



Observation Guide Professional Development Tool

Guide to Evidence-based Practices



Focus on Engagement and Responsiveness:

Adults and children are engaged in the current activity.

Conversations (child/child and adult/child) are encouraged and observed.

Adults demonstrate respect and cooperation in working together.

Adults interact with children and facilitate interaction between children.

There is evidence that teachers communicate with and collaborate with families.

3a. Adults and children are engaged in the current activity

Quality indicators:

- Adults observe and interact with children.
- There is a balance of teacher directed and child directed activities.
- Children have opportunities to make choices and teachers **facilitate** their learning, while **encouraging their development of independent functioning**.
- **Teachers have conversations with children and help them relate their classroom experiences to other situations.**
- **Teachers and staff accept each child's mode of communication and assist children's development of functional communication.**



Questions to ask:

- ✓ *When do you allow children to make choices?*
- ✓ *How do you facilitate, rather than direct, instruction?*
- ✓ *When do you have conversations with children?*



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

Links for Additional Information
Right click to open in new window

Universal Supports

- **Plan lessons that address varying needs for extended and guided practice, hands-on and functional activities, and real-life, visual, and photo connections.**
- Classroom adults provide feedback, redirection, and supports as needed.
- **Classroom adults are observant of children's engagement and functional use of skills for purposes of providing support and progress monitoring**

[Visuals for Supporting Instruction](#)

[Environments that Invite Learning](#)

[Encouraging Participation in Shared Reading](#)

[TATS Talks - Supporting Communication](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Provide adaptations and modifications as needed to assist children in staying engaged and participating.
- Include multi-sensory activities related to lessons and themes in centers and activity areas.
- **Relate lessons to real-life activities.**
- Ensure that children are given varying modes to respond to activities, questions, and books.

[TATS-Talks-about-Supports-and-Adaptations](#)

[Arranging Activity Areas](#)

[TATS Talks - Supporting Communication and Literacy](#)

[Embedding Individualized Instruction](#)

Intensive Interventions

- **Consult and collaborate with service providers, therapists, and families to determine children's use of skills and needed supports in areas such as responding and using/manipulating materials.**
- Provide interventions, accommodations, and adaptations to address needs for individual instruction, adapted materials, and physical assistance in multiple situations and settings.

[Supporting Children's Projects](#)

[Supporting Communication for Various Levels](#)

[Adapting Activities and Materials for Young Children with Disabilities](#)

3b. Conversations (child/child or adult/child) are encouraged and observed

Quality indicators:

- Teachers talk with children about instructional and non-instructional **activities and facilitate the practice of skills across various situations and settings.**
- **Teachers use language and communication to encourage children and describe actions while modeling to encourage the use of functional skills.** They communicate with children beyond the purposes of directing children, teaching a new skill, or asking questions about activities.



Questions to ask:

- ✓ *How / when do you have conversations with the children in the class?*
- ✓ *What types of things do you talk about?*
- ✓ *How do you encourage communication beyond instructional topics?*



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

Links for Additional Information

Right click to open in new window

Universal Supports

- Set up the room with items and displays that interest children, **and those that children are likely to see in various settings.** Talk about them and encourage children to express interests.
- Provide wait time and encouragement for children who are hesitant to talk or at beginning levels of communication.
- Accept and provide support for communication from all children in the classroom in the modes they use to respond.

[**Talk, Read, and Sing Together Every Day - Ideas for engaging children in conversation**](#)

[**Reading with Children is an Opportunity for Conversation - National Institute of Literacy**](#)

[**Talking with Young Children**](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Provide visuals such as core boards, communication boards, choice boards to support children.
- Provide opportunities for children to “talk about” what interests them **and facilitate opportunities for them to communicate in varying settings.**
- Support children in remembering words with visuals, songs, rhyming patterns.

[**Word Games for Listening and Talking - resource from US Office of Special Education - pdf**](#)

[**Encouraging Oral Language and Conversations**](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Collaborate with therapists and families to develop and help children use communication systems.
- **Be observant of and progress monitor each child's individual levels of development, modes and use of communication, and preferences for play and toys.**
- Teach children to make choices and provide visual and object support. **Provide opportunities for making choices in varying settings and situations.**

[**Helping Team Members Respond to Various Modes of Communication**](#)

[**Supporting Children with Various Response Modes**](#)

[**Supporting Communication for Various Ages and Developmental Levels**](#)

3c. Adults demonstrate respect and cooperation in working together.

Quality indicators:

- Teachers share in the responsibilities of the classroom.
- Teachers work together as a team when planning, facilitating, and implementing daily activities.
- Teachers speak to each other with kind words and professionalism.
- Teachers seem genuinely happy to be in the classroom and enjoying the children and planned activities.
- **Teachers, service providers, and classroom staff collaborate to plan for facilitating children’s practice of functional skills throughout daily activities, as well as across situations, people, and settings.**



Questions to ask:

- ✓ How are responsibilities shared?
- ✓ Do you enjoy your work and the children you educate?
- ✓ Are duties of teachers/staff varied according to interests and talents? Are the “desirable” and “undesirable” tasks rotated?



