



The Ounce Scale

Denny McGihon, PhD
Birth to Five Education Resource Director
Creative Options, Cerebral Palsy of Colorado

I hope the story of our journey at CP of Colorado to learning about, deciding on, and finally introducing the Ounce Scale as an ongoing assessment tool for our Birth to Three staff will be of use to those of you who are thinking about using it in your program.

Learning about it:

I learned of the "Results Matter" project at an ACECC meeting. Nan Vendegna, told us of the grant she had just received from the federal government to find a system that would explicitly define outcomes that could be utilized as data to justify federal funding. She emphasized that any system chosen should have a positive effect on the children and families who would be a part of it. I wanted it to be something our staff would experience as helpful to themselves as well. I began to talk with Nan and Jo Koehn at CDE to learn more. Then I attended the July 2005 conference on "Childhood Matters: The Culture of Childhood 2005." I researched the systems being considered. It was a great help to talk with others at the conference. I had narrowed my focus down to looking more fully at the Ounce Scale for Birth to Three with the corresponding Work Sampling System for Three to Fives.

I attended the workshop led by Diane Trujillo and Justin Gutierrez on the Ounce Scale. It was a lively group. We questioned how it would work for children with disabilities and many other things. I would be for it at one moment and doubtful the next. I was most interested in how it would help our teachers become better observers as well as more knowledgeable about child development. The Family Album looked like a useful tool to use with our parents.

Deciding on it:

I shared what I had learned with our President, Judy Ham, our Education Director, Wendie Edwards and our Developmental Services Director, Rosanne Surine. We showed the observation notes and Family Album to some of our staff. Finally we came to the conclusion that we would use the Ounce Scale for ongoing assessment and continue the use of the ASQ and ASQ-SE for initial screenings.

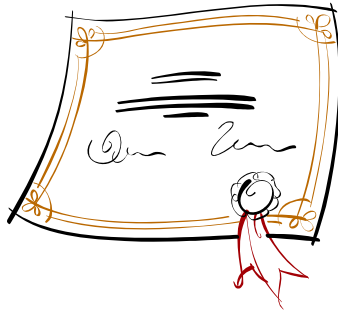
Introducing it and training on it:

Through Gretchen Davidson and Jo Koehn we scheduled a workshop with Diane and Justin for our staff as well as some of our community partners. Before the workshop we wanted to visit a site where the Ounce was in use. Wendie Edwards, Carol Goss, our education coordinator and I visited the Spin Center at Canyon City. This was very important. We talked with teachers who had been using it for several years and learned what had worked for them as well as what had been difficult. We realized that we were beginning a process which would require ongoing training and tailoring for our programs. That has helped us to be more realistic and patient in our planning.

Where we are now:

We have introduced the Ounce gradually. We started by having the teachers use the Ounce Observation note domains and forms. This provided an opportunity to check their progress in making observations. Then we had another workshop with Diane and a teacher from the Spin Center to train on doing the Behavioral profiles. Our teachers ended the workshop by saying they wanted to implement all of the Ounce Scales including the Family Album as soon as possible. We will do that by February first. I will keep you posted on our progress!

ACECC Ounce Scale Training is February 23rd and 24th. See attached flier for details



**Colorado Early Childhood and School Age-Youth Credential
Sudy Opsahl, Assistant Director**

Having credentialed educators in programs will improve the future for children. The professional development of staff is critical to increasing quality in early childhood and school age programs. Children need consistent educators who know how children develop, understand how to stimulate their minds, keep them safe, and provide the nurturing they need. The Credential recognizes the amount of education and experience providers have working with young and school age children. The Credential is a viable career lattice. It consists of six levels, starting with 2 classes in either early care and education or school age and increasing competencies and knowledge to the doctorate level. Also available is an infant toddler endorsement to those who have specialized training in infant toddler classes as well as a Level II ECE credential or higher.

The Credential office has been working with the Colorado Department of Human Services Child Care Division to align the ECE Credential with the director qualifications. This includes developing two challenge tests based on the 8 core classes needed for meeting the director qualifications. The challenge tests are offered 3 times a year (February, June and October) at several community college testing centers around Colorado.

The School Age-Youth Credential was developed in 2005 along with Core Knowledge and Standards for School Age and Youth professionals. Course work is currently being developed at some community colleges to enable providers in meeting the requirements for the School Age-Youth Credential.

The Colorado Community Colleges online early childhood distance learning program is based in the Credential office. At least fourteen early childhood classes are offered on line through this program every semester.

Both the Early Care and Education and the School Age-Youth Credential applications and Core Knowledge documents are available on our website. For more information please call the Credential Office: 303-333-6021 or visit our website: www.ColoradoECcredential.com

**** Individuals living or working in Arapahoe County who receive any level of the professional credential are eligible for an award stipend!**

Please contact Michelle Reetz, Professional Development Coordinator (303)-340-7053.