THE NATIONAL CENTER ON Quality Teaching and Learning

PRESENTER NOTES
USING DATA TO INFORM TEACHING

This guide offers suggestions for presenting ***Ongoing Child Assessment: Using Data to Inform Teaching***. This in-service suite includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation slides (14 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities
  - » *Early Writing Scenario*
  - » *Expressive Language Scenario*
  - » *Persistence Scenario*
  - » *Direction-Following Scenario*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
  - » *Decision Making Chart*
- Tools for Supervisors
  - » *Assessment Review Form*
  - » *Interpretation Form*
  - » *Observation Form*
- Helpful Resources
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to help participants learn to interpret assessment information and use it to make adjustments to teaching.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites about ongoing child assessment.
- Participants will practice interpreting different types of assessment information and then using that information to make decisions about instruction.
- Consider bringing in interpretations of assessment information to share with participants.
- Suggestions of potential follow-up activities for participants are provided at the end of this document.

NOTE

These documents provide support and additional documentation for the ideas in this presentation:

Bredekamp, S. (2011). *Effective practices in early childhood education*. (Chapter 11, pp. 343–344, 345–347, 348, 350–352). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Dichtelmiller, M. L. (2011). *The power of assessment: Transforming teaching and learning*. (Chapters 5, 6, and 10). Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.

McAfee, O., & Leong, D. J. (2011). *Assessing and guiding young children's development and learning* (5th ed.). (Chapters 4, pp. 49–52, 63–69; 5, pp. 73–76; 6, pp. 100–101; 7; and 9). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

SLIDE 1:
ONGOING CHILD ASSESSMENT: USING DATA TO INFORM TEACHING

Introductions:

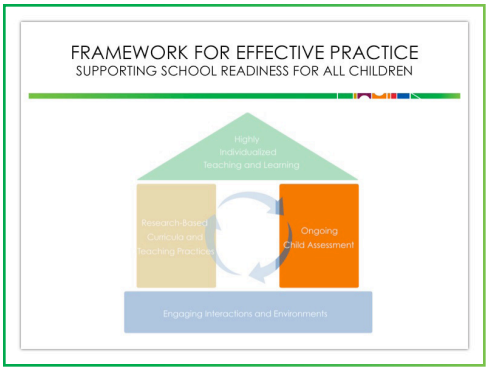
- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves.
- Conduct an icebreaker activity to promote participation.

Examples:

- Ask participants to describe one of the main purposes of ongoing child assessment.
- Ask participants to share an example of a question they have had about a child's learning.
- Ask participants if they have ever changed their instruction, based on information they have learned through assessment of a child's progress.

Introduce the topic.

This presentation discusses how to use data from ongoing child assessment to inform teaching. Ongoing child assessment is a continuing process of observing children and documenting their progress.



EMPHASIZE

Documenting and interpreting information on children's progress can help teachers become more effective.

SLIDE 2:
NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

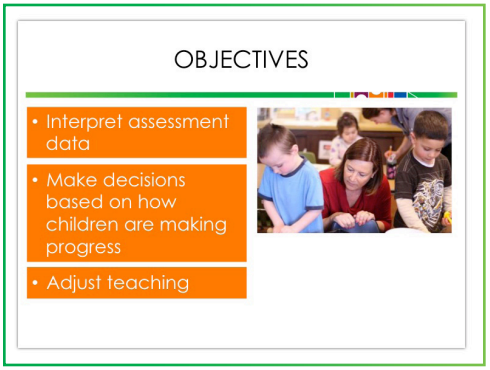
The four components of the House Framework support school readiness for all children:

- The foundation represents effective and engaging interactions and environments.
- The pillars represent research-based curricula and teaching practices, and ongoing child assessment.
- The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning.
- All four components interact with each other and are essential to effective practices.

This in-service suite is part of the *Ongoing Child Assessment* pillar of the House. It focuses on how teachers can review and interpret child assessment information in order to understand children's learning.

