Time Sampling
&
Frequency Counts

Child Care Network

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Time Sampling

- The Time Sample is an efficient recording method that tracks children's choices, their playmates, and the time they spend in one area.

- Time samples can be used for children 3 years old and up in group settings.

Time Sampling

- Time sampling records children's choices, therefore, it is only used at a time that children have choices.

- Select a half an hour to observe after the children have arrived and are actively engaged.

Time Sampling

- The learning centers are listed down the left margin of the time sample chart.

- Five minute intervals are filled in across the top when the recording has begun.

- The recorder looks at each area and writes down the names of the children who are in that area at that moment.

Time Sampling

- A circle can be drawn around the names of the children who are playing cooperatively.

- The recorder also notes if an adult is in the area.

- An area at the bottom of the time sample lists those children not in any area at the time, perhaps in transition, perhaps not involved in play.

Advantages to Time Sampling

- Time Sampling is helpful because it gathers information on all children in the class at one time.

- It gives quantitative (numerical) information about attention span (Cindy spent _____ minutes at the easel.)

Advantages to Time Sampling

- Time sampling indicates child's play and interests.
- It gives clues as to children's strongest areas, inferred by choices.
- Gives clues about children's less developed areas, inferred by avoidance.
- Can indicate stage of play a child is at.
- Can show preferred playmates.

Advantages to Time Sampling

- Can track adults positions in the room.
- Shows which areas of the room are most used.
- Shows which areas of the room are under-utilized.
- The recorder can develop abbreviations and adapt the form to meet the needs of an individual program.

Disadvantages to Time Sampling

- Time samples record no details about the nature of the play.
- Time samples may not capture children moving while recorder is writing.
- Time samples make inferences that may not be accurate.
- The time sample is time intensive for the recorder.

Disadvantages to Time Sampling

- Is effective only where a long period of free time is offered.
- Is not as effective for toddlers because most play is solitary or parallel and movement from area to area is more frequent due to shorter attention spans.
- Must be done periodically or is too judgmental.

Frequency Counts

- Frequency counts measure the repeated actions of a child, the whole group or the teacher.

- Frequency counts are a way of seeing just how often an event occurs.

Frequency Counts

- Strategies are then implemented to reduce negative actions or increase desirable ones.

- Some actions that you could use frequency counts for are: spills, biting, punching, saying "Thank You", using the book area, sharing, saying "Don't".

Advantages to Using Frequency Counts

- Frequency counts are a quantitative measurement on which to base strategies for change.

- They are quick to record, with no details, just tallies to write.

- They are useful for quantitatively and objectively measuring frequently occurring behaviors.

Disadvantages to Using Frequency Counts

- Frequency counts can lose the raw data, with no details recorded.

- They can only measure one kind of behavior, making the results highly selective.

- They allow the recorder's bias to enter the recording. (ex. Sharing)