



This guide offers suggestions for presenting **Ongoing Child Assessment: Planning for Assessment**. This in-service suite includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation (16 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities
 - » *The Assessment-Instructional Cycle* (Optional)
 - » *Methods of Assessment* (Optional)
 - » *Assessment Planning Matrix*
 - » *Activity Plan for Assessment*
 - » *Team Collaboration*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
 - » *Assessment Tracking Chart*
 - » *Daily Assessment Areas Chart*
 - » *Weekly Assessment Planning Matrix*
- Tools for Supervisors
 - » *Observation Form*
 - » *Weekly Assessment Plan Feedback Form*
- Helpful Resources
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to help participants efficiently plan for ongoing assessment of children's learning in the classroom.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites about ongoing child assessment.
- This in-service suite can be used alone or in combination with other in-service suites on ongoing child assessment to provide professional development regarding ongoing child assessment.
- Learning activities include practice in developing assessment plans, and assessment forms participants can use in their own classrooms.
- Consider bringing in different examples of assessment plans to share with participants.
- Optional learning activities and suggestions of potential follow-up activities for participants are described at the end of this document.

NOTE

These documents provide support and additional documentation for the ideas in this presentation:

Bredenkamp, S. (2011). *Effective practices in early childhood education*. (Chapter 11, pp. 343–344, 345–347, 348, 350–352). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Dichtelmiller, M. L. (2011). *The power of assessment: Transforming teaching and learning*. (Chapters 5, 6, and 10). Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.

McAfee, O., & Leong, D. J. (2011). *Assessing and guiding young children's development and learning* (5th ed.). (Chapters 4, pp. 49–52, 63–69; 5, pp. 73–76; 6, pp. 100–101; 7; and 9). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.



SLIDE 1: ONGOING CHILD ASSESSMENT: PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves.
- Conduct an icebreaker activity to promote participation.

Examples:

- Ask participants to identify and briefly describe their program's assessment system.
- Ask participants to share with a partner how they currently plan assessments in their programs.
- Ask participants to share a tip or a tool they use to plan or keep track of assessments in their classroom.

Introduce the topic.

This presentation describes and demonstrates the planning tools and strategies that teachers can use to efficiently collect and use ongoing assessment information about children's learning.





SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

The four components of the House Framework support school readiness for all children:

- The foundation represents effective and engaging interactions and environments.
- The pillars represent research-based curricula and teaching practices, and ongoing child assessment.
- The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning.
- All four components interact with each other and are essential to effective practices.

This in-service suite is part of the *Ongoing Child Assessment* pillar of the House. It focuses on how to systematically plan for gathering ongoing child assessment information in order to understand and make decisions about children's learning. Assessment information helps teachers evaluate children's progress, identify effective teaching practices, and prepare children for kindergarten.

NOTE


Remind participants that any record of child progress (including video, work samples, and photographs) must be treated consistently with their program's record-keeping policies, especially in regards to ensuring appropriate confidentiality of information.



OBJECTIVES

Planning for assessment includes deciding ahead of time:

- Which skills to observe
- Which method to use
- Which time and location is best
- Who is responsible for documenting each observation



EMPHASIZE *

We cannot simply assume children are learning because they are present in the program.

SLIDE 3: OBJECTIVES

The children in your Head Start classroom have to learn many things in order to be ready for kindergarten. How do you know they're learning what they need to know? By observing them during everyday activities in your classroom. Ongoing child assessment is necessary to understand children's progress, and is important to quality teaching and learning.

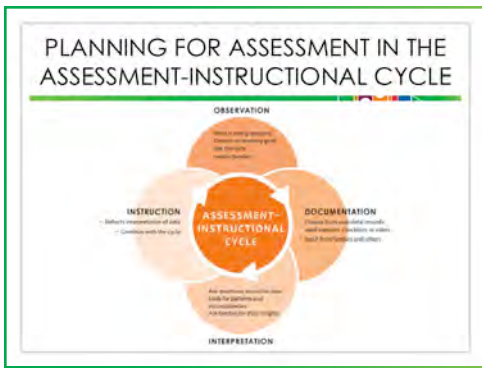
In this presentation we will discuss the main aspects of planning for gathering assessment information. Teachers decide ahead of time:

- Which skills to observe
- Which method to use
- Which time and location is best
- Who is responsible for documenting each observation

NOTE 

This presentation focuses on planning for gathering assessment information. Planning, however, is important for all steps in the assessment-instructional cycle—not only for observation and documentation, but also for interpretation and instruction.





