



## Presentation Summary for

# EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION: ONGOING ASSESSMENT

APRIL 17, 2015

Guest speaker Dr. Mary McLean joined us to discuss how to plan and use ongoing child assessment information to provide high quality teaching and learning for children with disabilities. We walked through the process of understanding a child's annual IEP goal, teaching observable skills that are smaller steps toward the annual goal, and using data to determine how well our teaching is working.

### **What is ongoing assessment and why is it so important?**

Ongoing assessment is a system where children's skills are observed and documented during typical routines and activities. It is fundamental to effective teaching. Regular assessments of children's learning help us know if children are making progress, learn how well our teaching practices are working, and decide whether or not we need to adjust our teaching to help children make better progress.

### **What is unique about collecting data for children with disabilities?**

Head Start teachers are already monitoring the progress of all children in their classrooms. For children with disabilities, data collection takes a bit more planning and effort, but takes place within the activities and routines planned for all children. An effective teacher does the following:

- Provides the child instruction around smaller steps toward a larger, annual goal.
- Provides more opportunities for the child to practice skills.
- Collects and reviews data more frequently.
- Reflects on teaching approaches more frequently.

### **How can a disabilities coordinator help a teacher make sense of an annual goal?**

IEP goals are written as annual goals. The first step in making sense of an annual goal is to break it down into smaller steps. There is an opportunity for a disabilities coordinator to take a broad, sometimes overwhelming target, and break it down into smaller skills that feel more manageable to the teacher. The goal can be broken down in the following ways, starting from the child's current level of ability:

- Smaller amounts
- Level of help provided
- Step-by-step
- Logical order

## How does a disabilities coordinator help a teacher figure out how to measure progress?

Start by ensuring that each skill the teacher is targeting to help the child make progress toward the annual goal is *observable* and *measurable*.

- Observable—can you see and hear the behavior?
- Measurable—can you count it, time it, or measure it in some way?

## Once the goal is broken down, and we are teaching behaviors that can be observed and measured, how do we collect data?

Head Start programs typically have systems in place for collecting data for all children, so teachers are already on their way. Some common collection methods are:

- Checklists—sheets where data can be noted in a variety of ways, organized by activity, IEP goals, or individual children
- Work samples—examples or photos of children’s work that demonstrate a particular skill
- Video—recording a skill using a smart phone, digital tablet, or other recording device
- Anecdotal records—descriptive notes about the child’s skills or behavior

The above strategies are useful for children with IEPs, but it can also be very informative to record the frequency, accuracy, and/or level of support offered to the child.

Method	Frequency	Accuracy	Level of prompt
<b>What to observe and record</b>	How often a behavior occurs	Percent of accurate responses based on the number of opportunities provided	Level of independence
<b>How to record</b>	Record a tally: 	Record correct and incorrect responses: +, -	Record prompt level: FP—Full Physical PP—Partial Physical V—Verbal G—Gestural P—Picture
<b>When to use this method</b>	When we want a behavior to increase or decrease	When it is important to perform skills correctly	When trying to decrease the amount of adult support needed by the child to complete the skill
<b>Example</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase raising hand</li> <li>• Decrease hitting</li> <li>• Increase turn taking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answering yes/no questions</li> <li>• Receptive color ID</li> <li>• Expressive object labeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk up/down stairs</li> <li>• Line up with peers</li> <li>• Respond to peer requests (to pass or share something)</li> </ul>

## How do disabilities coordinators help teachers find data collection systems that work for them and their team members?

The good news is that data can be taken within ongoing activities. There's no need to set up separate activities for the purpose of assessment.

The disabilities coordinator can individualize assessment recommendations based on each teacher's unique skills and classroom environment. Data collection strategies that are feasible and informative for the teacher and other classroom team members are more likely to be used. Here are some options:

- Notecards on a ring
- Address labels
- To keep count—painter's tape on leg, rubber bands that can be moved from one wrist to another, golf counter
- Smartphone or digital tablet apps
- Clipboards for each activity center and routine
- Activity matrix

## This is a lot to keep track of. How do disabilities coordinators help teachers plan for ongoing assessment of all children, including those with IEP goals?

An activity matrix can be used as a helpful planning tool to determine when it's a good time to work on targeted skills. You can use [this matrix](#) to help organize ongoing assessment for all children in the classroom. Once your instruction is planned, the data can be collected directly on the matrix.

Note: If the activity matrix is posted in a public space, the children's confidentiality can be maintained by using initials in place of their full names.

## Once a teacher is collecting all of this wonderful information about the child's learning, what happens next? (organize/summarize/make it visual)

First, organize child-specific data together, in a place that is easily accessible such as a folder or binder. Next, summarize the data. Then the data can be displayed visually, in a way that provides a clear picture of how the child is learning. This can be done with a line, bar, or pie graph that can be created in different ways:

- Made with Excel
- Hand drawn
- Made with data sheets that have built in visuals
- Made with apps

## Once the data has been summarized, how does the teacher use the data to make decisions about instruction?

A careful examination of the data that you have collected can provide the information you need to determine how well your teaching is achieving its purpose—to help children learn.

How is the child doing?	What should be done?
Making progress	Continue what you have been doing
Not making progress	Change what or how you are teaching
Goal accomplished	Move on to something more challenging

**Resources:**

ECLKC 15-minute In-service Suites and tools:

- [Breaking it Down: Turning Goals into Everyday Teaching Opportunities](#)
- [Ongoing Assessment: Children with Disabilities](#)
- [All other Ongoing Child Assessment In-service Suites](#)
- [Activity Matrix: Organizing Learning Throughout the Day](#)
- [Weekly Assessment Planning Matrix](#)

Head Start Disabilities Services Newsletter: <http://hsicc.createsend1.com/t/ViewEmail/j/141CB898373CF316>

For more information, contact us at: [NCQTL@UW.EDU](mailto:NCQTL@UW.EDU) or **877-731-0764**

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