



4. Guidelines for the Analysis and Description of Early Childhood Education Programs

THE guidelines which have been described and explained in Part 3, "Analyzing Early Childhood Education Programs," are intended to help school personnel. Their objectives are: (a) to identify the main ways in which early childhood education programs may differ from one another; and (b) to gain increased insight into the consequences for children that might follow the choice of one program rather than another. The guidelines should be useful to curriculum workers who are trying to mount programs suited to the particular needs of local communities. For example, the guidelines may help them make decisions on which of several Head Start or Follow Through models to adopt, or may help them as they work at local program development for children from age 3 to grade 3.

Both the content and the format of the guidelines are intended to be used only as starting points. Those using the guidelines may want to add or delete dimensions, expand on those that are given, or convert them to a format more useful for specific local purposes. Some of the program dimensions identified are described on a scale of alternative choices. These dimensions were selected as being those which are most central in terms of their effects on the lives of children and/or the conditions under which a program can be developed and sustained.

In making a descriptive analysis of a program, several steps might be followed. For instance, first use the guidelines as a checklist of characteristics, adding brief descriptive phrases where needed and identifying areas which are unclear, important aspects that may have been overlooked in planning, or characteristics which may not be related to local needs. Next, the items in each category should be considered in connection with Milly Cowles' discussion of theories of development (see pp. 790-95) in order to clarify what assumptions may underlie the various choices and what possible consequences each choice may have for children and staff.

Another step would be to determine the degree of consistency or relatedness among the various categories: goals and procedures; procedures and evaluation approaches; overall program characteristics and

methods used for staff development. Inconsistencies or "mismatches" can be a source of major problems in programs. Some methods for staff training do not prepare teachers adequately for the kind of program intended and some sets of teaching procedures do not lead to the fulfillment of desired goals. In some communities, the general requirements for the development of certain programs cannot be met without a great deal of difficulty. In addition, some sets of assumptions regarding human learning and development may be too narrow to explain many aspects of human behavior.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that much that is of great importance in making a real difference in programs has been left out. Examples of such omissions are the effects on student development of teacher and parent expectations of success or failure, and the quality of interpersonal relationships within classroom and family groups. Factors such as these should, of course, be considered when analyzing programs.

Guidelines for Analysis of Early Childhood Education Programs *

I. Assumptions Regarding Human Development and Learning (See Cowles, pp. 790-95).

Where does the program fit along this continuum?

Behavioral- Environmental . . .	Cognitive- Transactional . . .	Psychosexual- Personality . . .	Normative- Maturational
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If you have not already done so, acquaint yourself with these four main views using the references suggested on pages 790-95. On the basis of your reading and discussion, try to formulate the answers to the following questions that might be given by adherents of each view:

1. What is human development?
 - a. What is the relationship between learning and development?
 - b. What motivates and sustains development and/or learning?
 - c. What view of Man is reflected—especially concerning the nature of intelligence and of human knowledge or knowing?
 - d. What is the relationship among language, cognition, affect, and perceptual-motor functioning?
2. Under what conditions can development be (best) fostered or facilitated?
 - a. Role of the individual (student, learner)
 - b. Role of teacher and school materials
 - c. Role of other agents (peers and parents, home and neighborhood).
3. What kinds of evidence are collected and used:
 - a. In basic research and theory building/testing?
 - b. In evaluation of children's progress and intervention programs?
4. To what extent do theories covered deal with the same phenomena, the same dimensions of human behavior and development?
5. To what extent has the theory been translated for implementation into practice? What are some of its salient/typical implications for practice?

* These guidelines are the result of the joint efforts of the members of the ASCD Early Childhood Education Council. They were compiled and edited by David L. Elliott.

6. What do theories try to do? What should we as educators expect of them? How can we best get more help from theorists and researchers?

II. *Aims and Objectives* (See Frost, pp. 796-801).

What are the objectives of the program and how are they described?

A. What are the main types of outcome objectives for children and at what level(s) are they described?

Begin by going to all the sources to which you have access concerning a particular program. Fill in as much information as is available using the categories below as a beginning. Add categories or subcategories wherever necessary, especially at Level 3, Specific Instructional Objectives.

