

Early Learning Network Update **Fall 2009: Work Sampling and Ounce**

Early Learning Network Updates are designed to provide information to those practitioners affiliated with the Early Learning Network, including Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Programs, Infant/Toddler Early Intervention Programs, Preschool Early Intervention Programs, Keystone STARS 3 & 4 child care centers, and Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts. These newsletters provide questions and answers about specific policies and procedures, address professional development opportunities, and provide additional resources for providers. If you have any information or a question that you would like to see included in a future newsletter, please send your ideas to earlylearningnetwork@pattan.net.

Child outcome data in the Early Learning Network is being reported using the Work Sampling System Online and the Ounce Scale Online. The Work Sampling System Online and Ounce Scale Online measure a child's progress through a process known as "authentic assessment." Authentic assessments are based on observations of children during their typical learning activities. Through this process, teachers and therapists collect information about children's progress in a number of different ways. For example, a teacher might collect samples of a child's work, gather information from the family about their child's development, and make observations of the child's skills during classroom activities. Regardless of how information is collected, a child's progress will be reported in the Work Sampling System Online for preschoolers and in the Ounce Scale Online for infants and toddlers.

This Early Learning Network Update addresses some of the frequently asked questions regarding Work Sampling Online and Ounce Scale Online authentic assessment tools.

1. How often are the Work Sampling Online (WSO) checklist and/or the Ounce Scale Online (OSO) Developmental Profile reported for children?

Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten Programs, and Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers complete the WSO Checklist or the OSO Developmental Profile three times per year. In 2009-2010 the dates are November 1st, February 1st, and May 15th.

If a data point falls on a weekend or holiday, the reporting date is the next business day. All children who are enrolled at the time of the reporting date should have an assessment completed and entered into WSO or OSO (with

the exception of those populations as identified in Question 4.).

Early Intervention Programs (Infant/Toddler and Preschool) will complete the WSO Checklist or the OSO Developmental Profile at the child's entry and exit from the program, and, as of July 1, 2009, annually at the time of the anniversary of the child's initial IFSP/IEP.

2. What components of the Ounce Scale Online should be completed for each infant and toddler?

The Ounce Scale Developmental Profile should be completed and reported online for infants and toddlers.

The other components of the Ounce Scale, including the Family Album and observation

records, are optional; however, these tools provide supportive information that can help the teacher accurately complete the Developmental Profile and the use of these tools is considered best practice.

In addition to the Developmental Profile, Infant/Toddler Early Intervention Programs will also complete the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Report, formerly referred to as the “ECAP” rating. The ECO Report will be part of the OSO system in October. Until that time, practitioners should complete the Developmental Profile in the OSO system according to timelines. When the ECO Report becomes available in OSO, practitioners will complete and finalize the ECO rating for any assessments completed in July through September. Practitioners will have 90 days from the time that the ECO Report is available to complete the ratings.

3. What components of the Work Sampling System Online should be completed for each preschooler?

The Work Sampling System Online (WSO) Checklist should be completed and reported online for preschoolers.

The other components of the Work Sampling System, including the portfolio and summary reports, are optional; however, these tools provide supportive information that can help the teacher accurately complete the WSO Checklist, make decisions about classroom planning and engage families in their child’s learning. The use of these tools is considered best practice.

Preschool Early Intervention Programs are also required to complete the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) rating, formerly referred to as the “ECAP” rating. Upon completion of a child’s WSO checklist, practitioners need to finalize the ECO Report.

4. Which children should have child outcome data reported in Work Sampling System Online or the Ounce Scale Online?

Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who participate in one or more of the following programs should report child outcomes data using WSO/OSO: Accountability Block Grant

Pre-Kindergarten Programs, Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers, Infant/Toddler Early Intervention and Preschool Early Intervention Programs.

WSO Checklists and OSO Developmental Profiles do not need to be completed for children in Early Childhood programs who are:

- Only attending the Early Childhood program for the summer and are therefore not enrolled during one of the reporting time periods;
- Only in the Early Childhood program overnight; and
- In Kindergarten or school-age programs.

