

# **Asking the Right Questions, Getting the Right Answers: Evaluating Young Children for Special Education Services**

## **Glossary & Bibliography**

This section provides a glossary of terms that relate to the assessment of young children. In addition, there is an extensive bibliography that includes resources and websites where further information on the topic of early childhood assessment can be found. A listing of published assessment tools is also provided. Information contained in this section is a sampling and should not be interpreted as exhaustive. Many of the books and tools listed are available for loan at the Early Childhood Resource Center and can be checked out online at: [kskits.org/ecrc](http://kskits.org/ecrc)

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## Glossary of Assessment Terminology

**Action:** Being in a state of motion with organized patterns of behavior.

**Active Alert:** The considerable motor activity, including thrusting of the arms and legs; the baby often responds to stimuli with more movement; brief “fussy” periods may be noted.

**Adaptive Behavior:** The effectiveness of the individual in adjusting to the natural and social demands of the environment; may be reflected in maturation, learning, or social development.

**Adaptive Behavior Measure:** An instrument designed to assess acquisition of developmental and social skills including coping behaviors, sensory processing, motor control, psychological functions and social-emotional factors.

**Adaptive Response:** An appropriate action in which the individual responds successfully to some environmental demand; adaptive responses further the sensory integration process.

**Affect:** The feeling, emotion, mood, and temperament associated with a thought.

**Affective Monitoring:** The monitoring of experiences as pleasurable or not pleasurable.

**Anticipatory Guidance:** An approach that emphasizes discussing with a caregiver the next step or phase of a child’s development before it occurs.

**Aspiration:** The entrance of material (e.g., food, saliva) into the trachea or airway below the level of the true vocal cords.

**Assessment:** Identification of priorities, resources, and concerns of families regarding their infants/children abilities, behaviors or skills.

**Assessment:** An ongoing process designed to collect information regarding a child’s level of functioning, and define program outcomes and strategies.

**Babbling:** Repetition of phonemes, such as ba, ba, ba, da, da, etc.

**Behavior Checklist:** An instrument designed to measure a child’s basic behavioral characteristics including social and object orientation, participation, motivation, endurance, communication, consolability, activity, reactivity, goal directedness, frustration, attention span, responsiveness, and general tone.

**Cause-Effect:** A problem solving skill that reflects how things happen and understanding of how things work.

**Clinical Opinion:** An informed opinion from a qualified and trained professional.

**Communication:** Any means by which an individual relates experiences, ideas, knowledge, and feelings to another; includes speech, sign language, gestures, writing.

**Constructive Play:** When a child learns the use of play materials and attempts to create something with them.

**Contingent Interaction:** An adult response that is directly related to a child’s behavior.

**Cooperative Play:** When a child plays in an organized group that shares a common goal; the other children supplement the efforts of one child.

**Coping:** The process of making adaptations in order to meet personal needs and respond to the demands of the environment.

**Coping Style:** An individual's characteristic way of behaving in situations viewed as threatening or challenging to one's sense of well being.

**Criterion-Referenced:** A type of test that measures a person's level of mastery in a particular skill area without comparing him/her to others.

**Crying Alert:** When an infant is crying intensely; difficult to break through the crying with any stimulus.

**Deep Sleep:** When the baby is asleep and has a regular respiratory pattern; the eyes are closed with no eye movements; there is no spontaneous activity; though jerks or startles may be seen; responses to external stimuli are delayed.

**Developmental Age:** The age at which a child is functioning (demonstrating specific abilities), based on assessment of the child's skills and comparison of those skills to the age at which they are considered typical.

**Diagnosis:** A process designed to confirm or disconfirm the existence of a problem and describe the nature of the problem.

**Diagnostic Evaluation:** An in-depth process used by an interdisciplinary team to detect a developmental problem, describe the level of functioning in all developmental areas, and to identify the type of problem (for example, mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy) and (if possible) the cause.

**Dramatic Play:** When a child engages in role-playing and pretends to be someone, or something else, using real or imagined objects.

**Drowsy or Semi-Dozing:** The eyes are open but dull and heavy-lidded or closed with eyelids fluttering; infant may look dazed and "unavailable"; activity level is variable, though movements are generally smooth with mild startles; frequent state changes can be seen with stimulation.

**Evaluation:** A process in which a variety of methods are used to determine if a child is eligible for services including determination of present levels of functioning in each developmental area.

**Failure to Thrive:** A condition characterized by low weight/slow weight gain that is below expectations set by the standard growth chart, caused by physical and/or psychosocial factors.

