

Trans-disciplinary Play Based Assessment

Cherry Creek Schools' Child Find

Greenwood Village, CO



Cherry Creek Schools' Child Find (CCCF) completes approximately forty evaluations of children per week that are between the ages of birth to six years old. Staff found limitations in using standardized testing for young children with diverse backgrounds and varying developmental levels. An area for improvement was a systematic and naturalistic way for families to meaningfully inform their child's evaluation. As a result, the district began implementing Trans-disciplinary Play Based Assessment-2 (TPBA-2) after determining it to be a flexible authentic assessment tool that would allow staff to evaluate children inclusive of a thick and rich description of the child from his or her family.

Although some members of CCCF had received introductory training to TPBA-2 in past years, the district was not implementing TPBA-2 practices with fidelity. A commitment was made by the district three years ago to train all child find staff in TPBA-2 and begin the certification process. The training has included play facilitation and parent facilitation. Cherry Creek Child Find also participated in CDE TPBA-2 Cadre for the past two years and now has two certified TPBA-2 parent facilitators.

TPBA-2 includes evaluation across four developmental domains—sensorimotor, emotional and social, communication, and cognitive. The parent facilitator observes the child's play alongside the parent(s), asking questions of the parents about how what is being observed across all four domains coincides with their home-life, and oftentimes include the parents in the play. The parent facilitator not only keeps the family informed about what's occurring during the assessment but also ensures the information they provide informs the team of the child's overall development. Families are empowered to describe their child's needs, but even more so their strengths, to inform eligibility and individualized program development. TPBA-2 directly links assessment and intervention, hence parents also inform classroom interventions. It is also aligned with Division of Early Childhood and National Association for the Education of Young Children guidelines for family engagement.

CCCF evaluated our TPBA-2 practice through both formal and informal measures. We implemented a year-TPBA-2 book study, which included reviewing case studies and each member evaluating their own TPBA practice. We also completed coach and peer observations during child find evaluations. Subsequently, beyond our certified parent facilitators, we were able to get two staff members to TPBA-2 Coach Certification and are working toward becoming a Certified TPBA-2 training site next year. This will help ensure we can sustain this practice and train and certify more parent facilitators.

We are seeing positive outcomes implementing TPBA-2 practices. Parents are reporting more positive experiences with evaluation teams getting a "true picture" of their child. Evaluators are able to gain much more evaluation information to determine eligibility and create meaningful individual plans for children, as a result of the information provided by families. For other districts wanting to implement true authentic assessment with young children, inclusive of their families, TPBA-2 is the best tool.

Standard 3—Supporting Student Success