SLIDE 4: PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE ASSESSMENT-INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE

The assessment-instructional cycle refers to the ongoing and interrelated decision-making process that takes place during child assessment. Teachers continually make informed decisions about what to observe and why, and they choose the best ways to gather and document information about children's behaviors. They also decide how to organize, interpret, and use the information to guide and adjust their instruction. Throughout the process, teachers seek input from families and share information with them.

Here are four points to keep in mind:

Observation

Planning for assessment can help teachers decide ahead of time what to observe and when, and who will collect the information.

Documentation

Teaching teams consider different ways to document progress, and select methods that work best for a particular behavior and activity.

Interpretation

Teaching teams develop a plan for how and how often they will review data, and how often they will meet with the child's family to discuss possible interpretations and identify further questions.

Instruction

Teaching teams, with input from the child's family, plan changes to instruction based on their interpretation of the data.

DISCUSSION

As the presenter, highlight the link between assessment and instruction by relating examples from your own experience of documenting and interpreting observations that led to teaching improvements.

Ask participants to share examples of when they have changed their teaching, based on their own classroom observations.

EMPHASIZE

The steps in the assessment-instructional cycle repeat continuously for each child.



OPTIONAL

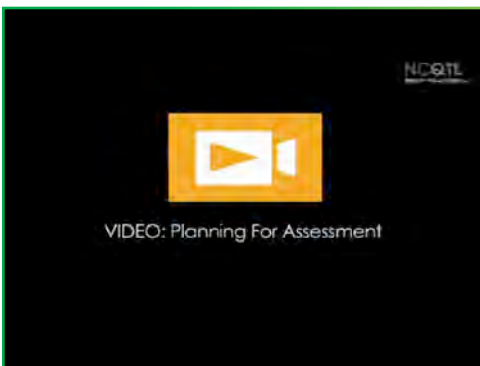


LEARNING ACTIVITY: THE ASSESSMENT-INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE

In this two-part activity, participants review and share their knowledge of the assessment-instructional cycle.

NOTE

Presenter notes for optional learning activities are located at the end of this document, after the closing slide.



Length of video: Approximately 6 minutes and 33 seconds

SLIDE 5: VIDEO: PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

Introduce the video.

This video shows teachers who are planning for assessment in their classrooms. Ask participants to think about the following questions as they watch the video:

- How do the teachers plan what information to gather?
- How do they choose the method they will use, and decide the best activity and time of day?
- How do they use the information they have collected to inform their teaching?

VIDEO

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share their comments and answers to the above questions.

Points to highlight from the video:

- The teaching staff plans assessments together. They decide who is going to do what.
- They plan activities that will allow them to assess different domains within the same activity.
- They use a variety of methods, in large and small group settings, to collect data across different activities (taking notes on clipboards, collecting work samples, taking photos).
- They debrief to discuss what happened and what worked.
- They have a system to organize the data and make sure all children are included.
- They look at the data to plan the next assessments, and inform instruction.
- They share observations and goals with families, and welcome family involvement in the assessment process.



CRYSTAL AND ELLEN
PLAN FOR ONGOING ASSESSMENT



EMPHASIZE *

Planning makes assessment gathering more organized and convenient.

SLIDE 6: CRYSTAL AND ELLEN PLAN FOR ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Crystal teaches a class of 20 children. She and her assistant, Ellen, go over the lesson plans for the coming week and talk about how things are going in their classroom.

Crystal and Ellen think most of the children are making good progress, but some may need additional support.

They decide that in the coming week they should check on the children's progress in several areas.

As Crystal considers the areas she would like to assess, she becomes concerned that they might not have enough time during classroom activities and routines.

With only two teachers in the room, the plan needs to be practical and efficient! Crystal and Ellen think about when and where they are the most likely to observe the behaviors they want to assess. They embed ongoing assessment throughout the day making sure that assessment is balanced with teacher-child interactions.

They have several goals:

- To gather information they can use to evaluate how the children are progressing.
- To use assessment information to decide how to adjust what and how they teach.
- To share that information effectively with families and specialists.

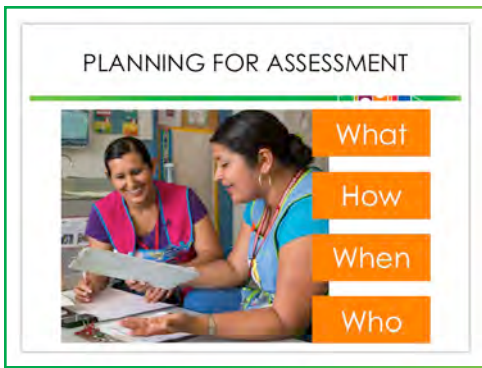
DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share some of their own concerns about gathering assessment information. What are some of the obstacles they currently experience?