NOTE

Remind participants that any record of child progress (including video, work samples, and photographs) must be treated consistently with their program's record-keeping policies, especially in regards to ensuring appropriate confidentiality of information.



EMPHASIZE

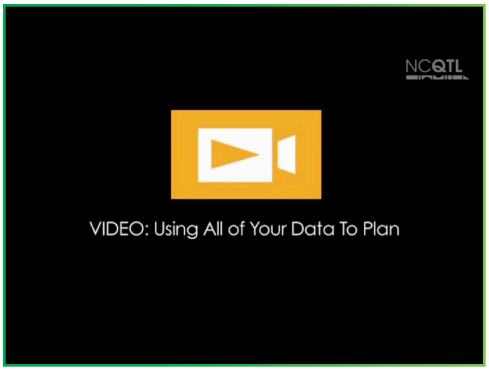
Children aren't automatically learning just because they're present in a program.

SLIDE 3:
OBJECTIVES

The children in your Head Start classroom have to learn many things in order to be ready for kindergarten. How do you know they're learning what they need to know? By observing them during everyday activities in your classroom. Ongoing child assessment is necessary to understand children's progress and is important to quality teaching and learning.

In this presentation we will discuss how to:

- Interpret assessment data.
- Make decisions based on how children are making progress in the classroom.
- Adjust teaching based on assessment data.



Length of video: Approximately 5 minutes and 12 seconds

SLIDE 4:
VIDEO: USING ALL OF YOUR DATA TO PLAN

Introduce the video.

In this video, teachers describe some of the ways they collect assessment data and use it in their classroom.

Ask participants to think about the following questions as they watch the video:

- What kinds of data are being collected?
- How do teachers use the data to inform teaching?

VIDEO

DISCUSSION

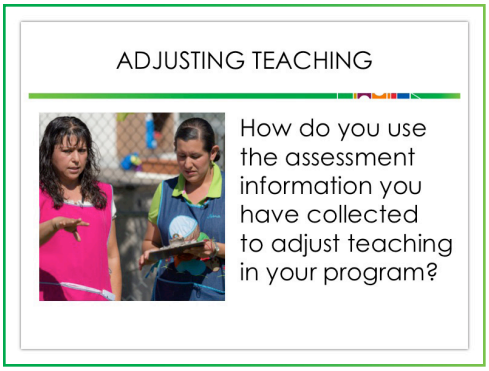
Ask participants to share their comments and answers to the above questions.

Points to highlight from the video:

- Teachers in the video are recording observations in a variety of ways (checklists, videos and photos, work samples, anecdotal notes, etc.).
- The observations are used to plan instruction. Teachers use data to individualize lesson plans for children at different skill levels. They also use data to identify children's interests, and plan activities that promote children's engagement.

NOTE

- All adults in the classroom work together to observe and document observations.
- The observations and goals are shared with families.



EMPHASIZE

It is important to use the ongoing child assessment data that has been collected. A major purpose of collecting the information is to use it to improve teaching.

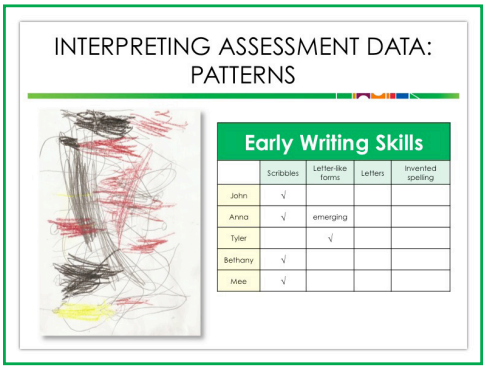
SLIDE 5:
ADJUSTING TEACHING

Now that we've heard from some classroom teachers, let's share ideas. How do you currently use the assessment data you have collected to adjust your teaching?

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of how they use assessment data. How do they know the children in their program are progressing? Do they use anecdotal records, work samples, or other data to improve instruction in their classrooms?

