

## GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVING CHILDREN

1. Know **WHY** you are observing -- to **understand child development**.
2. Know **WHAT** your focus is for each observation.
3. **Look for what the child is able to do** rather than what the child is not yet doing.
4. Get the director and lead teacher's verbal permission to observe **THE CHILD** at the center. Let them know what you will be doing during the observations. Comply with their requests for appropriate behavior within their center. If your supervisor tells you to work while doing your observation, comply and set up another time for the observation.
5. In most cases you will be a non-participant observer. Be as inconspicuous as possible. (Pretend to be paint on the wall.) Be **BORING** but not rude to the children.
6. Remain detached from the situations you observe. You are not in your "teacher" role during the observations.
7. Be non-judgmental. You are observing behaviors not judging them in terms of good or bad, or right or wrong.
8. Collect "clean data". Impose or introduce nothing into the setting that might change the behavior or the children.
9. Be professional. Your behavior reflects not only on yourself but also on Ohlone and the ECS department.
10. Maintain **CONFIDENTIALITY**. The rights of the child and his/her parents must be respected. *Do not use the real name of the child when writing about the child or discussing your observations in class.* Do not talk about the child to anyone other than the parent(s) and then **NEVER** within the child's hearing. (Using the child's alias during class discussions is permissible.)
11. Respect the child's right not to participate in a particular task or situation you need to observe.
12. Record what you observe. Do not alter or fabricate data.
13. If you observe a licensing violation, you are mandated to report it. If you are not sure if a violation has occurred, discuss the situation with your instructor.
14. Leave all personal items in your car or other safe place. Backpacks, purses, food, drink, gum, etc are prohibited from the children's classrooms,
15. Dress appropriately for working, playing and engaging with young children.