NOTE

Record the responses on a large sheet of paper or whiteboard. At the end of the session, refer back to these comments. Ask participants if the concerns they raised were addressed during the training.





EMPHASIZE *

Make assessment plans at the same time you make lesson plans.

SLIDE 7: PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

As you plan your classroom lessons, you can plan for assessment at the same time. You will want to consider these questions.

What areas of development and learning are you currently focusing on?

- These are the same domain areas you should include in your assessments.
- Teachers often start with a general assessment plan for the whole class. They adjust assessment plans during the year for individual children, and for children with special needs.

How will you assess?

- Think about which assessment method will work best for a given learning goal.
- Think about how you will organize the information.

When is the best time to gather assessment information?

- Plan to embed assessment in ongoing routines and activities throughout the day.

Who will help gather assessment information?

- Plan so that everybody on the teaching team can assist.
- Encourage families' participation. How might they want to gather and share observations of their children's learning at home and in the community?





SLIDE 8: WHAT TO ASSESS: LEARNING GOALS

The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (HSCDELFF) describes important developmental building blocks for children's success. Teachers can use the knowledge and skills outlined in the Framework as a guide when they develop learning goals for the children in their classrooms. Teaching teams also refer to the Framework when they plan what to assess.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to think about how they currently plan assessments in the HSCDELFF domains.

They can think of one or two domains to use as examples.

Participants can write down notes to share with a partner, or volunteer to share examples with the large group.

NOTE

For more information on specific examples of knowledge and skills outlined in the Framework, remind participants they can view the HSCDELFF video at:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/center/hscdelf-video.html>



Usually, teachers begin the school year with a general, whole class assessment plan for the entire year. This includes universal learning goals for all curriculum areas, for the whole class. They adjust this plan throughout the year.

Through ongoing child assessment, it becomes clear which children need a bit of extra help to stay on track in specific curriculum areas. Specific goals are set for those children.

For children who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Behavior Support Plan (BSP), teaching teams collect data about progress toward their specific IEP or BSP goals.

NOTE

As the presenter, provide examples of learning goals from participating programs, if possible. Share goals with participants and review to see that goals align with assessment tools.



PLANNING HOW TO ASSESS: ASSESSMENT METHODS



SLIDE 10: PLANNING HOW TO ASSESS: ASSESSMENT METHODS

After you have reviewed the HSCDEL and your program's curricula and assessment tools, you will know what to assess.

The next step is to plan how to gather "data"—the information you need to inform your instruction. There are many different methods to choose from. Be sure to look at a variety of methods when you consider the most useful and practical way to document the skill you are interested in.

- **Anecdotal records:** If you are assessing children's learning in curriculum content areas where descriptive information would be helpful, plan to write down anecdotal notes of what the children do or say.
- **Work samples:** If you are assessing progress in domains that include items like drawings or constructions, plan to collect a sample or photo of the children's work.
- **Checklists:** If you want to keep track of how well children are learning specific skills, or how much assistance children need to be successful, plan to use a checklist to collect data.
- **Video:** If you need information about how children engage in interactive, physical, or problem-solving tasks, you could record a video. Videos also allow teaching team members to review an entire classroom situation at a later time.

NOTE

For more detailed information on each of the assessment methods mentioned above, refer participants to the group of suites in the series, *Ongoing Child Assessment: Collecting and Using Information*.

OPTIONAL



LEARNING ACTIVITY: METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

In this activity, participants practice choosing different methods to collect information about children's knowledge and skills.

NOTE

Presenter notes for optional learning activities are located at the end of this document, after the closing slide.



PLANNING **HOW** TO ASSESS:
GET ORGANIZED!



SLIDE 11: PLANNING **HOW** TO ASSESS: GET ORGANIZED!

After you have chosen the best methods to gather information on children's learning goals, it's time to get organized!

Develop an easy and practical way to make sure you collect enough information on all of the children in your classroom.

- An assessment chart can be posted on the wall, carried on a clipboard, or kept as a computer document. Some teaching teams use software programs designed specifically for assessment. All of these options will remind the teaching staff to collect information about each child's progress in each domain.
- The collected information must be organized to be useful. Set up a system of files and folders on the computer, or use a traditional storage system like a portfolio, notebook, folder, or binder.

As you develop weekly lesson plans, make weekly assessment plans at the same time.

