

## Ongoing Child Assessment: Overview

Narrator: Welcome to this short presentation, Ongoing Child Assessment: An Overview. The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning has developed a number of 15-minute in-services, or modules, that describe and give examples of important practices for high-quality child assessment. These in-services are organized around four themes: preparing or planning for assessment, collecting and organizing information, interpreting or making sense of the information, and strengthening your program. We use the house framework to represent the key features that need to be in place to support school readiness for all children. Ongoing child assessment is one of those features.

Ongoing child assessment is a continuing process of observing children, documenting those observations, and using the information to improve teaching and improve learning. We use the information we collect to meet the needs of children who are struggling and to provide the right level of challenge for children who are excelling. It is important to start with a plan. The plan specifies that we collect information about all of the children and across all of the domains of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.

The plan also tells us that we collect information on a regular basis, often enough to know how the children are doing, and we collect assessment information within the context of typical activities whenever possible. It can be helpful to have an assessment schedule to make sure that all of the important information gets collected in a timely way. The plan also tells us who will collect the information; that might be the teacher and the assistant teacher. Some programs involved others as data collectors, but the people who are collecting the information should have the training and support to gather accurate data.

There are many different ways to collect or gather child assessment information. Teachers write anecdotal notes, they collect samples of children's work, they use video, and they use checklists. Teachers also gather information from children's families. In order to use child assessment information, it is helpful to keep it organized and to summarize it. Some of the ways that teachers organize their data is by using notebooks or portfolios or using computerized management systems. Teachers will also want to think about whether they will organize their data by individual child or by curricular domain. The information needs to be easy to locate and summarized so that the teachers can use it.

Ongoing child assessment means that the teaching team gathers information on a regular basis and they also use it on a regular basis. Teachers examine the data to see what it tells them. Is this child or group of children making good progress? Is this child or group of children struggling? Or, has a child or group of children achieved a goal? Teachers use the data to make adjustments to their teaching.

If children are making good progress, they may provide additional learning opportunities. If a child or group of children is struggling, they may try a different approach or break down the learning goal into smaller parts, or provide more practice. If a child or group of children has achieved the learning goal, the

teacher may move on to more challenging goals. The purpose of collecting ongoing child assessment information is to improve teaching and to improve child outcomes. Learn more about each of these topics from the in-services on ongoing child assessment. Thank you for listening.