

TRANSDISCIPLINARY PLAY-BASED ASSESSMENT

Recently, Pre-School staff members received two days of professional development on the art of conducting Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessments. What's that all about?

Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment (TPBA) is a functional, dynamic, developmentally appropriate approach to assessment of young children from birth to 6 years of age. TPBA involves a team that includes professionals as well as family (parents or other caregivers), who observe the child in play with a selection of both familiar and novel toys and materials in a natural (home or community) or a naturalistic (play) setting.

Over the course of 1 - 1 1/2 hours, the child has an opportunity to play with his or her parents or other caregivers, siblings or peers, and a play facilitator in a variety of engaging activities that incorporate communication, cognitive, sensorimotor, and emotional and social domains of development. Using developmental guidelines and age tables relating to each of these domains, the team members then interpret their observations to determine the child's level of ability; what, if any, disabilities or concerns are indicated; and what strategies were effective in promoting higher levels of skills or more functional behaviors. In combination with information gained from caregiver assessment tools, and occasionally from additional tools, the team can then present a comprehensive picture of the child from which program needs can be determined and intervention strategies planned.

TPBA has been widely used across the United States and in many countries since 1990, and professionals from numerous disciplines have found TPBA to be a practical, functional, holistic, and developmentally appropriate process for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their families. TPBA derives from the integration of input from hundreds of families and professionals and the results of current research across many aspects in the field of child development and early childhood special education.

Over the next several months the AACCS Early Learning Center Team will continue to integrate the TPBA process into their program.