5. One of the children in my class enrolled just before one of the child outcome reporting periods. Do I need to report child outcome data for that period?

In Early Childhood programs, all children who are enrolled in a designated child outcome reporting period (See question #1) should have their OSO Developmental Profile or WSO Checklist completed and reported in the online system. In cases where there has been little time to gather observations on a specific child, it is considered best practice to update and re-finalize the assessment within 14 days following the child outcome reporting period.

6. How do I know whether to choose the Work Sampling System Online Checklist or the Ounce Scale Online Developmental Profile for a particular child?

In general, the OSO is used for children from birth through two years of age. The WSO is used for children who are three years of age and older.

The ELN has been automated so that once the child’s initial demographic information has been entered into PELICAN; it will transfer to either WSO or the OSO.

7. How do I determine which Ounce Scale Online Developmental Profile to use for reporting child outcomes?

The first time an infant/toddler is entered into PELICAN, the data is transferred to the OSO and the child's Developmental Profile is automatically determined. After the first child outcome reporting period, the teacher/therapist will be able to choose the Developmental Profile that is appropriate.

The selection of the OSO Developmental Profile level is based on the chronological age of the child when s/he reaches the reporting date.

For example, if a child is three months of age on the October 1st reporting date, use the 0-4 Month Developmental Profile since the age of the child falls within the range of the Developmental Profile.

Some ages are applicable to two Developmental Profile levels, for example, the OSO includes both a 0-4 Month level and the 4-8 Month level. When a child's age is applicable to two Developmental Profile levels, always use the Developmental Profile with the youngest age range to assess the child. So, if the child is 4 months of age at the reporting time, use the 0-4 Month Developmental Profile for reporting child outcomes.

Continue using the Ounce Developmental Profile until the child's third birthday. At that time, switch to the P3 WSO Checklist. Currently, moving the child from OSO to WSO as s/he turns 3 years old is not fully automated in ELN. In order to move a child from OSO to WSO, the child will need to be removed and then re-enrolled in his/her classroom. While the child does not need to physically change classes, this un-enroll/re-enroll process will trigger the database to send the child to the Work Sampling system.

8. In the Work Sampling System Online, how do I determine what Checklist to use?

The first time a preschooler is entered into PELICAN, the data is transferred to WSO and the child's Checklist is automatically determined. After the first child outcome reporting period, the teacher/therapist will be able to choose the Checklist that is appropriate.

In general, the P3 Checklist is used for three year old children; the P4 Checklist is used for four year old children.

Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten Programs, and Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers should determine the child's age on September 1st of the current school year. This is the checklist level that will be used for the entire school year. For example, if the child is 3 years old on September 1st, the P3 Checklist will be used for the entire school year even if the child turns 4 years old sometime in that school year.

For Preschool Early Intervention Programs, the child's age at the time of entry to the program determines the Checklist level to be used for the initial assessment and the first annual assessment. If the child is 3 years old at the time of entry, the P3 should be used for the initial data point and the first annual data point. Thereafter, the P4 checklist would be used for any additional annual data points and for the exit data. If the child is 4 years old on entry to the program, the P4 checklist will be used for all assessments during his/her time in the Preschool Early Intervention Program.

In order to streamline data collection and provide for more cohesive data, the Kindergarten Checklist will not be used for assessing children in any preschool program. Preschool programs should continue to use either the P3 or P4 checklists even if the child is 5 years or older.

9. In the Work Sampling System Online, I am asked to identify one classroom as either P3 or P4; however, my classes are mixed; children use both P3 and P4 Checklists. What should I choose as the classroom label?

Choose a label for the classroom which represents the age of the majority of the children in the classroom.

When entering individual children into a class, you will be able to identify individual children as either P3 or P4 based on their age.

Because the P3 and P4 Checklists are different, there is no way to combine the children who are scored on separate Checklists into one report. When printing reports, the teacher in the classroom should print two reports; one for the children using P3s and a separate one for P4s.