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

Links for Additional Information
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Universal Supports

- **Classroom staff should collaborate to develop a daily schedule that allows them to share in responsibilities.**
- Classroom staff should attend trainings and workshops to receive information about best practices for teaching young children.
- **Information related to children’s performances for progress monitoring and needs should be shared.**

[11 Things Rocking Co-teachers Do](#)

[Establishing Classroom Teamwork](#)

[Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards 2017](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Roles and responsibilities, **including facilitation of children’s functional use of skills**, for all aspects of the day should be clearly defined and indicated on the daily schedule.
- IEP goals, accommodations, and supports should be addressed by all classroom staff and service providers **in various situations throughout the day.**

[TATS Talks about Classroom Collaboration](#)

[Five-Step Process for Collaborative Planning](#)

Intensive Interventions

- All classroom staff should provide supports during classroom and personal care routines.
- Collaborate with therapists, service providers, and families to develop specific individualized plans. **Provide information about the supports and strategies to families so that they can help their child practice skills in other settings.**
- Health plans and emergency response should be shared with all staff.
- **All classroom staff should be familiar with the stages and sequence of child development as they apply to the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (FELDS) and skill progression.**

[Best Practices for Collaborating with Preschool Service Providers](#)

[Breadth of the Outcomes Chart \(ECTA\)](#)

3d. Adults are interacting with or facilitating interaction between children.

Quality indicators:

- Classroom staff and service providers interact with all children in consistent but varying roles to enable children to experience various situations throughout the day.
- Adults are engaged with activities with children and encourage independence in the use of functional skills.
- Adults allow children to assume to role of activity leader and follow the lead of the children while guiding them in their use of social interactions across situations.
- Adults exhibit proximity to the children by remaining in areas where children are working, are at the children's eye level, and respond when children seek help.



Questions to ask:

- ✓ When and how do you allow children to “take the lead” in the classroom or during unstructured activities?
- ✓ How do you help children develop independence in their interactions with peers and adults?



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

Links for Additional Information
Right click to open in new window

Universal Supports

- Arrange the room so that children have a variety of interesting activities, as well as access to materials needed to independently make choices, develop play scenarios with peers, and participate in activities.
- Provide centers and toys that encourage children to initiate activities and to invite friends to join.
- Reference and discuss skills for peer interactions during activities. Relate books to social skills.

[Activities that Encourage Cooperative Play](#)

[Process for Teaching Social Skills](#)

[Facilitating Social Interactions](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Provide and teach visuals related to class rules, routines, and peer interactions.
- Facilitate peer interactions and encourage skills such as initiating play, problem solving, and handling conflict.
- Provide feedback, reinforcement, and additional instruction and practice in self-regulation, requesting help, and using skills in varying situations.

[Facilitating Peer Interaction](#)

[Teaching Young Children Self-Control Skills](#)

[Supporting Children During Play](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Develop lessons that address specific skills. Provide and teach self-regulation strategies.
- Develop social stories that address a specific skill for children experiencing difficulty. Include visuals and actual photos in the story.

[Process for Teaching Social Skills](#)

[TATS Talks - Developing and Teaching Social Skills Lessons](#)

[Visual cue Scripts for Playing with Friends](#)

3e. There is evidence that teachers communicate and collaborate with families.

Quality Indicators:

- Teachers and staff maintain regular communication with families about classroom themes, schedules, and goals, including suggestions for follow-up at home.
- **Teachers collaborate with families and gain information about children’s use of functional skills, as well as use of skills in various settings and with multiple people and situations.**
- **Teachers/staff consult with and include related service providers in supporting families’ participation in meetings. Families are provided needed information to be comfortable sharing information about their child.**



Questions to Ask:

- ✓ Are families encouraged to visit (within guidelines established by administrator), correspond, and/or make appointments to visit or conference?
- ✓ Do teachers/staff adhere to rules related to confidentiality of students?



Supports, Accommodations, Adaptations

Links for Additional Information
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Universal Supports

- Develop a system (family bulletin board, newsletter) to share information with families.
- Welcome families and allow for regular times in your schedule for meetings, conferences. **Provide time and methods for families to share information.**
- Communicate regularly regarding children’s progress and needs as well as suggestions for **reinforcing skills in various settings.**

[*A Family Engagement Guide from Head Start*](#)

[*Tips for Schools to Enhance Family Engagement*](#)

[*Family Brochure for COS*](#)

Targeted/Specialized Supports

- Update family members regularly regarding progress related to IEP goals, **COS information**, as well as other skills noted in progress monitoring.
- Collaborate with families to present information (visuals, vocabulary, routines) consistently.
- Provide resources and information about community resources that might be beneficial to the family.

[*Encouraging Family Engagement - CEC checklist*](#)

[*Sharing Class Rules with Families*](#)

[*Links to TATS Talks to Families*](#)

[*Talking Points for Gaining Family Input*](#)

Intensive Interventions

- Discuss skills and behaviors related to children’s disabilities honestly but kindly with family members.
- **Involve families in setting goals and in helping to monitor the impact of interventions in the home setting. Involve family members in the COS process and facilitate their sharing of information.**
- Provide information about community resources and support groups that might be helpful to the family.
- Collaborate and have discussions with families to not only identify issues but to celebrate progress in steps toward goals.

[*Partnering with Families in Ongoing Assessment*](#)

[*Including Families in Information Gathering*](#)