**Functional Play:** When a child repeats or initiates actions; simple and repetitive muscular activities.

**Gesture:** The child's use of hands/body to express thought and intent prior to the consistent use of spoken language.

**Goal-Directed Behavior:** An activity with purposeful, sequenced events in order to achieve a specific outcome.

**Gravitational Insecurity:** An unusual degree of anxiety or fear in response to movement or change in head position, related to poor processing of vestibular and proprioceptive.

**Group Play/Associative Play:** When a child plays with other children; they are all engaged in similar if not identical activity.

**Homeostasis:** A biological term that refers to a state of balance within a system.

**Jargon:** Strings of unintelligible speech sounds with the intonational pattern of adult speech.

**Joint (Shared) Reference:** A process of differentiating or noting a particular object, action, or event for the purpose of communication.

**Joint Attention:** A child or caregiver focused on the same object, toy, activity, etc., at the same time.

**Kinesthesia:** A muscle sense that provides body awareness of movement and body position in relation to one's environment.

**Language Comprehension:** The child's understanding of verbal language with and without linguistic cues.

**Language Expression:** The child's use of nonverbal, preverbal and verbal behaviors to communicate with others to convey thoughts, feelings and ideas.

**Learning Style:** The way in which an individual best acquires knowledge or processes information.

**Level of Arousal:** A neurophysiological term used to describe the state of the human nervous system that occurs on a continuum from sleeping to awake; it incorporates both affective and physical components and is an important foundation for learning, performance and behavior.

**Light Sleep:** The eyes are closed, though rapid eye movements may be noted beneath closed eyelids, and occasionally an eye may open briefly; low-level motor activity present, with movements quite random; respirations frequently irregular and sucking movements may be seen.

**Means-End:** A problem solving skill; how a child uses an action or "means" to achieve a goal or the "end".

**Modulation:** The brain's regulation of its own activity; involves facilitating some neural messages to maximize a response and inhibiting other messages to reduce irrelevant activity.

**Muscle Tone:** A muscle's level of tension while at rest or in reaction to movement; reflects the condition of the muscle and the nerves that supply it; can be high, low, normal or a combination of levels.

**Mutual Co-Regulation:** The process that occurs during caregiver-child interactions in which each member both influences the experience and is influenced by the dynamics of the interaction, which in turn impacts self-regulation capacities.

**Mutual Gaze:** Eye contact with a communication partner, used to signal intensified attention.

**Norm-Referenced:** A type of test which compares a person's results with others of the same age to show his or her relative standing on the items tested.

**Object Permanence:** The concept that objects continue to exist even when they cannot be seen, heard, or touched.

**Onomatopoeia:** A word that is pronounced similar to the sound it represents; such as, bark, moo, bang, and meow.

**Oral Defensiveness:** A unique pattern of avoidance of certain textures of food; soft, slimy foods, rough textures, etc., and irritation with activities using the mouth in general.

**Otitis Media:** An inflammation of the middle ear usually caused by upper respiratory infections that can cause hearing loss, if chronic.

**Parallel Play:** Play that is purposefully and independently conducted alongside of peers. Children engaged in parallel play may carry out the same actions or use the same toys as the peer they are playing near, however, there is little or no interaction between each other as actual play partners.

**Performance:** The way or manner in which one acts, expresses oneself, or responds, given different situations and requirements.

**Perservation:** Continuing to repeat a behavior or response after it is no longer appropriate; repetition of sounds, words, or actions.

**Postural Insecurity:** The feeling of being unstable or insecure in one's body, especially in the trunk area.

**Pragmatics:** The way a child uses language to communicate with and to affect others.

**Premature Infant:** A baby born before 37 weeks gestation.

**Proprioception:** The perception of sensation from the muscles and joints; proprioceptive input tells the brain when and how muscles are contracting or stretching and when and how joints are bending, extending, or being pulled or compressed; this information enables the brain to know where each part of the body is and how it is moving.

**Quiet Alert:** The infant is strongly focused on a stimulus (often auditory or visual); bright, almost glazed look, though the focus of attention can change easily after a brief delay; minimal motor activity.

**Reflective Practices:** A style of practice that involves a commitment to increasing self-awareness and knowledge through reflection and question asking.

**Regulatory Disorders:** They are reflected in difficulties in regulating behavioral, physiological, sensory, attentional, motor, or affective processes, and in organizing a calm, alert, or effectively positive state.

**Reliability:** The consistency of a test; the more reliable the instrument, the more likely a person will receive the same score if tested again.

**Screening:** A process for separating from a group those children who need further evaluation.

**Self-Regulation:** A complex developmental process involving the ability to achieve, monitor, and change state behavior to match the demands of the environment/situation.

**Sensorimotor:** The combined sensory and motor aspects of activities and experiences; child takes in information through the senses (sensory) and acts upon it (motor).