___ Level 1. Broad Program Objectives

___ Mainly custodial
day care
___ Other

___ School readiness
life adjustment

___ More broadly
educational
development
of competence

___ Level 2. Intermediate Range Objectives

___ Perceptual-motor
eye-hand coordination, auditory discrimination, visual discrimination

___ Cognitive
concept formation (relational, general), principles and generalizations, problem-solving ability, creativity

___ Language
competence, performance in standard English, other dialect or language reading

___ Affective
positive self-concept, achievement motivation, persistence, autonomy, ethnic pride, openness to change

___ Role as student
ability to follow directions, impulse control, politeness, self-direction, initiative, responsibility for own learning

___ Mastery of subject-matter content
mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, literature

___ Other

___ Level 3. Specific Instructional Objectives

B. What is the degree of specificity of the statements of objectives?

___ Very explicit ___ Global, general
(behavioral definitions) (loosely defined)

___ Emphasis on products, measured ___ Emphasis on "learning
outcome, criterion performance sets," cognitive
operations

___ Specific sequence ___ Sequence emerges in
predetermined situation

C. What is the process-product emphasis of the goal statements?

___ Mainly on process ___ Mainly on product
(teaching procedures, (outcomes in pupils)
instructional setting)

Some programs will list more of the process-type objectives, exemplified in IID, than the product-type objectives of the previous section. There may be specific reasons for this that are at least in part traceable to assumptions made about human learning and development. (In most programs, process objectives

are reflected in descriptions of program procedures rather than in their statements of goals.)

D. What objectives are expressed in terms of (expected changes in) program procedures and adult roles?

- ___ 1. Teachers and other adults as:
 - ___ Disseminators of knowledge content
 - ___ Sources of reinforcement (rewards, knowledge of results)
 - ___ Guides to children's learning and developmental activities
 - ___ Models with which to identify
 - ___ Other
- ___ 2. Materials and equipment to:
 - ___ Facilitate lesson and drill sessions
 - ___ Serve as self-correcting guides to learning
 - ___ Stimulate curiosity and invite exploration
 - ___ Aid in organizing natural world surrounding children
 - ___ Other
- ___ 3. Setting

E. Of the objectives listed in A and/or D, which are considered most important and why?

- 1. Range, as revealed in A2:
 - Narrow Broad
 - (language only, cognition only) ("whole child")
- 2. Priorities, as revealed in A and D, as well as through direct observation:
 - Why? Why are some omitted?

F. What degrees of relatedness are assumed to exist among the various types of objectives listed in IIA?

- ___ Individual objectives seen as separately achievable
- ___ Some goals inclusive of others
- ___ All goals seen as interdependent

G. What is the expected time span for reaching goals?

- a. Long-term: ___ Short-term: ___
 - By adult- ... By grade 6 ... By age 8 ... Within ... Within
 - hood one year one summer
- b. Same for all goals Varies with different dimensions mentioned in A (specify how many) ___
- c. Same for all children .. For selected subgroups of children only

III. *Principal Program Components or Procedures* (See Patterson, pp. 802-805). What are the most characteristic features of the operation of the program?

A. In what ways are initial student status and subsequent student status assessed?

- 1. Timing:
 - ___ On entry into ___ Continually ___ At year's
 - the program during the year end
- 2. Type:
 - ___ Informal ___ Formal
 - ___ Teacher judgment ___ Std. tests
 - ___ Work completed ___ Checklists ___ Observ. schedules
 - ___ Unsystematic ___ Systematic
 - ___ Haphazard ___ Carefully planned

3. By whom carried on:
- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Student self-evaluation | ☐ Teachers | ☐ Specialists |
| | ☐ Aides | ☐ Supervisors |
| | ☐ Parents | ☐ Other |
4. Criteria used: (See list of objectives from IIA.)
- ☐ Narrow range ☐ Full range
5. Purpose:
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ As integral part of instructional program | ☐ As distinctive function (e.g., research) |
| ☐ Feedback to shape program development | ☐ For periodic reporting only (e.g., to parents) |
- B. What main kinds of materials and equipment are used in the program?
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Specifically programmed | ☐ Adaptable to wide variety of uses |
| ☐ Self-correcting | |
| ☐ Appropriate for independent pupil use | ☐ Requires adult direction and supervision |
| ☐ Restricted range of types (Describe) | ☐ Wide range of types |
- C. How is time used in the program?
- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Highly structured schedule of activities | ☐ Flexible schedule varying from day to day |
| ☐ Blocks of time designated for specific activities | |
- D. How is space utilized in the program?
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Single classroom or room at home only | ☐ Wide variety of locations used regularly |
| ☐ Areas or rooms designated for specific activities | ☐ Much flexibility in the use of space |
- E. What are the main sources of structuring for the children's activities which are supposed to contribute most toward the achievement of the program's objectives? (Factors can be ranked in order of importance.)
1. Main focal points:
- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Materials and equipment accessible to students for their use | ☐ Direct instruction by teacher (i.e., teaching lessons) |
| ☐ Physical layout of building and lot (including boundaries) | ☐ Direct instruction by other adults (i.e., aides, parents) |
| ☐ Other influences (e.g., in neighborhood, home, TV, etc.) | ☐ Teachers (adults) as guides, to support for exploration |
| | ☐ Interaction with peer group |
2. Main initiative in choice of activities and materials:
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☐ With children | ☐ Varies with time of day, etc. | ☐ With teacher, adults |
|--|--|---|
3. Locations of activities:
- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Exclusively in classroom or schoolyard | ☐ Mainly in neighborhood homes |
|---|---|
4. Degree of diversity in instructional situations:
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Essentially the same all year | ☐ New elements continually added |
|--|---|

