

CHLD 109: Observation and Assessment of Young Children

Running Record

Learning Outcomes	<p>2. Describe, select and demonstrate use of purposeful, appropriate formal and informal observation tools, instruments, and strategies for use in program and child evaluation.</p> <p>3. Identify and select appropriate screening tools and/or assessment procedures to meet specific purposes and audiences inclusive of IEP and IFSP planning and instruction.</p>
DEC Recommended Practices	<p>A17 Professionals assess children in contexts that are familiar to the child.</p> <p>A28. Professionals conduct longitudinal, repeated assessments in order to examine previous assumptions about the child, and to modify the ongoing program.</p> <p>C14. Data-based decisions are used to make modifications in the practices. Child performance is monitored and data are collected to determine the impact of the practices on the child’s progress, and monitoring must be feasible and useful within the child’s environments (i.e., ongoing monitoring must be user friendly) and is used to make modifications of intervention if needed.</p> <p>PP29 Field experiences offer opportunities to practice performance competencies of the discipline.</p>
NAEYC Standards	<p>3c: Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches.</p>

The purpose of this observation is to provide you with an opportunity to practice recording observations with accurate, objective notes. Objective running record note taking is a purposeful informal observation strategy and the basis for many assessments. It is also a useful tool in evaluating program data. It takes practice to develop the skill of taking objective notes, as it can be challenging not to insert your opinions, conclusions and summative words.

To prepare for this assignment you will need to:

- Review Chapter 4: Documenting: Collecting Information
- Study the handout “**DEC Observation Notes Sample**” – note how they state things objectively.
- Reflect on what you have previously learned about being objective. Some of the important guidelines to remember are:
 - Record only facts.
 - Use action words (verbs) whenever possible.
 - Observe without interpreting.
 - Use words that describe, but do not judge.
 - Refrain from recording personal opinions.
- Make arrangements to observe in a family childcare home or childcare center of your choice.
- Print and fill out the “**Field Experience Verification Form**” for the cooperating teacher to sign.

When you arrive at your observation site:

- Inform the teacher what your assignment is so that s/he can position you well.
- Expect to have children interrupt you when they want to interact with you. It is ok to tell them that you are doing your schoolwork and learning how to take notes.
- Plan on staying for about an hour. During your observation, record as many interactions and occurrences that occur within the environment as you can.
- Select one child to focus on. Pick a target behavior according to the opportunity provided. Ex. If you are there at snack time, you might choose to focus on social interactions while eating or language usage. If you are there during outdoor time, you might choose to focus on sedentary vs. active play behaviors or maybe the stages of play exhibited (solitary, parallel, associative, cooperative).
- Attempt to prevent the child from realizing that you are recording their actions. If the child realizes that you are focused on them, they may become self-conscious and start exhibiting abnormal behaviors.
- Have the cooperating teacher sign the “**Field Experience Verification Form.**”

After you complete your observation:

- Edit your notes to eliminate any subjective words.
- Type the notes following the format of the **DEC Observation Notes Sample** handout
- Submit your running record and completed **Field Experience Verification Form** to your instructor.