

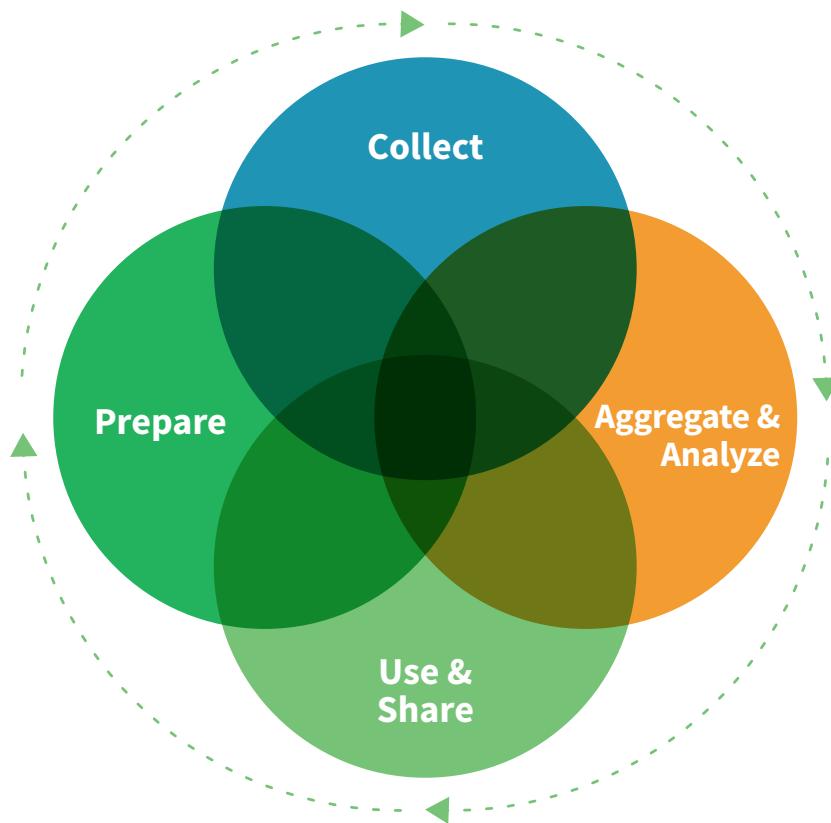


B. Collect

The Collect stage is when you and your staff put plans into action. This stage is important, because data need to be relevant, accurate, and timely in order to be useful for decision making and individualizing. Paying close attention to what is being assessed, when, how, and by whom, will help ensure collection of high-quality data that are meaningful and useful.

Complete the following activities (items 12–16 on the worksheet in [Appendix B](#)) as part of the Collect stage:

- ✓ Review children’s existing records.
- ✓ Identify what to assess based on the assessment instrument. This instrument must align with the ELOF and the state’s ELDS.
- ✓ Gather information about children from their families. Make sure to ask about their routines and what children typically do at home.
- ✓ Ask families about DLL’s language history.
- ✓ Review children’s IFSPs or IEPs.



1. What to assess.

Review the assessment tool, curriculum materials, and the information in the bullets listed on [page 21](#). Then have education teams identify assessment targets before children begin receiving services.

Staff should determine what to assess based on what they know about each child. Home-based staff should work with families to determine what to assess. For example, staff need to assess children with IEPs or IFSPs for skills in their IEP goals or IFSP outcomes as well as skills identified in the assessment tool. See [Appendix D](#) for more information about deciding what to assess when working with children who have IFSPs or IEPs.

2. When to assess.

Staff conduct observation-based assessments when they observe and interact with children as they do familiar activities with familiar people in familiar settings. Have the education team plan to assess knowledge and skills during daily learning opportunities and routines. Home visitors can ask parents to observe children as they engage in daily activities and routines and share information during regular visits or socializations.

3. How to assess.

To collect ongoing assessment information, staff might make anecdotal notes, use checklists, collect work samples, and review video. Staff can learn more about ongoing child assessment strategies on the [Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center \(ECLKC\)](#) at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/screening-assessment-evaluation-observation>.