___ Narrow range of materials and activities accessible to students

___ Wide range of activities and materials accessible to students

5. What is the degree of regular relationship between school activities and the everyday life of the children?

___ Learning tasks are largely focused on complex naturalistic situations

___ Continual movement between extremes

___ Learning tasks are largely focused on highly defined lesson-task situations

6. What degree of relationship is maintained among various subject areas in the program?

___ Subject areas treated separately for purposes of instruction

___ No distinctions made among subject areas for purposes of instruction

F. What provisions are made for individual differences in experiential backgrounds, developmental levels, and learning styles among students?

1. Amount of differentiation:

___ Very little (Same activities for all)

___ Highly differentiated and tailored

2. Main means for differentiation: (Can be ranked in order of importance.)

___ Student choice

___ Through kinds of materials available

___ Through homogeneous grouping by age, achievement or ability level, interests, etc.

___ Teacher choice

___ Through level of usage of materials

___ Prescription by specialist(s)

___ Through action of adults and older children

___ One-to-one tutoring

___ Other (specify)

___ Mainly through pacing of activities

___ Varying locations for activities

IV. *Administrative-Organizational Requirements* (See Hodges, pp. 806-808). What administrative-organizational arrangements have to be made for the program to become fully operational (with special attention to the requirements for developing a new program or for successful replication of an existing model in a new setting)?

A. In what main ways are members of the local community involved in the program, particularly the parents and neighbors of the children who are enrolled?

___ Only indirectly (e.g., through local school board, PTA, etc.)

___ As part of larger project (e.g., CAP agency)

___ Direct involvement:

(Check those most descriptive and/or rank in order of importance.)

___ In selecting programs, deciding on objectives

___ In policy making and planning—

___ Mainly advisory

___ Setting administrative and fiscal policy

___ In hiring and firing of personnel

___ Relatively high power and influence

___ relatively low power and influence

___ As parts of paid staff— ___ teachers, ___ aides, ___ other staff

___ As clients— ___ Main ways of reaching children (i.e., through parent education, home teaching)

___ Along with the children (supplementary to children's program)

___ As volunteers, ___ participating parents, ___ resources for children, ___ resources for teachers

B. What kinds of personnel will be required and what qualifications should they have? (Enter number for each category.)

	M.D.						Staff-child ratio
	Ph.D.	M.A.	B.A.	A.A.	H.S.	C.H.S.	
Supervisor/adviser	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Aide/assistant	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Home visitor	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Volunteer	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Psychologist	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Social worker	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Medical worker	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Nutritionist/cook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Custodian	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (Designate)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. What amounts and kinds of experience are parts of the desired qualifications for each of the above types of personnel?

3. What personal qualifications are sought in each of the types of personnel in B1?

4. What number of children can be served effectively by one staff member in each of the above categories? (List in right-hand column of B1.)

In most programs the teacher is the basic unit upon which all other staff ratios are based: e.g., one teacher per 15 children with two aides, etc.

5. What incongruities are there, if any, between the personnel requirements of the program being analyzed and existing state/local personnel regulations? (List.)

6. What kinds of staff development (pre-/in-service training) will be required? (See Section D.)

7. In what main ways should the staff be involved in planning and implementation of the program?

- ___ In the selection of the program model to be implemented, or
- ___ in the continuing development of a local program
- ___ Planning the process of implementation, or
- ___ continuous involvement in the problem-solving process
- ___ Developing policy positions for the program
- ___ Developing program materials and selecting equipment, or
- ___ developing supplementary materials and adapting program to the needs of local children
- ___ Developing and implementing evaluation procedures
- ___ Developing dissemination procedures within the local organization and its community
- ___ Other (specify)

C. What are the space, time, and transportation requirements of the program?

1. Space:
Describe types of (a) indoor and (b) outdoor space needed.
What is the estimated number of square feet of floor space per child?
2. What arrangements for transportation must be made:
 - a. To get children to and from the program site?
 - b. For travel within the time of the program?
3. Time requirements:
 - ___ Extended day care (early morning to early evening)
 - ___ Full school day (8:30-9:00 a.m. to 3:00-3:30 p.m.)
 - ___ One-half day exclusively within school hours
 - ___ One-half day not exclusively within school hours
 - ___ Other (specify exact time periods)
 - ___ Year-around..... School year..... Other

D. What kinds of staff development (pre-/in-service training) will be required to operate the program?

1. What is the minimum amount of preservice training required to initiate the program?

- a. Who should receive this training? ☐ Teachers, ☐ Aides,
☐ Others
- b. What amount of time and what types of resources will be needed?