- Think of upcoming activities. What opportunities will the teaching team have to collect progress information?
- Will you collect data about all the children, with a focus on one domain during the week?
- Will you, instead, gather information about a small group of children across several domains?

Or does your teaching team have another system for collecting and organizing the data?

Choose the methods that work best for you and your teaching team.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of how they organize ongoing assessment information.

As the presenter, share examples of organizing systems that you have experience with.

HANDOUT

Consider distributing and reviewing the *Tools for Teachers: Assessment Tracking Chart* (an example of an organizational system to make sure all children are assessed as planned) and the *Tools for Teachers: Daily Assessment Areas Chart* (a visual reminder of which areas to assess each day).



**PLANNING WHEN TO ASSESS:
ASSESSMENT PLANNING MATRIX**

Activity or routine	All children:	Individual children:		
		Etienne	Aiden	Olivia
Free play Engage in conversation Checklist Teacher At children by end of week Use writing tools Mark samples Assess At children by end of week			Responds to peer Checking Assistant Tuesday, Thursday	Joins group successfully Research Teacher Tuesday, Thursday
Circle Attend and participate Video to watch later Assess Wednesday, Friday		Pretends to read Assess Assistant Tuesday, Thursday		
Snack Use one-to-one counting Checklist Adults at table At children by end of the week				

SLIDE 12: PLANNING WHEN TO ASSESS: ASSESSMENT PLANNING MATRIX

Remember Crystal and Ellen? Crystal was worried about finding the time to collect ongoing assessment information.

Let's take a look at the assessment matrix they developed. First, Crystal and her teaching assistant thought carefully about the best activities and times to observe children's behaviors. Then they were able to develop an efficient plan to gather information within the flow of everyday activities and routines.

The first column lists the schedule of daily activities.

The second column is for all the children. It includes **what** information will be gathered, **how** it will be gathered, **who** will gather the information, and **when** it will be gathered.

- We can see that during **free play**, Crystal will use a checklist to record children's conversational skills while her assistant, Ellen, collects samples of children's early writing. Many teachers find it practical to observe and collect assessment information as the children play in centers.
- While Crystal leads **circle** time activities, Ellen will record video clips that capture examples of children's attention and participation.
- During **snack** time, the adults will encourage children to count objects. They will use a checklist to mark progress in one-to-one counting for each child.

The other three columns are for individual children with specific learning goals.

- During free play, Ellen will use a simple checklist to record how many times **Aiden** responds when a peer initiates a social interaction. For **Olivia**, all staff will take brief notes on whether and how she is able to join a group of peers to play.
- During circle time, Ellen will take notes on **Etienne's** interest in books and reading.

Crystal's matrix illustrates how her team has planned ahead to gather information. The teaching team has made an assessment schedule that fits their classroom needs. It enables them to collect data at convenient times, during everyday activities, without disrupting the general flow of the day.

SLIDE 12 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

EMPHASIZE *

Data can be collected at convenient times during everyday activities without disrupting the flow of the day.



The matrix also serves as a guide to ensure that all teaching team members complete the assessments as planned. Planning together ensures that everyone agrees on what they're each responsible for, and how they can work together. For example, one member of the team leads a large group activity while another records data.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of their own assessment planning. As the presenter, share examples of scheduling assessment tasks based on your own experience.



LEARNING ACTIVITY: ASSESSMENT PLANNING MATRIX

In this activity, participants practice using an assessment matrix to plan data collection.

Divide the large group into smaller groups.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Assessment Planning Matrix* learning activity and review directions. Also distribute and review the *Tools for Teachers: Weekly Assessment Planning Matrix*, which includes a blank form for participants to use in their own classrooms.

NOTE

The *Assessment Planning Matrix* learning activity includes a handout of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (HSCDEL) wheel to help participants identify learning goals for this exercise.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Assessment should focus on important learning areas or domains.
- A matrix can be organized by the activity or routine, by a group of children, an individual child, or a child with individual needs (i.e., dual language learners, children with IEPs).
- Be sure to include who, what, where, and when.



LEARNING ACTIVITY:

ACTIVITY PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT

In this activity, participants brainstorm different strategies for gathering assessment information as part of their daily classroom activities and routines.

Divide the large group into smaller groups.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Activity Plan for Assessment* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Assessment can occur during planned group activities.
- Choose convenient times, strategies, and people to help assess children's progress.
- Be sure to include what, how, when, and who.

PLAN FOR SHARING

- Plan for how and how often to review assessment information.
- Schedule regular meetings with teaching teams and families to make decisions about teaching.