3a. Anecdotal records.

An anecdotal record is a written note about what a child said or did during a typical routine or activity. Records share progress about the child's knowledge or skill in an ELOF or curriculum goal. An anecdotal record is a factual description only—without an assumption or judgement. Include the date, time, and location where the observation happened to help you track progress.

THE BASICS: ANECDOTAL RECORDS

Date and time: *January 24, 2014*

Setting: *Outdoor play area*

Curriculum area/domain: *Gross Motor*

Child: *Jackie N.*

Objective description:

Jackie pedaled a tricycle 10 feet in a straight line.

Observer: *Miriam S.*

From: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/ongoing-child-assessment>

3b. Checklists.

Staff can use a checklist while observing a group of children to gather information about goals in a domain or sub-domain. The items on the checklist must be observable and measured with a “yes” or “no” response. Staff might write checklists in a variety of ways based on the information they need. Checklists work better for some content than others. For example, staff can document physical skills with a “yes” or “no” response. Social and emotional skills require more information, such as anecdotes and observations in different settings or during different parts of the day. The example below shows a physical development checklist used in a toddler classroom.

Domain: Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development						
Sub-Domain: Gross Motor						
	SARAH	JUAN	THOMAS	ADRIAN	MATEO	MARIANA
Walks and runs, adjusts speed when needed	Yes 3/20					Yes 3/20
Throws, kicks, jumps, climbs	Yes 3/20		Yes 3/20	Yes 3/20		
Experiments with moving the body in different ways, such as dancing	Yes 2/18					
Maintains balance and posture while sitting and concentrating		Yes 2/22		Yes 2/22		
Adjusts position of body to fit through or into small spaces		Yes 2/12				Yes 3/16

3c. Work samples.

Work samples are products (or pictures of products) that children have created. Staff organize work samples in a physical or digital [portfolio](#) that they review periodically to track children’s progress. Home-based staff can ask families to keep or take pictures of any artwork they create at home and then review them together during regular visits. Home visitors can also collect work samples and video during socializations.

Share portfolios with families regularly so they can see how their child is progressing. Samples and photos are a great way to engage families, since they can see evidence of what their child is doing.



From: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/ongoing-child-assessment>.

3d. Video.

Staff can collect and review video clips that show a child performing ELOF-related skills. These videos often show progress children have made and, with adequate permission, teachers can share them with families during a conference, through electronic applications (apps), by e-mail, or through text messages. Home-based staff can ask families to record children demonstrating ELOF-related skills, or staff can record during socializations and view and discuss with parents during the next home visit.



From: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/ongoing-child-assessment>

4. Strategies for documentation.

In classroom and family childcare settings, use a matrix to plan where and when to document, as well as which staff members will observe and collect documentation. Include what to observe, where to observe, when to observe, and how to observe (checklists, anecdotal records, etc.) in their lesson plans. Home visitors should plan observations with families during home visits and socializations.

It is important to [document](#):

- during observations and interactions throughout the day or during a home visit
- when entering data into a physical or digital portfolio, so staff can summarize and access it over time

Regular documentation is important to ensure that staff collect accurate data. Without a documentation system, it is easy to forget what you observed and even which children you observed. For example, if staff use anecdotal records, they will need materials to make notes, either on paper or digitally.

If staff use checklists, make sure they are developed in advance and available during observations. Checklists need to fit the observation. These forms include the date, activity, and children's names. To use work samples, staff must keep the product that the child constructed or take a picture of it. Physical work samples should include the child's name, date, activity, and a description of what the child said or did.

Many teachers and home visitors use file folders or bins with children's names on them to avoid misplacing documents. At the end of the day, staff can enter information into a computer.

4a. Data storage and summaries.

Develop a data storage system so staff can enter information from ongoing child assessments and store them physically or electronically over time. Some authentic assessment instruments provide a system for entering and storing data that staff can use to report children's progress. Other software programs that are not connected to an assessment instrument also allow staff to enter and summarize data. Staff should make sure they have a system in place before collecting data.