2. What kinds of in-service staff training are required to sustain and/or develop the program?

- a. Who should receive this training? ☐ Teachers, ☐ Aides,
☐ Others
- b. What kinds of resources will be required for this training?
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Local supervisors,
helping teachers | ☐ Outside advisers,
project consultants | ☐ Higher education
faculty |
| ☐ Adult education
specialists | ☐ Other personnel | |
| ☐ Kits of materials
and/or equipment | ☐ Films and video
tapes | ☐ Other |
- c. How are these resources to be employed?
- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ To give teachers feedback
on own behavior | ☐ To model teaching (and
other) techniques |
| ☐ To give teachers feedback
on children's behavior | ☐ To train in specific
methods and techniques |
| ☐ To engage staff in con-
tinuous problem
solving related to
day-to-day work | ☐ To communicate informa-
tion, concepts, attitudes |
| ☐ Other (specify) | |
- d. What are the proposed timing and spacing of in-service work?
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Daily sessions | ☐ Weekly sessions | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Time provided
during working
hours | ☐ After-hours | ☐ On staff's
own time
compensated for |

3. What kinds of incentives for engaging in training are provided the recipients?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ College credit | ☐ Additional pay | ☐ Released time |
| ☐ Credit toward advanced certification | | ☐ Promotion |

E. What are the costs for the first year of the operation of the program?
(Based on unit of children. See B2.)

Items marked with asterisk are to be counted as continuing after the first year of operation.

- ☐ Staff (salary/month x months of program operation)
- ☐ Staff fringe benefits (per month x months of operation)
- ☐ Initial staff development, preservice training first year
- ☐ In-service training
- ☐ Basic equipment (furniture, non-expendable teaching devices, etc.)
- ☐ Basic program materials (books, kits, games, etc.)
- ☐ Expendable supplies and raw materials
- ☐ Food services (breakfasts, lunches, snacks, etc.)
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Medical, psychological, social, nutritional services
- ☐ Supervisory/administrative costs (as a proportion of the total costs,
considering more than one unit of children)
- ☐ Evaluation
- ☐ Dissemination

F. How much time is required for the implementation or development of the program?

1. Lead time required to prepare for first period of operation:
 weeks months years
2. Estimated time required for relatively full implementation or development of program:
 weeks months years

Considerations here include time required for: desired community and staff involvement in preliminary planning and policy making; recruitment and training of personnel; acquisition of land, buildings, equipment, and materials; and the enrollment or recruitment of children and parents.

V. *Evaluation of the Program* (See Patterson, pp. 809-11).

What kinds of evaluation procedures are necessary to the operation of the program?

A. What are the main purposes for the evaluation?

☐ No regular and/or ☐ Regular and/or systematic evaluation

1. Types:

☐ Formative—to facilitate decision making in the program
☐ continuous ☐ periodic ☐ occasional

☐ Summative—for accountability, to determine whether program fulfilled objectives after it is over

☐ Comparative—mainly for basic research

2. Audience: ☐ funding source(s), ☐ sponsor of model,
☐ local administration, ☐ local community, ☐ teachers, staff,
☐ parents, ☐ children, ☐ other (specify)

B. What criteria are used in the evaluation?

1. Product evaluation (of outcomes in children):

(See types of objectives listed in IIA.)

a. Range and priority of types covered in evaluation

b. Specific objectives covered in evaluation

2. Process evaluation (of program procedures):

(See IID.)

☐ Description and assessment ☐ No description or assessment of procedures carried out of procedures

☐ Assessment to determine extent of the implementation of chief components/characteristics of a given "model" or

☐ Other criteria—

☐ Materials and equipment present,

☐ Physical plant characteristics,

☐ Staff characteristics, ☐ Staff behavior patterns,

☐ Other (specify)

3. What main evaluation methods and strategies are employed?

☐ Unsystematic ☐ Systematic (std. tests, (e.g., expert judgment) checklists, etc.)

☐ Carried on by ☐ Carried on by independent local staff agents

☐ Short-term time ☐ Longitudinal time perspective (5-10 years+)

C. Is the evaluation approach itself evaluated?

(See Kamii and Elliott, pp. 827-31.)

What, for example, is the degree of match between evaluation methods employed (including criteria) and:

1. The aims and objectives of the program?

2. The program procedures?

3. The underlying assumptions regarding learning and development? ☐

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