

Training Activity Instructions

Name of Activity: What are Functional Skills and Behaviors?

Learning Objective: Participants will identify the difference between isolated (discrete) skills and functional skills to better understand and assess children's every day functioning.

Activity Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- Functional Skills and Behaviors Handout
- What are Functional Skills and Behaviors Activity Sheet
- What are Functional Skills and Behaviors Activity Answer Key
- Pens/pencils

Preparation:

Give each participant the *Functional Skills and Behaviors Handout* and the *What are Functional Skills and Behaviors Activity Sheet*.

Instructions:

1. Review the *Functional Skills and Behaviors Handout* and discuss reactions as a whole group. Depending on the needs of the participants, prompts for group discussion may include:
 - What does it mean for skills and behaviors to be observed in children in everyday routines and activities?
 - How would you look at the functional use of skills and behaviors across settings and situations?
 - What are the benefits of gathering information about a child's functioning that goes beyond discrete skills on standardized or domain based tests?
 - How are children's functional skills and behaviors and the three global child outcomes rated in the COS process connected?
 - *Variation:* If your program integrates the IFSP/IEP and COS processes, consider changing this prompt to include the connection of individual child outcomes or goals to children's functional skills and behaviors and the three global child outcomes.
2. Ask each participant to take 5-10 minutes to independently complete the *What are Functional Skills and Behaviors Activity Sheet*.
 - *Variation:* Divide a larger group into 4-5 smaller groups and have them complete the activity together.
3. As a large group, review each skill listed and discuss the extent to which the skill is functional or isolated. Use the *What are Functional Skills and Behaviors Activity Answer Key* to provide the correct answers along with explanations.
 - *Variation:* If you had participants complete the activity in groups, begin the debriefing with the question, "Were there any items you did not agree upon?"