

Summary



Introduction An authentic assessment of a child's development and progress would be beneficial to the child and its family, teachers and administrators. In the present article the author uses the portfolio assessment method to document the progress of 21 children. All the children were 5 years old and the assessment was begun right from the first day of school. Each child was assessed under 5 categories: motor, social/emotional, language, art and cognitive developments. The main reason for the project was to document the work of the children and assess their capabilities based on the recorded data and then to strategically plan suitable programs for each children if required. Method In order to gather the response from children the author asked them to create self-portraits with their names beneath. In addition family questionnaires were also given as handouts during the previous open house. In addition consistently observing children would help to design a more effective classroom environment and also the pattern of teaching. In case a child needs help in any area only documented evidence will help the teacher to identify the problem with better clarity and use appropriate intervention methods. Apart from teachers school directors as well as family members would also be able to understand the child better in case of such evidences. These assessments should continue even after the introduction of a program as only then the strengths and weaknesses of the program will be identified. In the present study when a particular sample of work from the child could not be obtained the child was observed while performing a task of its interest or during group activities to gather the required information. Such observations also helped in understanding when a child required individual attention or guidance. The artworks of children who painted or drew pictures were also included in the portfolio. Through this the children

felt that their efforts were valued. Results Methods such as portfolio assessment would give children a sense of pride when they later view their work and also parents would be equally delighted to read the documented evidences about their child's progress. For teachers such evidences would help them to better their teaching methods and effectively support the education of the children. Also documented portfolios would also be enough proof that teachers have followed standards and grade-level expectations. Thus constantly updating portfolios will ensure effective teaching and communication between teachers and children and also with parents and administrators. The relationship between the teacher and the child in a classroom become more well defined which results in effectively designing the classroom environment and planning the correct curriculum. This study also involved the parents as the assessment criteria for the portfolio was explained during the open house conducted prior to beginning the assessment. In the middle of the school year the parents were met individually to discuss the evidence gathered from the assessment of their children. The progress and achievements of the children as well as matters which required attention were discussed. Implications Thus portfolio assessment is an authentic proof of the child's learning and development. The information gathered through such assessments definitely have a lot of implications for the child's learning as when the capability of each child is documented, teaching and helping the child overcome problems become a lot more easier. Such assessment methods can be used in any school setting as the process involved is simple and convenient for the teacher, children and families and administrators. Reference Harris, M. E. (2009).

Implementing Portfolio Assessment. YC Young Children, 64(3): 82-85.

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