals and next steps for at home and school, to ensure each student's success.

#### **HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:**

1302.33(b)(1) Assessment for Individualization

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **Observations**

Observations are collected in the My Teaching Strategies Database. See Observation & Assessment TS Gold Documentation Guide.

## **Observation Monitoring**

DLL students require the additional observations in Spanish language and literacy and will be monitored by the DLL Supervisor.

**In the Fall**, Teacher/Specialists will ensure prior to checkpoints that each dimension for each child has at least one completed observation.

**Winter and Spring checkpoints** will require at least two observations in each designated School Readiness Goal objective and dimension (School Readiness Goals: 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2c, 2d, 3a, 8b, S8b, 11a, 20a, 37 & 38). All other objectives and dimensions will require at least one observation for Winter and Spring checkpoints.

Teacher/Specialists completing **Summer checkpoints (EHS Only)** will complete a minimum of one observation for each dimension.

**Not Required** objectives - NOT YET (not developmentally appropriate for our children's age group)

- a. 15d, 18d, 18e, 19c, 20d, 20e, 20f
- b. NO DATA is required for the following (you do not need to enter not yet/not observed. And NO checkpoint data is needed)
  - i. Science & Technology
  - ii. Social Studies
  - iii. The Arts

During Education Planning, teachers will run an up-to-date Objective Status Report to monitor areas of need and implement them into the weekly lesson plan. Halfway through the checkpoint period Teacher/Specialists will need to ensure that 50% of all dimensions

have an observation completed. Each child in Head Start (referred to as the Focal Child) will be observed for the entire day to capture as much information for the domain areas as possible. Early Head Start will target developmental objectives and dimensions each week for all children. Home-Based Home Visitors will target developmental objectives and dimensions for each home visit and playgroup.

## **Guidelines for Observing Children**

1. Set realistic expectations for how and when to observe the child; it is neither practical nor necessary to observe the child for long blocks of time. It may be best to set aside 5 to 10 minutes during different parts of the day on a regular basis. Vary times, activities, and days of the week that you choose to observe a particular child. Children will not be pulled outside of class or daily routines to be directly tested.

2. Write down your observations; you should record what you see and hear during the observation or immediately afterward. Date each observation, and try to note times observed, activity, and who was with the child (e.g., peer and/or adult). Do not include other children's names in the observation. Be sure your recorded observations tell a story and are not fragmented pieces of information. Utilize both anecdotal and running observation techniques that capture a reflection of the child's current developmental stage.
3. Be objective, child specific, and detailed. Record what you see, not what you think you see. Avoid recording assumptions about what the child may feel or intend. Review your comments during debrief time and eliminate subjective or judgmental words or phrases.

### **Child Assessment**

Teachers/Specialists will observe and gather data on each child in all objectives and dimensions in My Teaching Strategies. Teachers/Specialists and Teacher Assistants will be Interrater Reliable for their assigned age group in My Teaching Strategies. In Head Start, each week eight children will be focal children. Plans and activities will be developed using the Individual Child Planning form. Focal children will have three planned activities.

In Early Head Start, each week all children will be designated focal children by each Teacher/Specialist. Plans and activities for focal children will be developed using the Individual Child Planning form. Focal children will have three planned activities. Each planned activity will include the School Readiness Goal it meets, IFSP Goals, Child Guidance Goals (when applicable), the My Teaching Strategies Objectives or dimensions, why it was chosen, and the Strategy/Activity. Possible small groups will include other children who are working on similar goals, which include the School Readiness Goals.

Teachers/Specialists will base their assessment determinations on multiple sources of input that will include the following:

- Parent information from Initial Home Visit, ASQ, ASQ-SE, Teaching Strategies Family Portal, home visits, parent report, and Family Conferences.
- My Teaching Strategies
- Observation of children, including during socializations
- Portfolio contents (Head Start)

After checkpoints have been assigned, the Teacher/Specialist will use the assessment data in My Teaching Strategies to begin the development of the Family Conference Form (See Procedure **Home Visits and Family Conferences**). Follow the procedure for completion of the Family Conference Form. If a child enters the program mid-year, please refer to the *Home Visit and conference Procedure*.

### **Portfolio System for Head Start:**

The portfolio is a record of some areas of the child's progress.

You will collect portfolio contents as follows:

- Children's writing
- Drawings
- Photographs; projects and studies, people they have interacted with and any child creations
- Written dictation

The Portfolio's content checklist assists you in establishing a system for collection. Staple the Portfolio contents inside each portfolio. You will gather samples three times throughout the program. Invite families to add their own samples to the portfolio. Details of the collection dates are on the Portfolio contents. Target dates are October, January, and April. These samples will reflect open-ended, developmentally appropriate activities (no dittos or product-like activities). Portfolios will capture each child's progress throughout the year. Portfolios will stay intact until the last conference when it is shared and given to the family.