

## Coaching Corner



### Ready, Set, GRO!

Ongoing, authentic observation, targeted at how a child is developing, is a vital component to have in place if you are to be successful in providing a great foundation before heading into kindergarten. In order to support children in achieving their full potential and developing school readiness skills, we must be aware of how and what they are developing. Reflecting on what we observe children do every day is crucial.

In order to create goals and outcomes for children's development and learning, care must be taken to assess children, the learning environment, and the standards and outcomes for your specific program. Is there an easy way to use the steps of development to track children's progress? The answer is yes!

Monitor children's progress with our newly created observation checklist, HRL-GRO (**G**rowing through **R**eflection and **O**bservation). Developed as an authentic system for tracking children's progress, GRO can be used to record changes and growth in children's development, behaviors, and learning over time. In addition, GRO outlines the steps of how children learn and develop each skill through all domains and guides the way to supporting growth and development simply. Defining the underlying skills that are developing along the way, GRO helps you know where a child is on the path to being school ready.

### What makes GRO different?

HRL-GRO	What Other Progress-Tracking Tools Offer
<b>37 skills</b> are shown in the progression that children develop them, easily identifying a child's level of development within one step.	Focus on the final outcome only; skills listed in isolation.
<b>Easy-to-understand</b> format and scoring.	Multiple books and manuals with complicated scoring requirements.
<b>Teaching strategies</b> provide ways you can further the development of each skill and enhance the quality of teacher-child interactions.	Disconnected discussions for how to develop specific skills.
<b>Real classroom examples</b> of what children do or say are provided for concrete support of observations.	Administration procedures are the focus; teachers are left to interpret how to observe.

### What are the benefits of using an observation checklist?

- When observing children in naturally occurring routines and experiences, we are able to determine more of what they are able to do compared to formal one-on-one testing options.
- Because the GRO provides such unique developmental sequences, you are able to focus on teaching **intentionally**. Knowing the areas of achievement and skills that are yet to develop helps you individualize and base your planning on what children *can* do and are on the verge of developing.
- Sharing information and partnering with families remains positive and meaningful. Because the GRO focuses on what children can do along the path to school readiness, families can contribute important information about how skills are developing at home.
- Teachers will be prepared with simple language to **share with families** based on the tools used in the GRO.
- Using GRO strengthens your ability to recognize and respond to the needs of your preschoolers as the tool becomes an integral part of your curriculum and progress monitoring systems.

To learn more about HRL-GRO, [click here](#).