

Program Ideas

The way observations are documented varies. Consider using sticky notes, a clipboard and chart of items to observe, a blank calendar, or small labels (like mailing labels) in addition to photographs, videos, sketches, and tallies.

Examples of documentation include recording conversations or storytelling between children and elders, displaying co-created artwork, and photographing the progress of planning and creating a garden together.

Don't be overwhelmed. Start with a learning moment and write about it to share with others. Later, emphasize the process of learning and interacting rather than the product. Observe over time as a relationship blooms and matures.

Guiding questions to consider when reviewing what you have documented are:

- What else can I do to provoke their engagement?
- What else will capture their interests?
- What additional resources do I need?

Families like to learn about what their child or older relative did during intergenerational programming. Sharing information can lead to strengthened resources and greater support for the intergenerational program. Daily updates or periodic newsletters can share the latest information and build support for your program.

Best Practices for Intergenerational Programming

1. Staff members of the adult and child programs *collaborate* to plan activities.
2. Participants are *involved* in *decision-making* about the activity and during activities.
3. Participation is *voluntary*.
4. Participants are *prepared* ahead of time and reflect on the activity afterward.
5. *Activities reflect interests*, backgrounds, and social histories of program participants.
6. Activities are age- and role-appropriate.
7. Activities support *interaction* among intergenerational participants.
8. Facilitators skillfully *stage the environment* to promote interaction.
9. Facilitators consider *the social environment and the role of staff members*.
10. *Adaptive equipment* is used as appropriate.
11. **Facilitators document and communicate experiences to build on in future activities.**



Additional Resource

"Observing Young Children." 2011. Eastern Connecticut State University. Center for Early Childhood Education. Educational Video Clips for Early Childhood Professionals: e-clips No. 5. www.easternct.edu/cece/e-clips_observation.html. Seitz, H. 2008. "The Power of Documentation in the Early Childhood Classroom." *Young Children* 63 (March): 88-93.

References

Jarrott, S. E. 2011. "Where Have We Been and Where Are We Going? Content Analysis of Evaluation Research of Intergenerational Programs." *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* 9:37-52. doi: 10.1080/15350770.2011.544594.

"Making Learning Visible." 2012. Understanding, Documenting, and Supporting Individual and Group Learning. Website. www.makinglearningvisibleresources.org/. www.pz.harvard.edu/