

How Do I Know if My Child Is Learning? Parent Guide #12

Parents wonder if their child is learning what is being taught, knows how to use this knowledge to solve new problems, and is maturing socially and emotionally.

- Parents get information from a variety of sources. They ask for the thoughts of teachers and child care workers. They listen to other parents' stories about the progress their child is making. They also look at any assessments (reviews) that have been completed for their child.
- There are different ways to assess students.
- The purpose of an assessment is to help the teacher plan class activities for your child.
- Some assessments are relative in nature. Your child's performance is compared to that of other children. This gives you an idea of how well your child is doing compared to others their age.
- Other assessments show if your child has mastered the skill being looked at by not comparing him/her with others.

Each of the following methods can help determine your child's strengths as well as needs. The best approach is to use many ways of determining what your child knows and can do.

Types of Assessments (Reviews)

- **Observation:** One of the best assessment methods for young children is to closely watch them play. Teachers interpret the play and plan what to do for your child's

learning. What you see from your child outside of school will also provide information for the teacher.

- **Informal assessment:** Another way to assess learning is to ask a child to do something and watch how he/she does it.
- **Formal assessment:** Developmental screenings determine which children may need more testing.

Results of screenings or assessments should not be used to hold a child back from kindergarten.

- Formal educational programs, if set up to meet the developmental needs of children, are the best way to prepare for later success in school.
- Your child has a right to attend kindergarten if he/she turns five on or before December 1.
- Once school begins, your child may be assessed at certain points on an on-going basis in the classroom.

Ask the teacher about results of all assessments. Expect to be included in the goal-setting and planning for your child. Discuss your child's progress with the teacher.