

Ongoing Child Assessment Procedure

1302.33 (b) Assessment for individualization. (1) A program must conduct standardized and structured assessments, which may be observation-based or direct, for each child that provide ongoing information to evaluate the child's developmental level and progress in outcomes aligned to the goals described in the *Head Start Early Learning Child Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*. Such assessments must result in usable information for teachers, home visitors, and parents and be conducted with sufficient frequency to allow for individualization within the program year. (2) A program must regularly use information from paragraph (b)(1) of this section along with informal teacher observations and additional information from family and staff, as relevant, to determine a child's strengths and needs, inform and adjust strategies to better support individualized learning and improve teaching practices in center-based and family child care settings, and improve home visit strategies in home-based models. (3) If warranted from the information gathered from paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) of this section and with direct guidance from a mental health or child development professional and a parent's consent, a program must refer the child to the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA for a formal evaluation to assess a child's eligibility for services under IDEA. (c) Characteristics of screenings and assessments. (1) Screenings and assessments must be valid and reliable for the population and purpose for which they will be used, including by being conducted by qualified and trained personnel, and being age, developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and appropriate for children with disabilities, as needed. (2) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English, a program must use qualified bilingual staff, contractor, or consultant to: (i) Assess language skills in English and in the child's home language, to assess both the child's progress in the home language and in English language acquisition; (ii) Conduct screenings and assessments for domains other than language skills in the language or languages that best capture the child's development and skills in the specific domain; and, (iii) Ensure those conducting the screening or assessment know and understand the child's language and culture and have sufficient skill level in the child's home language to accurately administer the screening or assessment and to record and understand the child's responses, interactions, and communications. (3) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and qualified bilingual staff, contractors, or consultants are not able to conduct screenings and assessments, a program must use an interpreter in conjunction with a qualified staff person to conduct screenings and assessments as described in paragraphs (c)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section. (4) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and can demonstrate that there is not a qualified bilingual staff person or interpreter, then screenings and assessments may be conducted in English. In such a case, a program must also gather and use other Part 1302 §1302.34 31 Administration for Children and Families, HHS information, including structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home language from the family, for use in evaluating the child's development and progress. (d) Prohibitions on use of screening and assessment data. The use of screening and assessment items and data on any screening or assessment authorized under this subchapter by any agent of the federal government is prohibited for the purposes of ranking, comparing, or otherwise evaluating individual children for purposes other than research, training, or technical assistance, and is prohibited for the purposes of providing rewards or sanctions for individual children or staff. A program must not use screening or assessments to exclude children from enrollment or participation.

Assessment is an evaluation of children's development and learning. Assessment information is used to understand children's strengths and needs and provides important information to help set individual child goals and assess progress toward program school readiness goals.

In our Head Start full-day center-based and family child care and in our Early Head Start center-based, home-based and family child care program options, our formal assessment tool is the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS). The AEPS is inclusive of children with

disabilities, and children who are dual language learners. We also do ongoing informal observation and use many resources for supporting the understanding of development. These resources include, but are not limited to, The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos, Parents as Teachers, and Resources for Infant Educators.

Families are their children's first teacher and know their child best. It is important that every family be involved in meaningful ways to support their child's school readiness. For families, school readiness means they are engaged in the lifelong success of their child. Our program is committed to working with families as full partners in this process.

When children and families enroll in a full year program option, the teachers/primary caregiver/home visitor/educator introduces the AEPS and explains how we do ongoing assessment and how the information is used to develop Individual Learning Plans (ILP).

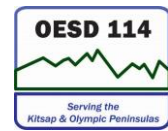
A copy of the AEPS Family Report must be given to the parent/guardian no later than one week prior to the home visit or meeting with the family. In partnership with the families, enrolled in center-based and family childcare programs, the teacher/primary caregiver/educator will complete Section 1 of the AEPS Family Report with the parent/guardian within the first month of enrollment. Families enrolled in home-based programs will complete all areas of Section 1 of the Family Report with their home visitor within the first four home visits. This information will assist in the building of relationships with families and in developing a better understanding of family and child routines and dynamics. The Family Report must be reviewed and updated each assessment period with the family.

Families have important information to share about their child's skills and abilities and must be given the opportunity to share information about their child.

The teacher/primary caregiver/home visitor/educator will complete the Family Report with the parent/guardian by reading the questions from the report to the parent/guardian. Refer to *Completing the AEPS Family Report* program procedure.

For Section 2 of the AEPS Family Report, document the date you are completing the form in the space at the top of each development section. When recording the answers to the questions use a "Y" if the parent/guardian feels the child can perform the skill or action described, an "S" if the parent/guardian feels the child performs the skill or action sometimes and an "N" if the parent/guardian feels the child does not yet perform the skill or action. When two "N" responses are recorded, stop, and put a line and the date. This will indicate where you will start the next time you do a formal assessment. At the end of each developmental area, space is provided to document the skills or actions that are important for the child to learn next. These skills/actions can be used to support a child goal(s) when completing the ILP with the family.

During each assessment period, the teacher/primary caregiver/home visitor/educator will use the AEPSi Child Observation Data Recording Form for recording observations. Once the



teacher/primary caregiver/home visitor/educarer has completed the Family Report with the family and the Child Observation Data Recording Form online these will become the basis for the child's ILP. The goal(s) identified on the ILP will be based on the areas identified in the AEPS Family Report, Child Observation Data Recording Form and/or screening results. Parent's input is vital to this process. Refer to the *Early Head Start Individual Learning Plan Procedure*.

If a child enters the program when the next assessment period is more than 90 days away, the primary caregiver/home visitor must assess the child within the first 90 days of enrollment. If a child has been enrolled for four weeks of the assessment period, drops or moves to another classroom/program model, you must complete an assessment for the assessment period.

The AEPS Family Report and the AEPSi Child Observation Data Recording Form must be filed in the Child Services section of the child's file. Update the Child Services monitoring log and PROMIS when completed. The teacher/primary caregiver/home visitor/educarer must ensure all areas of the tools are completed each assessment period.

Timeline for completing assessments:

Fall Assessment Period: July 1 – November 15

Observations will be collected July 1 through November 15

Assessments need to be completed and finalized by November 15

Winter Assessment Period: November 16 – March 15

Observations will be collected November 16 through March 15

Assessments need to be completed and finalized by March 15

Spring/Summer Assessment Period: March 16 – June 30

Observations will be collected March 16 through June 30

Assessments need to be completed and finalized by June 30

All observations and assessments must be completed and finalized into the AEPSi system by each due date.

A child with an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) in a Head Start full day center-based or a family child care program option or in an Early Head Start center-based, home-based or family child care program option will be assessed using the AEPS. Goals identified on the IFSP/IEP and information from the AEPS will be used to develop the child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) in partnership with the parent/guardian. Teachers, primary caregivers and home visitors will work in partnership with local early intervention agencies (Part C Providers) or school district Special Services to provide ongoing services to families.