SLIDE 13: PLAN FOR SHARING

Programs need to have an assessment system in place that addresses all steps of the assessment-instructional cycle. In addition to planning what to assess and how, teaching teams need to have a plan in place for reviewing, interpreting, and sharing assessment information, and for using that information to adjust teaching.

The plan should include how you will review assessment information, and how often. It should also include how you will exchange information with a child's family.

Schedule regular meetings with teaching teams, specialists, and families to discuss progress, set new goals, and determine adjustments to instruction that are needed for each child.

For example:

- Staff can share and discuss their observations at the end of the day, or at the beginning of the following day.
- Teaching teams can meet weekly to discuss possible interpretations, and identify further questions and next steps.
- Teachers can exchange information with families as needed, to better understand a child's learning at home and in the classroom.





LEARNING ACTIVITY: TEAM COLLABORATION

In this activity, participants practice discussing how they will collect assessment information and collaborate with other team members on the tasks involved.

Ask participants to work with a partner.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Team Collaboration* learning activity and review directions. Also, refer participants to the *Tools for Teachers: Weekly Assessment Planning Matrix* for examples of learning goals.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Teachers need to understand why the information they will collect is important for instruction.
- Staff needs to know how to collect the data and what the data will look like.



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 8 seconds

SLIDE 14: VIDEO: THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

Introduce the video.

This is a short clip from the video we watched earlier in this session. As we watch it again, we'll focus on how planning for assessment can help teachers gather data as a regular part of everyday activities. Planning ahead helps ensure that teachers can collect enough information to assess children's progress and make informed decisions about teaching.

VIDEO

DISCUSSION


Ask participants to share their comments about how they would develop (or improve) a system to plan for, gather, and use assessment information to inform their teaching practices.



**SUMMARY:
PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT**

Develop a comprehensive assessment plan:

- Determine which areas to assess.
- Plan when to gather the information.
- Choose an assessment method.
- Develop a system to organize the information.
- Involve team members in the planning.
- Schedule times to review information to inform instruction.
- Share information.



EMPHASIZE *

Planning for assessment helps teachers incorporate the assessment process into daily activities.

SLIDE 15: SUMMARY: PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

Let's summarize how you can plan for assessment in your Head Start classroom.

- Determine which areas of development and learning you need to assess.
- Plan to gather ongoing child assessment information at convenient times during regular classroom activities.
- Choose the most practical and effective method for each type of behavior or skill.
- Develop a simple system to collect and organize the data for all of the children.
- Involve all members of the teaching team, and plan so they can help.
- Plan how and how often teaching teams, specialists, and families will review and interpret data.
- Schedule regular meetings with teaching teams and families to share information and make decisions about instruction.

NOTE

Ask participants to review the concerns they expressed earlier about collecting ongoing assessment information. Ask if their concerns were addressed during the training.

HANDOUT

Distribute handouts, if not distributed during the presentation. Based on participant roles:

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*. This handout briefly highlights material covered in this in-service suite.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Teachers*. This set of handouts includes an *Assessment Tracking Chart*, a *Daily Assessment Areas Chart*, and a *Weekly Assessment Planning Matrix* for participants' use in their own programs.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Supervisors*. These two handouts are meant for participants who are supervising programs or grantees. They can be used to guide conversations about assessment planning with classroom teams.
- Distribute the *Helpful Resources* list and review key resources.



FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

SHARE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS:

- Work with a peer to develop an assessment plan together.
- Ask a more experienced colleague to share examples of planning tools.
- Discuss options for how family members might contribute to the assessment process.
- Choose a time and day to discuss assessment with teaching teams on a weekly basis.



SLIDE 16: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources that support effective assessment and teaching practices in the classroom.

OPTIONAL



LEARNING ACTIVITY:

THE ASSESSMENT-INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE

Suggested placement is after Slide 4.

In this activity, participants review and share their knowledge of the assessment-instructional cycle.

This is a two-part activity. The parts could also be used separately.

Ask participants to work individually or with a partner.

HANDOUT

Distribute *The Assessment-Instructional Cycle* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to describe their examples of the four steps of the assessment-instructional cycle.



OPTIONAL



LEARNING ACTIVITY: METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Suggested placement is after Slide 10.

In this activity, participants choose from different assessment methods, and practice planning how they would document children's knowledge or skills.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Methods of Assessment* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- There are many different methods you can use to assess a child's progress, including anecdotal records, checklists, videos, and work samples.
- To decide on an assessment method and activity, think about which ones would best illustrate the behaviors and skills you want to observe.