Record ideas on a large sheet of paper or white board, and refer back to them during the presentation, as appropriate.



SLIDE 6:
INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT DATA: PATTERNS

Teaching teams collect information about children's knowledge and abilities, and use the data to inform their teaching.

Sometimes, teachers notice patterns as they look at the data. Assessment information may show, for example, that many of the children need to further develop their early writing skills.

The teaching team can adjust their teaching to meet this need, perhaps by adding more materials, activities, or teaching strategies related to early writing.

LEARNING ACTIVITY:
EARLY WRITING SCENARIO

In this activity, participants read a scenario where children are demonstrating early writing skills. Then participants discuss what the teachers might change in their teaching practices to help the children progress.

Divide participants into small groups.

HANDOUT

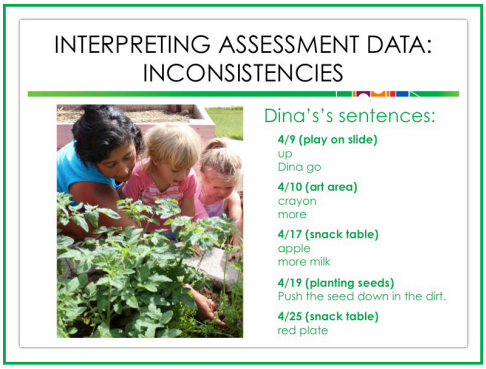
Distribute the *Early Writing Scenario* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Organizational tools, like checklists, can help teachers collect information efficiently so they can see more easily how to adjust their teaching practices.
- Patterns that teachers identify in children's progress can help them inform instruction.



SLIDE 7:
INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT DATA: INCONSISTENCIES

Sometimes, teachers notice inconsistencies in the data they have gathered.

In this example, the teaching team frequently collects information about the expressive language of a child who is reluctant to talk in the classroom.

The teaching team notices that the child used a much longer sentence than usual, when she was planting seeds. They investigate further and discover that this child has a special area of interest: gardening.

The team adjusts the curriculum by adding activities and materials that build on her interest.

LEARNING ACTIVITY:
EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE SCENARIO

In this activity, participants discuss and record their ideas on how teachers might adjust their instruction to help a specific child progress.

Divide participants into small groups.

HANDOUT

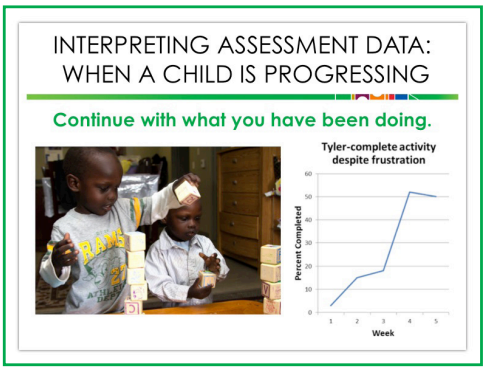
Distribute the *Expressive Language Scenario* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- By keeping track of inconsistencies and errors, teachers can more easily interpret assessment data.
- By observing children's skills in multiple settings with multiple sources, teachers can get a more complete picture of how a child is learning and use this information to make decisions.



SLIDE 8:
INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT DATA: WHEN A CHILD IS PROGRESSING

When the teaching team reviews the information they have collected, sometimes it is clear that a child is making satisfactory progress toward a learning goal.

If ongoing child assessment shows that a child in your classroom is making progress in learning a skill, you may just continue with what you have been doing. Make sure you adjust the type and level of instruction you provide to match the child's increasing mastery of the skill. By using evidence-based curriculum and teaching practices, you are supporting the child's learning.

LEARNING ACTIVITY: PERSISTENCE SCENARIO

In this activity, participants discuss and record their ideas on how teachers can use data to continue to support a child who is making steady progress towards a learning goal.

Divide participants into small groups.

