

### Using Observation and Documentation: *Observing with Purpose*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

#### THINK ABOUT IT!

##### ■ **Self-Reflection**

Use these questions to think about your own practice.

##### ■ **Reflect with Others**

Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.

##### ■ **The Power of Practice**

Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

#### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- How will I use windows of opportunity (spontaneous, targeted, or prompted) throughout the day to observe children's various skills? How can I observe children in different contexts?
- What resources will I access to support my growing understanding of child development? (See *Resource Links* and *Digging Deeper* for this bundle.)
- How will I use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) to help provide a framework to guide my observations?
- How will I engage colleagues and families to share and discuss what they have observed?
- How will I become more aware of my personal biases while observing?
- If I have children in my class who speak a language that I don't speak, how do I engage other staff or family members to help with observing dual language learners? (For more information about assessing dual language learners, refer to the *Effective Assessment* bundle, *Assessing Young Dual Language Learners*.)

#### TRY IT OUT!

Practice an observation during your day. Think about a child in your group and one of his or her skills or behaviors in a specific area (physical, cognitive, social-emotional, language development, or approaches to learning) that would be important to observe. You might think back to the child that you identified at the end of the pack *Observing with Purpose*.

Identify the time of day when this skill or behavior is most likely to be observable.

- Pay attention to what the child says and does.
- Note the developmental information you learn about the child.
- Be aware of how your personal lens may influence this observation.
- Identify the other developmental domains that are also observable.

#### How Did It Go?

- What was challenging about this observation? What went well?
- What did you learn about the child you observed?
- During what other times of day and in what other settings can you observe this skill or behavior again?
- What information from this observation can you share with families?

#### What Next?

Continue practicing purposeful observation as part of your daily routine. Check out *Digging In: Observing with Purpose* from the bundle materials to reflect further on your observation skills. Use the next pack, *For the Record*, to help build your documentation skills.