

## How to Conduct an Internal Assessment Using the Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD)

NOTE: The CHILD is currently unavailable to the general public for purchase; it can only be accessed and used by a trained and reliable CHILD assessor. Although the CHILD is being used for the purpose of internal assessment, it will be conducted as a virtual assessment by a CHILD trained and reliable Pennsylvania Key Program Quality Assessor (PQA).

The program may want to inform the parents of the virtual internal assessment, assuring them that assessors will follow the same observation protocols and adherence to confidentiality procedures as they would if conducting an on-site observation.

### **CHILD assessment at-a-glance**

- Approximately two hours to complete (four coding blocks of 20 minutes each, with 5-10 minutes to score each item after each coding block)
- No teacher interview although videographer may be asked questions to clarify partially observed practices
- No documents needed as source of evidence for scoring
- Assessment based on observation only
- May include all classroom activities including outdoor play and meals
- Must observe some unstructured activities

### **Required materials**

The program will provide:

- Reliable internet connection
- Device to provide video of classroom for virtual internal assessment by the PQA CHILD assessor
  - NOTE: Assessors are not permitted to view or save recorded video. They must see a live classroom environment when conducting the virtual internal assessment.
- Audio connection between PQA and videographer throughout assessment for prompting purposes

The CHILD reliable assessor will need:

- Reliable internet connection
- CHILD scale
- Scoring sheet
- Notetaking sheet
- Timer
- Observation feedback form (optional)

### **Supplemental materials**

For the program:

- Guiding principles and CHILD dimensions overview handout
- CHILD Practitioner's Guide available from the CHILD reliable PQA for participating programs
  - The PQA will share information about using the Practitioner's Guide to support ongoing work with the CHILD. If the program is interested in this additional support, the PQA will order the Practitioner's Guide

and have it delivered to the program for use after the virtual internal assessment is completed.

### **Purchase the materials**

The CHILD is currently unavailable for purchase. The CHILD reliable PQA will discuss the CHILD expectations with the program prior to the internal assessment. An overview of expectations is also provided in the “Guiding Principles and CHILD Dimensions Overview” handout.

### **Conduct the Internal Assessment (start to finish)**

#### **PROGRAM**

##### **1. Prepare to conduct the internal assessment with the CHILD**

- The PQA will have a conversation with the program’s videographer regarding details of practices that need to be seen and the following additional information:
  - The CHILD is focused primarily on interactions.
  - If challenging child behaviors occur, be sure they are captured in the live stream.
  - The assessment will be occurring in real-time as the videographer is live streaming. There will be four 20-minute coding blocks of observation. After each coding block is completed, the videographer should pause the live stream and the PQA will take 5-10 minutes to score that coding block. The videographer will be notified when the PQA is ready to begin the next coding block.
  - Set aside at least two hours of time for the assessment when the videographer is available.
  - Choose a preschool classroom (the majority of the children are between ages three and five) to be assessed.

##### **2. When to conduct the internal assessment**

- It is best to conduct the assessment when the majority of the children have arrived and during an active time of the day. Some unstructured activities must be observed, and the assessment may include all classroom activities including outdoor play, transitions, and meals.
- The chosen classroom should maintain a typical schedule (as much as possible) while the videographer is in place.

##### **3. Conduct the internal assessment**

- The PQA CHILD reliable assessor will conduct the assessment while viewing the live stream of the classroom.
- The assessor will provide instruction to the videographer when needed as the observation progresses.

##### **4. Review the observation results**

- After all coding blocks are finished and the scoring is completed, the PQA will engage in a brief dialogue with the director and/or classroom teacher about observed practices as they relate to the CHILD.
- A written report will follow within a week.

##### **5. Review strengths, areas for potential growth, and strategies to try**

- Upon receipt of the written assessment report, schedule time to review the results with your Internal Assessment Team, PQA, and Quality Coach (when applicable). Discuss strengths in the practices that support social and emotional learning.
- Identify goals to achieve growth and include them in your Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI).
  - For programs agreeing to use the CHILD Practitioner’s Guide: Appendix C in the Practitioner’s Guide includes Planning Guides for each dimension to help you as you create your CQI plan.
- Be patient. Do not be discouraged if the assessment results do not meet your expectations. Growth takes time.

## 6. Continue application of the CHILD practices

- It is recommended that each program staff involved in the internal assessment is familiar with the expectations of the CHILD including the nine dimensions. This supports ongoing discussion and deeper conversations regarding the CHILD practices and application to the specific classroom's goals.
- For programs agreeing to use the Practitioner's Guide:
  - Read the "Introduction to the CHILD" in the Practitioner's Guide.
  - Choose one dimension at a time to focus on in the CHILD Practitioner's Guide. Read through the section to gain familiarity with the dimension.
- Change what you can and accept those things that are outside of your program's ability to improve.
- Plan to revisit your goals and program's administrative practices regularly to assess and update as goals are achieved. The CQI process is cyclical as you continuously reflect on your practices and your drive for growth.

## PQA

### 1. Prepare to conduct the internal assessment

- Discuss the observation process details with the videographer including practices/behaviors that need to be seen and the following information:
- The CHILD is focused primarily on interactions. The observer needs to see numerous interactions.
- If challenging child behaviors occur, be sure they are captured in the live stream.
- The assessment will be occurring in real-time as the videographer is live streaming.
  - There will be four 20-minute coding blocks of observation. After each coding block, the videographer should pause the live stream and the PQA will take 5-10 minutes to score that block. The videographer will be notified when the PQA is ready to begin the next coding block observation.
- Set aside at least two hours of time for the assessment when the videographer is available

### 2. When to conduct the internal assessment

- Schedule a time when the classroom being observed will be maintaining a typical schedule (as much as possible).

### 3. Conduct the internal assessment

- Exercise ongoing communication with videographer to ensure coverage of all aspects of classroom.
- Score all 28 dimensions in each coding block.
- Take notes about the interactions you observe. Typically, a single interaction can be classified across multiple items, and you will determine which items the observed behaviors fall under.
- After you have completed a 20-minute coding block, ask the videographer to turn off/pause the live stream. Allow 5-10 minutes to determine the score for each item in that coding block. After scoring for the coding block is completed, inform the videographer that it is time to begin a new coding block.
- Each coding block is treated independently of the other blocks.

### 4. Review the observation with the program leadership

- At the end of the observation, verbally review global strengths, areas for improvement, and missed opportunities with the director and/or classroom teacher about what was observed.
- Complete the IA Consultation Summary including and expanding on areas discussed with program staff.

## **5. Review strengths, areas for potential growth, and strategies to try**

- Review the IA Consultation Summary and the results of the assessment with the program's internal assessment team. Discuss strengths in the practices that support social and emotional learning.
- Assist the program in establishing goals for their CQI plan based on the assessment.
- Convey the following to the program:
  - Assure everyone has contributed ideas and ensure everyone knows the next steps to take toward improvement.
  - Start small. Focus on one attribute at a time.
  - Be patient. Do not be discouraged if your initial scores are not what you expected.
  - Change what you can and accept those things that are outside of your program's ability to improve.

## **6. Continue to encourage application of the CHILD practices**

- Offer to engage in additional consultation with the program (whether the program agrees to use the CHILD Practitioner's Guide or not).