HANDOUT

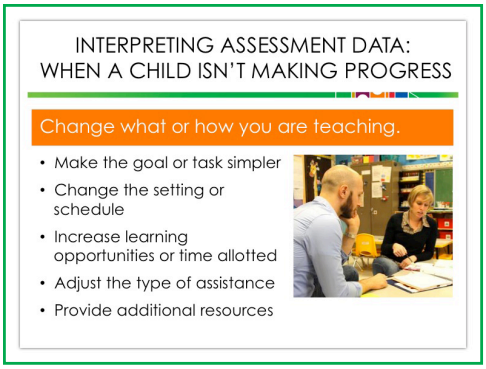
Distribute the *Persistence Scenario* learning activity and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Different assessment methods can be used to help track a child's learning, so that teachers can decide how much progress a child is making.
- Information that families share can help teachers understand more about how a child is progressing both inside and outside of the classroom.



SLIDE 9:
INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT DATA: WHEN A CHILD ISN'T MAKING PROGRESS

In other situations, teachers look at their data and decide that children are not making progress, or are progressing too slowly toward a curriculum goal.

You will want to change what or how you are teaching.

What might the child need to be more successful?

What resources might be needed to support development and learning?

Depending on the type of learning goal and what your assessment data reveal, you might consider:

- Making the goal or task simpler.
- Changing the setting or the schedule.
- Increasing the number of learning opportunities, or the amount of time the child has to respond.
- Providing more assistance, using curriculum modifications, or teaching loops.
- Seeking support from a specialist.

DISCUSSION

Provide examples of some of these adjustments to teaching, based on your own experiences.

Ask participants to share examples of adjustments they have made to their teaching practices.

NOTE

Consider distributing and reviewing the *Tools for Teachers: Decision Making Chart*.

LEARNING ACTIVITY:
DIRECTION-FOLLOWING SCENARIO

In this activity, participants discuss how teachers might adjust their instructional approaches when they identify a subgroup of children who are struggling with a particular skill.

Divide participants into small groups.

HANDOUT

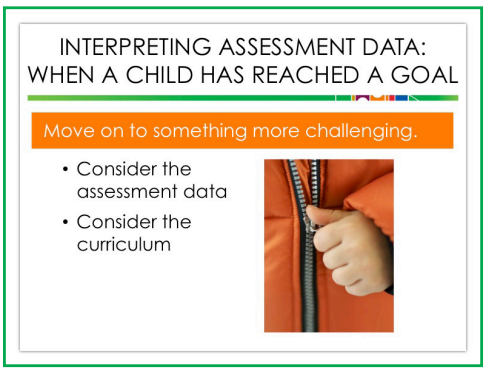
Distribute the *Direction-Following Scenario* handout and review directions.

DISCUSSION

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.

Points to highlight:

- Different assessment methods can be used to identify subgroups of children who struggle with a similar skill or learning goal.
- If subgroups of children who are struggling with the same skill can be identified, the teacher's adjustments to instruction can have a larger impact.
- Teachers can make more informed decisions by consulting with other colleagues and specialists

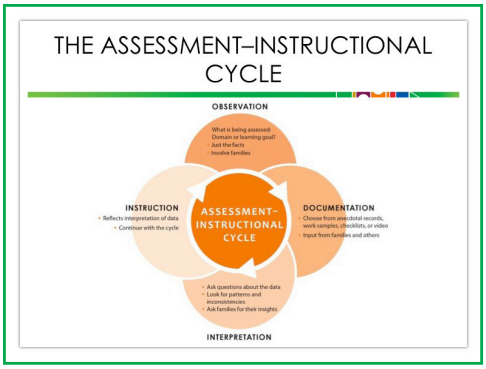


EMPHASIZE

The teaching team interprets assessment information and uses it to plan instruction.

SLIDE 10:
INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT DATA: WHEN A CHILD HAS REACHED A GOAL

When ongoing child assessment shows that a child has accomplished a goal, you'll want the child to move on to a more challenging goal, or to a goal in a new area. Review your assessment data, and use your program's curriculum guide to help you determine a next step for the child.



