

## The Circle of Learning and the program's assessment system

Assessment is part of the teaching process. We assess so that we can scaffold. We want each child to grow to **their** next level. In order to help them do this, we need to know where they are. We are now held accountable for program outcomes and honest assessment as well as family goals. There are program requirements for documentation that must be met.

- The minimum number of observations needs to be completed.
- It is important to have your observations be meaningful and to the child's level.
- Do not just write observations in order to check off the requirement.

We need to recognize the importance of individualization. Each child's portfolio needs to be kept current and reviewed weekly.

- To assess where the child is in their growth
- To plan activities for their growth
- To plan opportunities to meet program outcomes
- To plan opportunities to meet family goals

It is important to have time each day to complete observations you have taken. We want to do this daily while the observations are fresh in our minds and so as not to take time away from lesson planning on plan day.

### Weekly Planning day

First:

- Review observations of the students you will be focusing on planning for the next week (6 children each week) for example
- Review the student's portfolios to allow for individual planning as well as the individual graph or Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Second: Curricula planning

Small group:

- Refer to portfolio observations and objectives needed to plan for the group – within that group you may see a need for individual children.

- This is the time to plan to teach skills for outcomes and program requirements
- Keep in mind next steps – plan for growth

#### Circle

- Introduce skills
- This is an important time to develop language and vocabulary skills especially using books
- Look at transition as a time to teach or assess simple skills.

#### Free Choice time:

- Teach and scaffold to individual needs and goals of children and be sure the environment includes opportunities for growth.
- Include opportunities for children's interests.

There is a difference in teaching activities and assessment activities. We assess to know what to teach and we teach a skill and then assess it. Not all activities and group work will involve formal assessing. Sometimes you will just take personal notes to help you plan for a child or a group of children.

Weekly plans need to include some sort of activity for the following: transition, small group, circle, free choice, etc. for:

- Rhyming
- Letter knowledge
- Language development
- Counting and numbers
- Data Representation (graphs)
- Early Numeracy
- Writing – not just name samples but journaling and other writing opportunities.

With your coach, take a look at the year as a whole and get a general idea of where you want to go and how. If you plan your small groups for every two weeks or a month, this can help you with activities to meet the various levels and you can also work on pre-written observations and have them ready in advance.

As you begin to use this system, be sure to ask any questions you may have or ask for more support from your coach.