10. Who has access to the Ounce and/or Work Sampling information?

OCDEL has worked diligently to design confidentiality processes that comply with state and federal regulations and has sought feedback from its stakeholder ELN Advisory Committee.

- ELN will comply with all federal and state confidentiality, privacy and security requirements;
- Practitioners will have access only to the data relevant to their students, programs and/or concerns. Child specific data will not be disclosed beyond the level of the direct service provider except as permitted by applicable law; and
- Only aggregate information, which does not allow for the identification of specific children will be reported to the Commonwealth and when required, to the federal government.

11. If a child is served by more than one teacher/therapist, can each teacher/therapist log on and see the child's record?

Not at this time; however, by early in 2010, this feature should be available.

12. What are the options for programs that do not have computer access?

Programs should make plans to acquire or access the technology. Grant funds may be used to purchase these materials. An alternative option is to go to local libraries, community centers or career and technology centers to access online computers.

13. What information do I enter in PELICAN and what information is entered into Work Sampling System Online and Ounce Scale Online?

The PELICAN system is now linked to both Work Sampling and Ounce Online for the following programs: Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten Programs, and Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers. Linking PELICAN to Work Sampling and Ounce means less data entry for staff and a fewer data errors. Once data is entered through PELICAN, it is transferred overnight to Work Sampling and Ounce. The PELICAN-Early Intervention System will be linked to WSO/OSO in January 2010.

PELICAN collects demographic information on the program, the staff, the child and their family. It describes both the child's early childhood program and family characteristics. Typically, program directors/administrators, program assistants and/or Early Intervention Service Coordinators enter the data in PELICAN.

WSO and OSO capture all the data related to the child's development. Observations of the child are gathered here and used to complete the Checklists and Developmental Profiles. Teachers and therapists who are responsible for reporting the child outcome data will add data to WSO/OSO.

14. I can no longer add a child or teacher in Work Sampling System Online and Ounce Scale Online. How do I do this now?

For Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten Programs, and Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers, the linking of the databases means that any changes to WSO/OSO that involve child or teacher demographics are made in the part of the Early Learning Network known as "PELICAN." For example, to add a child to WSO or OSO, you must first enter the child into the PELICAN system and enroll him/her in a classroom within the PELICAN system. This information will be sent from PELICAN to WSO/OSO via an overnight update.

The PELICAN-Early Intervention and WSO/OSO are not yet linked. Therefore, Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention Programs may still add teachers, children and classrooms directly to WSO/OSO.

15. When do I archive or delete a child in Work Sampling or Ounce?

For the following programs: Head Start Supplemental Assistance Programs, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Accountability Block Grant Pre-Kindergarten Programs, and Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers, all changes to the child's enrollment are made through the PELICAN system. For these programs, any time a child is removed from a classroom, the PELICAN system will automatically archive the child in Work Sampling and Ounce Online. The child will stay in the archive until s/he is enrolled in another classroom or re-enrolled in services. The PELICAN system does not allow you to delete a child from Work Sampling/Ounce Online.

Because they are not yet linked to the PELICAN system, Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention Programs may still archive children directly through Work Sampling. Archive any child who has exited the Early Intervention program for any reason or who transferred to another Infant/Toddler or Preschool Early Intervention Program. Archiving the child will allow you to re-activate the child and to access the child's reports at a later date. Children should never be deleted from WSO/OSO even if the child is no longer enrolled in the Early Intervention program. When a child is deleted, all child outcome data will be lost for that child.

16. What kind of ongoing support is available to programs participating in the Early Learning Network?

Technical assistance and ongoing support are available as programs begin to enter data in ELN:

- Inquiries regarding ELN procedures or access to WSO/OSO should be directed to earlylearningnetwork@pattan.net.
- For training on Work Sampling and/or Ounce online, Early Intervention programs should contact their EITA consultant. Early Childhood programs should contact their Regional Key.
- For questions related to access to PELICAN/ELN (www.pelican.state.pa.us), early childhood programs should call the ELN Help Desk at 1-877-491-3818.