EMPHASIZE

The steps in the assessment-instructional cycle repeat continuously for each child.

SLIDE 11: THE ASSESSMENT–INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE

The assessment-instructional cycle refers to the ongoing and interrelated decision-making process that takes place during child assessment. Teachers continually make informed decisions about what to observe and why, and they choose the best ways to gather and document information about children's behaviors. They also decide how to organize, interpret, and use the information to guide and adjust their instruction. Throughout the process, teachers seek input from families and share information with them.

Here are four points to keep in mind:

Observation

You've learned about the importance of deciding in advance what to observe and how to plan for collecting information during regular classroom activities and routines.

Documentation

There are many different ways to collect information, including anecdotal records, work samples, checklists, photos and videos, and information shared by families. Using multiple methods to collect information provides a more comprehensive picture of a child's learning.

Interpretation

In order for the assessment information to be most valuable, the teaching team needs to use it. The teaching team interprets information about the child's learning by reviewing the data, discussing possible meanings and underlying causes of behaviors, and summarizing findings. The team looks for changes in skills over time to identify patterns in learning for an individual child or subgroups of children.

Instruction

The teaching team, with input from the child's family, uses information from the assessment materials to plan instruction and to make changes so that every child will learn.

DISCUSSION

As the presenter, relate examples from your own experience of documenting and interpreting assessment information that lead to teaching improvements.

Ask participants to share examples of when they have changed their teaching, based on their own classroom observations.

Length of video: Approximately 42 seconds

SLIDE 12:
VIDEO: MATCH STRATEGY TO CHILD'S NEED

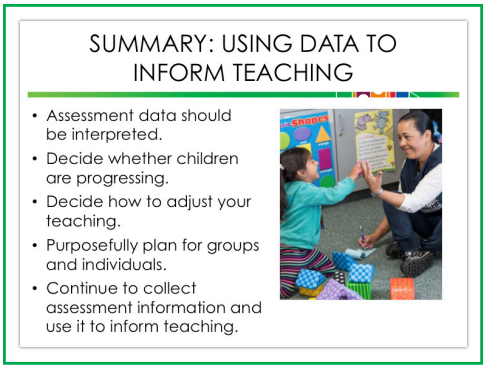
Introduce the video.

This is a short clip of a teacher talking about how she uses data to help identify teaching strategies for individual children.

VIDEO

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of how they used data to change teaching practices.



EMPHASIZE

The cycle of assessment and adjustments to your teaching practice is ongoing.

SLIDE 13: SUMMARY: USING DATA TO INFORM TEACHING

Let's summarize the use of assessment data to inform teaching.

- Ongoing child assessment information should be interpreted to figure out what children know and can do.
- Based on your interpretation of the assessment data, you can decide whether or not children are making enough progress.
- Based on your interpretation of the assessment data, you can also decide what adjustments in teaching might be helpful. You may decide that you need to adjust the curriculum, or use a particular intervention strategy, or use additional resources to support development and learning.
- Once you have decided how your teaching might be adjusted, based on assessment information, you will be able to purposefully plan for groups and individual children to make sure they are learning.
- Continue to collect assessment information. It takes time, practice, and reflection to develop the skill of using assessment information to plan instruction.

HANDOUT

Distribute handouts, if not distributed during the presentation. Based on participant roles:

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*. This handout briefly highlights material covered in this in-service suite.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Teachers*. This handout includes a decision making chart.
- Distribute and review the *Tools for Supervisors* handouts. These three checklist forms are meant for participants who are supervising programs or grantees.
- Distribute and review the *Helpful Resources* handout and highlight how the list can be used.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

SHARE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS:

- Review data with a peer to compare interpretations.
- Consult with a more experienced colleague when a child is not making progress.
- Set up meetings with families to share and review assessment information.
- Choose a regular time and day to discuss assessment information with teaching teams.
- Seek out other professional development opportunities to learn more about interpreting data.

SLIDE 14:
CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources that support effective assessment and teaching practices in the classroom.