

## Authentic Assessment: Measuring My Child's Growth and Development

This school year, your family may experience a lot of new styles of learning and tools to support your child's growth. One of these tools your child's teaching team will use is called authentic assessment, which helps them and you learn about your child's development.

What is authentic assessment?

Authentic assessment is a tool teaching teams use every day to understand:

- What children know and can do.
- How children are developing.
- What they can do to support children's growth.

How does authentic assessment work?

At home, you assess things every day. You check to see if your child is feeling well when they wake up. You observe how they are getting along with friends and ask about what emotions they are feeling. You notice what kinds of things they are interested in. These observations help you understand your child and how you can help them grow. Your child's teaching team uses authentic assessment in much the same way. As teaching teams support children's exploration, they observe, ask questions and take photographs of children to capture their learning throughout the day.



How is information from authentic assessment used?

Authentic assessment is used to understand children's thinking, growth and learning. It helps families, teachers and programs in different ways.



*You* can use authentic assessment to:

- Understand how your child learns best.
- Understand how to best support your child's learning.
- Share information about your child with your child's teaching team.



*Teaching teams* can use authentic assessment to:

- Understand your child's abilities and make decisions about how to help them continue to grow.
- Plan and suggest daily activities based on your child's skills and interests.
- Communicate with families and caregivers regularly throughout the year.



*Programs* can use authentic assessment to:

- Order materials to support the learning needs of children.
- Identify resources to help meet the learning needs of all children.

What areas will my child be assessed on?

Authentic assessment tools assess five domains of early learning:



*Approaches to Learning* - how children engage in learning experiences. This is important because the way children approach learning influences their development across all domains.



*Social and Emotional Development* - how children develop relationships as well as recognize and manage emotions. These are lifelong skills necessary for development and learning.



*Language, Literacy and Communication* - how children listen, understand, and use language and other developing abilities to communicate.



*Cognition* - the skills and concepts children use to organize and make sense of the world around them, including math, art, science, and social studies.



*Physical Development and Health* - the skills and abilities children develop to move and stay safe in their environment.



It is important for teaching teams and caregivers to observe all of these areas to provide individualized support for each child's growth. These areas may be slightly different depending on your child's age and the tool your program uses.

How can you partner with your child's teaching teams on authentic assessment?

You know your child best! Talk to your child's teaching team often. Working together can help make sure your child gets the support needed for the most learning and growth.

- Share information about your child's interests and skills with their teaching team.
- If you wish, you can share short written statements of your time at home, photos of your child at play, or pictures of work your child has created.
- Talk about your child's development with their teachers.
- Ask your child's teachers about authentic assessment and be open to their ideas.
- Consider the below reflection questions:
  - How am I noticing my child's learning in everyday activities?
  - How am I sharing information with my child's teaching team to support my child's learning?

We look forward to partnering with you to help your child grow throughout the school year!

Brought to you by the [Division of Early Childhood Education](#)

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