

ANECDOTAL NOTES

An anecdotal record is a short story about your impressions of a child. It might include things you are concerned about in the child's behavior patterns, moods, and achievements; records that provide useful pieces of information. This is a continuing observation which allows you to chart the child's progress.

USES OF ANECDOTES:

1. Program Planning--to plan according to the children's observed abilities.
2. Guidance--to deal with children's behaviors in an appropriate way.
3. Evaluate Reports--case studies, composites
4. Research
5. Parent Conferences

STRUCTURE OF AN ANECDOTE:

1. FACT: What you see--must include who, what, where, when and how.
2. INTERPRETATION: What does the behavior mean, based upon developmental principles, normative data, theory, research, and the child's previous behavior.

IT IS VITAL TO SEPARATE THE FACTS FROM THE INTERPRETATION!

WHAT BEHAVIORS TO INCLUDE IN AN ANECDOTE:

To decide if a behavior you are observing is significant enough to take down as an anecdote, ask yourself this question: "Is this something that could be shared with the child's parents that would give them an indication of their child's progress in a certain area of development?"

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES:

Use precise words to describe behavior--instead of "walked" use "strutted", "stuttered" instead of "said"; use "whispered", "mumbled", "demanded".

DIALOGUE:

Include the child's exact dialogue, but only if it is important to help you illustrate your point. The teacher's dialogue is usually not included.

INTERPRETATIONS:

Give interpretive comments at the end of the anecdote. Ask yourself: "What does this behavior mean?" Relate the behavior to an area of development. You may include personal comments--but you them as such ("I think..." or "I feel...").

ASSIGNMENT:

Each observation should be done on a separate sheet of paper and include the following:

Your Name:

Date":

Child's Name:

Child's Age:

Fact:

Interpretation: