

Program Self-Assessment Booklet 10

Child Development and Health Services: Individualization

Core Question to be answered by the Self-Assessment team:

How does the grantee, in consultation with the family, individualize the program of child development and health services to meet each child's unique characteristics, strengths and needs?

Purpose:

Individualization assures that the program recognizes the uniqueness of each child and staff respond by individualizing approaches to child development, education and family partnership.

This booklet will help the team assess if the program meets Federal *Performance Standards* relating to how services are responsive to each child. Related *Performance Standards* include: 1304.20(d); 1304.20(f); 1301.21(a); 1304.21(b); 1304.21(c)(1)(i); 1304.23(b)(1); 1304.40(a)(2); 1308.19.

As you conduct your assessment of the program's ability to individualize child development and health services for children, look for evidence that:

- Families are involved in establishing goals for their children to meet their social/emotional, language and academic needs in order to be prepared for school
- The system used by the program to assess children is ongoing
- Individualization addresses:
 - ✓ Child interests
 - ✓ The eight domains of learning and development
 - ✓ Temperament
 - ✓ Language
 - ✓ Cultural background
 - ✓ Learning style
- Teaching staff tie individual children's goals into the overall curriculum

Helpful tools to support data collection in this area follow.

Review:

Ask the Head Start director and/or responsible manager to provide you with access to the following documents:

- Evidence of individualized planning
- Evidence that plans address child interests, developmental strengths, temperament, needs, oral language and early literacy skills, cultural background and learning style
- Ongoing monitoring reports
- **Important data sources relevant to this area such as the *PRISM* report, *PIR* data, Community Assessment, strategic plan or short and long term program goals**

Reminder: a member of the staff serving on the Self-Assessment team must conduct file reviews.

Record your results below:

My review of ____ (fill in number) child files revealed that:

- ___ all files show evidence of individualized planning
- ___ a substantial number of files show evidence of individualized planning
- ___ very few files show evidence of individualized planning

Comments:

Early Head Start			
(Please check appropriate column)	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Files show that individualization addresses:			
■ Child interests			
■ Developmental strengths			
■ Temperament			
■ Needs			
■ Learning styles			
■ Languages			
■ Early literacy skills (e.g., book knowledge, book language, phonological awareness, print awareness)			
■ Math and science concepts			
■ Cultural background			
■ Health/nutrition considerations			
Information in the child files shows that parents provide input into the education and child development services that are planned for their child			
Classroom curriculum plans reflect individualization and are based on information contained in the child files			
Planning for socializations indicates evidence of individualization			
Socializations include parents and their infants and toddlers			
Head Start			
(Please check appropriate column)	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
Files show that individualization addresses:			
■ Child interests			
■ Developmental strengths			
■ Temperament			
■ Needs			
■ Learning styles			
■ Languages			
■ Early literacy skills (e.g., book knowledge, book language, phonological awareness, print awareness)			
■ Math and science concepts			
■ Cultural background			
■ Health/nutrition considerations			
Information in the child files shows that parents provide input into the education and child development services that are planned for their child			
Classroom curriculum plans reflect individualization and are based on information contained in the child files			

Observe:

Two members of the assessment team, one staff person with a child development background and another staff person or parent, should select a specific number of children to observe. The “observation team” might have two or three “focus” children. In conducting an observation, team members should focus on one child at a time for an extended period (typically no less than 30 minutes).

The following questions are adapted from the *PRISM* Classroom Observation and *PRISM* Home Visit Observation tools and the National Institute for Child Health and Development Caregiver Language Checklist. Use your observations of children to answer the following and record your comments:

Is there evidence that the teacher or caregiver responds to the child’s vocalizations or bids for attention? (e.g. the caregiver responds verbally by repeating a sound or naming the object the infant/toddler is pointing to or comments on what the child said to expand the conversation.)

Yes No Comment: _____

Is there evidence that the teacher or caregiver supports the learning of the child? (e.g., notices what the child is working on, takes out a special puzzle or helps a child with a disability participate in a physical game by holding hands or going slowly.)

Yes No Comment: _____

Is there evidence that the teacher or caregiver adjusts the activity to reflect the needs of the child? (e.g., accepts non-verbal response to a question or offers adaptive equipment like larger crayons or double-handled scissors to the child.)

Yes No Comment: _____

Is there evidence that the teacher or caregiver provides a supportive learning environment? (e.g., offers a hand to a new walker, moves furniture to accommodate a child with motor planning problems.)

Yes No Comment: _____

Interview:

A member of the assessment team should interview teachers and/or home visitors, family child care providers, and a sample of parents. Use the following questions to assist you with interviews:

Questions for education managers, teaching staff and home visitors:

How does the curriculum support individual needs, abilities and learning styles of children?

How does the curriculum support individual needs in the areas of oral language, literacy, and school readiness?

What information is taken into account to individualize planning for each child?

Talk about three children you currently work with. What have assessments revealed? How have you used this information to design activities and experiences to support these children in attaining new goals?

Describe the practices within your program that ensure a continuity of services and care for children as they enter and exit the program.

How does the program involve parents in supporting individualized child development?

How does the program involve parents in supporting individualization based on oral language, early literacy and academic skills?

For Early Head Start:

Are there adequate transitions from Early Head Start to Head Start or another setting in the community? Does transition planning for Early Head Start children begin six months before the child's third birthday?

Questions for parents include:

What kinds of things is your child learning by participating in Head Start?

Are there other things that you would like to see your child learning? If yes, have you discussed this with your child's teacher/home visitor?

Have you participated in home visits with the teaching staff as well as staff/parent conferences? Tell me about those visits and conferences.

Do you work together with your child's teacher/home visitor to plan activities that you can do with your child in your home?

Team Member Summary Worksheet

Summary of Results for Individualization

Areas where the program is working well. Provide examples of program strengths or areas where the program exceeds *Performance Standards*:

Areas where the program needs improvement:

Additional areas of concern:
