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## What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is organized documentation of a child's developmental progress and learning. The purpose of a portfolio is to capture moments that demonstrate a child's growth over time. Staff observe what children are doing and record their observations. Samples of children's work and photographs of children's activities are usually included in portfolios, along with staff observations and notes. Each item should be linked with one or more learning goals or developmental milestones. A good portfolio contains multiple sources and types of documentation.

## Where do we keep the contents of a portfolio?

Items for each child's portfolio might be kept in a file folder, a 3-ring binder, a pizza box, or a large envelope. Some facilities scan items and store portfolios in their computer, on a disk, or through a web-based service. The container you choose for portfolios must fit into the storage space you have available and be easy for staff to access.

## How do you use portfolio assessment?

Because the portfolio contains representative samples of the child's work over a period of time, a portrait of the child's developmental progress will emerge. Compare the child's progress to relevant learning goals, or indicators. This information will be valuable to the program staff as they plan daily activities for children and can be used as the centerpiece of parent conferences.

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## Better Beginnings and children's portfolios

- BB Level 3 and higher: The staff shall maintain a portfolio on each child.
- During your program review, the BAS assessor will ask to see a sample of portfolios for each age group enrolled. This will be documented on the Program Review Checklist, which you will upload with your Better Beginnings application.

For more information on portfolios go to:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/portfolios-and-documentation>

*Portfolios: Tools for Documentation, Celebration, and Growth* (2022) by Lisa Taylor Cook and Joanne Baham: <http://www.childcareexchange.com/article/portfolios-tools-for-documentation-celebration-and-growth/5026434/>

The childcare management software you use might also have tips and suggestions for preparing portfolios.