

Observation & Child Assessment 0-5

General/Approach

All education staff will observe children and write observations. Observations need to contain the facts, be specific, including the mood (tones of voice, facial expressions, body language, etc.) and beginning, middle, and end. Observations are entered by the Teacher 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 SmartTeach within 24 hours by Teacher 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 (HS), and Assessment information are 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 SmartTeach (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 information with families. Family members can share written observations, photographs, and videos through the Family Portal in SmartTeach. Teachers 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 SmartTeach database.

Observation Monitoring

Dual Language Learners (DLL): Students require the additional observations in Spanish language and literacy and will be monitored by the DLL Coordinator.

Fall and Winter checkpoints will require one observation for ALL required objectives and dimensions. For full list please refer to the Required Objectives document (can be

found on the SharePoint).

Spring checkpoints will **require at least two observations** for ALL required objectives and dimensions. For full list please refer to the Required Objectives document (can be found on the SharePoint).

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)
 - a. Science & Technology
 - b. Social Studies
 - c. The Arts

During Education Planning, teachers will run an up-to-date Documentation Status Report to monitor areas of need and implement them into the weekly lesson plan. Halfway through the checkpoint period, the Teacher 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

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 regularly. 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.

1. 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 into pieces of information. Utilize both anecdotal and running observation techniques that capture a reflection of the child's current developmental stage.
2. 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 will observe and gather data on each child in all objectives and dimensions in SmartTeach. Teachers and Teacher Assistants will be Interrater Reliable for their assigned age group in SmartTeach.

In Head Start, each week eight children will be focal children. Plans and activities will be developed using the Individual Child Planning form.

In Early Head Start, each week all children will be designated focal children by each Teacher. 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 IFSP Goals and/or Child Guidance Goals (when applicable), the SmartTeach objectives or dimensions, and the Strategy/Activity. Possible small groups will include other children working on similar goals, including the School Readiness Goals.

Teachers 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.
- SmartTeach
- Observation of children, including during socializations (for HB)
- Portfolio contents (Head Start)

After checkpoints have been assigned, the Teacher will use the assessment data in SmartTeach to begin the development of the Report Card (See Procedure for [Family Conferences](#)). Follow the procedure for completion of the Report Card.

Mid-year enrollment: If a child is enrolled less than 3 weeks prior to the checkpoint due date, observation and assessment documentation is not required. Goals will be determined at the IHV, please refer to the [Initial Home Visit](#) and [Conference Procedures](#).

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:

Content	Fall	Winter	Spring
Children's writing sample			
Art/Drawing sample			
Cutting sample			
Written dictation			
Child chosen sample (something they want to show family)			
Photographs; projects and studies, people they have interacted with and any child creations			

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 contents of the Portfolio. 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 they are shared and given to the family.