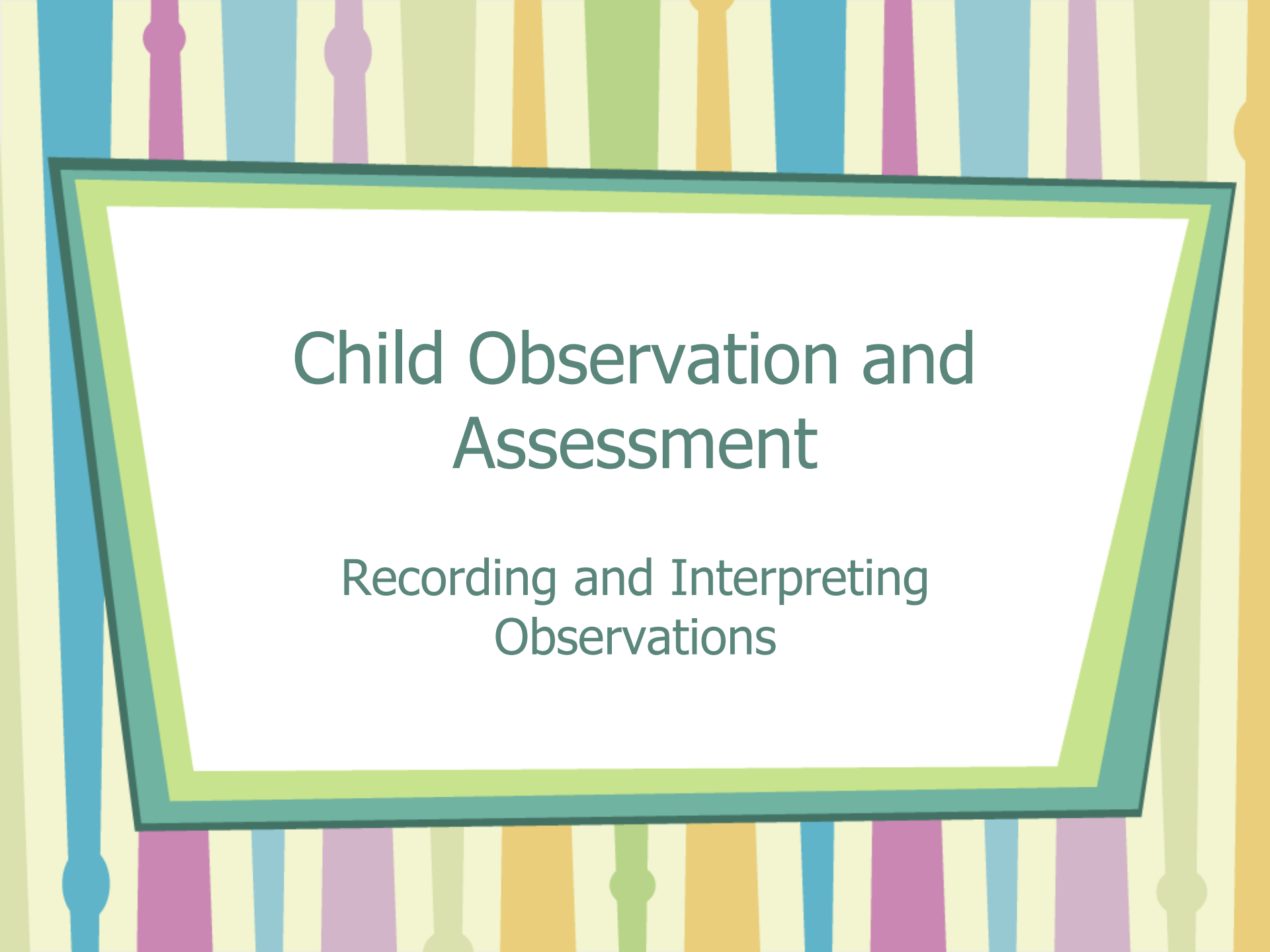




Child Observation and Assessment

Recording and Interpreting
Observations

Learning outcome

- In this session you will learn about recording and interpreting your observations and the importance of ethics and confidentiality.



Recording and Interpretation

- Not all observations will have a predetermined aim or rationale.

Children/young people may be observed:

On a daily basis as they undertake activities.

- Indoors or outdoors.
- In naturalistic conditions or in structured, regulated situations.
- Using a wide range of observation methods or techniques.

Recording and Interpretation

- Some observations provide factual information such as a child/young person's physical development or their ability to perform an action.
- Others provide information for interpretation such as emotional, social, language or cognitive development.

Recording and Interpretation

Observations must be recorded and evaluated and maybe compared to recognised milestones/theories:

- The Stycar sequences (Mary Sheridan, Meggitt & Sunderland).
- The Educational Curriculum for a particular type of Setting (varies depending which country you are in).
- Theorists such as Piaget, Erikson, Chomsky, Kohlberg.

Using Observation Records

Observation records may be used for:

- Research.
- Planning.
- Sharing information.
- Reflection on personal practice.
- Inspection purposes.



Importance of Ethics in Observations

- Protection of the rights of the child/young person
- Objectivity of the observer
- Storage of the data
- Accessibility
- Purpose to which the data is applied

Students need to consider two contexts:

- College or university
- The workplace

What does Ethics in Observations Involve?

- Informed consent/permission
- Confidentiality
- Honesty and integrity
- Respect for learners (children/young people)



Top Tips

Confidentiality

- Click on the link below to watch the video (approximately 5 minutes), then continue with the presentation.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXV7sd-n-Yk>

Ethics checklist

- Before observing
 - Permission from supervisor and/or
 - Permission from parents
 - Permission from child/young person (where appropriate)
- Anonymity after observing
 - Names of children
 - Names of places
 - Names of staff/parents

Ethics checklist

- Objectivity
 - All statements accurate and non-discriminatory
 - All statements are unbiased
 - All statements supported by evidence
- Confidentiality
 - All records kept in a secure place

Next Steps

- You now need to think about how you will undertake your observations in preparation for assignment 1.
- Do you work/volunteer in a setting with children/young people? If so, which child will you observe?
- If you do not work/volunteer in a setting with children/young people, do you have contact with a child or young person you could observe (preferably not your own child)? If so, which child will you observe?
- If you do not work/volunteer in a setting with children/young people or have contact with a child or young person you will need to search for at least 2 suitable videos to use for your observation? If so, you will need to show these to the module tutor for approval before starting any observations.

Learning outcome

- In this session you have learnt about recording and interpreting your observations and the importance of ethics and confidentiality.



References and further reading

- Bradford, H. (2012) *Planning and Observation of Children Under Three*, London: Routledge
- Drummond, M. (1998) Observing Children in Smidt, S. (Ed) *The Early Years: A Reader*, London: Routledge
- Macloed-Brudenell, I (2004), *Advanced Early Years for Foundation Degrees and levels 4/5*, Oxford: Heinemann.



References and further reading

- Mukherji, P. and Dryden, L. (Eds) (2014) *Foundations of Early Childhood: Principles and Practice*. London: Sage
- Palaiologou, I. (2012) *Child Observation for the Early Years*, 2nd Edition, London: Sage
- Riddall-Leech, S (2008) *How to Observe Children*, Harlow: Heinemann
- Welsh Assembly Government (2008) *Observing Children*, Cardiff:WAG