4b. Fidelity.

Programs need a system for checking the fidelity of data collection during ongoing assessment. Supervisors might check the fidelity of data collections when working with teachers in classrooms and during home visits. Here are some ways you can check fidelity:

- Observe and collect data at the same time as the teacher or home visitor. Then compare documentation to see if he or she documented the same observations you did. If a teacher has difficulty collecting data, provide additional implementation support.
- Review the process that staff use to record observations to be sure they assess all children across all domains. If there are gaps in the system, help develop a focused assessment plan so that staff can collect all data for all children.
- Review the assessment instrument scoring to be sure that staff score the tool correctly. If there are errors, review the scoring system to determine where there is a misunderstanding.

4c. Monitor data collection.

Programs need systems for ensuring that data collection is happening according to the timeline created in the Prepare phase. The timeline should specify dates for each phase of observation and data entry, as well as fidelity checks and data entry.

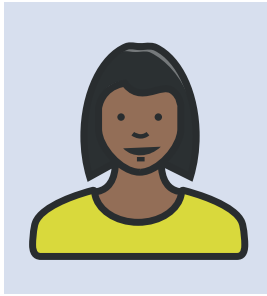
Programs should:

- monitor teams' progress toward meeting these timelines,
- learn how staff use the information with children,
- identify skill gaps to inform professional development, and
- consider supports to enhance staff's capabilities (including technology supports and time to enter data).



From: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment/article/ongoing-child-assessment>

Case Story



The Westcott Head Start program provided professional development workshops on ongoing child assessment at the end of the summer. Education teams met regularly as they started implementation. For three years, Westcott has been using an authentic, ongoing child assessment instrument that aligns with the ELOF. This instrument helps staff identify what to assess in groups of children and individual children. Teachers include a plan for conducting ongoing assessment in their weekly lesson plans. In the pre-K classrooms, teachers use checklists and observation recording forms to collect assessment data during planned learning activities. The forms include the developmental skill progression for the child development goals most aligned with the activity's learning objectives. During less structured play and exploration, including outdoor play, teachers document children's knowledge and skills with digital cameras, anecdotes, and observations. Teachers document observations during daily routines and play times. They also ask families for their insights on their child's skills and behaviors. Home visitors work together with families to set goals for children and then observe and document during and between visits and during socializations.

Center-based staff find time in their weekly planning meeting to look across these data and determine which key information about children's development they need. Then they plan to introduce learning activities or enhance learning centers to encourage children to use these skills. They also reflect on whether they are using their ongoing assessment instrument with fidelity and check in with each other to make sure they are documenting and scoring the assessment tool accurately.

The program's home visitors focus on helping parents observe and understand their child's development. They work jointly—from planning for assessment, to ongoing observations, to planning home visits that use the information. The assessment process is an ongoing part of each visit and each planning session. Parents record what they observe during the week in daily routines, play, and everyday activities. They assess often enough to help them stay on top of the child's development, so they learn what to expect at different age levels and have a planning framework. Recording and documenting assessment information is ultimately the responsibility of the home visitor. Socializations also offer opportunities to observe social skills.

Supervisors and coaches work with classroom teachers and home visitors each year to help them implement ongoing child assessment. It has been especially helpful to have someone observing and providing feedback to all staff members as they conduct ongoing assessment. The coaches have also been instrumental in checking fidelity, scoring the assessment instrument, and providing support when needed. Over time, the fidelity

of observation, scoring the instrument, and data entry have all improved. The planning team for Westcott Center is meeting to review the first cycle of ongoing assessment. This team includes the education manager, a coach, the data coordinator, disabilities coordinator, a preschool teacher, and a home visitor. The planning team looks at the data they collected for all classrooms and home-based services. They will identify any missing data, and develop a plan for staff to collect missing data and enter it before summarizing the data from the first cycle. The team will report data about fidelity for the center. Members of the planning team will reflect on how things have been going and list any changes that might be helpful for the second phase of ongoing assessment.