**Sensory Defensiveness:** A constellation of symptoms that result from adverse or defensive reactions to non-noxious stimuli across one or more sensory modalities; an over reaction of normal protective senses; individuals with sensory defensiveness have their own response styles; possible patterns of avoidance, sensory seeking, fear, anxiety or even aggression.

**Sensory Input:** The streams of neural impulses flowing from the sense receptors in the body to the spinal cord and brain.

**Sensory Integration:** The ability of the brain to organize sensory information including vestibular, tactile, and proprioceptive; the parts of the nervous system work together so that a person can interact with the environment effectively and experience appropriate satisfaction.

**Sensory Processing:** The nervous system's ability to take in and make sense of incoming sensory information.

**Serious Otitis Media:** An acute or chronic ear condition in which fluid collects in the middle ear, causing inflammation; can lead to conductive hearing loss and serious damage to the inner ear if untreated.

**Small for Gestational Age (SGA):** A birth weight that is below the 10th percentile for gestational age, reflecting poor fetal growth.

**Solitary Play:** When a child plays alone with toys that are different from those used by other children; the child is centered on self-activity.

**Standardization:** The formal development of a test with written uniform procedures for administration, scoring and interpretation; standardized tests may be either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced.

**Suck/Swallow/Breathe Synchrony:** The rhythmical, coordinated pattern of sucking, swallowing, and breathing that is present in all normal babies.

**Tactile Defensiveness:** A tendency to respond negatively to tactile/touch input; may result in avoiding touch from others, dislike of crowds, irritation when having hair washed or cut, avoidance of certain types of clothing, and many other similar reactions to touching or being touched.

**Tactile Hypersensitivity:** Increased sensitivity or overreaction to tactile/touch input.

**Tactile Hyposensitivity:** The decreased or under-reaction to tactile/touch input.

**Temperament:** The basic foundation for a child's behavior, including activity level, and interactions with and reactions to people, places, and things; refers to the qualities of behavior including how a child acts and reacts to the world.

**Touchpoints:** The key times in development identified by Brazelton as being important to discuss with caregivers.

**Transitions:** The times of change or movement from one experience to another or one activity to another.

**Validity:** The extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure.

**Vestibular System:** The sensory system located in the inner ear that is responsible for detecting movement and position in space.

**Visual Defensiveness:** The over-sensitivity to visual input that results in distractibility and gaze avoidance.

**Vocal Play:** The long strings of consonant-vowel syllables produced in self-imitation, such as ba-ba-ba-ba; appears at about 6 months of age.

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## Early Childhood Assessment Measures

<p><b>Adaptive Behavior Scales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Developmental Profile II (DP II)</li> <li>* Early Coping Inventory (ECI)</li> <li>* Bayley's Infant Behavior Record</li> </ul>	<p>Birth to 9 years 4-36 months 1 to 3 months</p>
<p><b>Behavior Checklist Scales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales (PKBS)</li> </ul>	<p>3-6 years</p>
<p><b>Curriculum-Based/Criterion Referenced</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS) (Volumes 1, 2 and 4)</li> <li>* AEPS for Infants and Children (Volumes 1, 2 and 3)</li> <li>* Autism Screening Instrument for Educational Planning (ASIEP-2), 2nd Edition</li> <li>* Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales, Normed Edition</li> <li>* Developmental Communication Curriculum (DCC)</li> <li>* Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)</li> <li>* Every Move Counts (EMC)</li> <li>* Hawaii Early Learning Profile: HELP for Preschoolers</li> <li>* High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR)</li> <li>* Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)</li> <li>* Infant-Toddler Development Assessment (IDA)</li> <li>* Oregon Project Curriculum for Visually Impaired And Blind Preschool Children (OPC)</li> <li>* Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory (PEDI)</li> <li>* The Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs (CCITSN), 2nd Edition</li> <li>* The Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs</li> <li>* Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment (TPBA)</li> <li>* Transdisciplinary Play-Based Intervention (TPBI)</li> <li>* Uzgiris and Hunt Infant Psychological Development Scale (IPDS) Dunst Revision</li> <li>* Vulpe Assessment Battery (VAB-R), Revised Edition</li> <li>* Work Sampling System (WSS)</li> </ul>	<p>3 to 6 years Birth to three  3 to 49 months 8 months to 6 years 12 months to 5 years 2.5 to 5 years  3 to 6 years 3 to 8 years Birth to 2 1/2 months Birth to 36 months  Birth to 6 years 6 months to 7 years  Birth to 24 months 2 to 5 years Infancy to 6 years Infancy to 6 years  Birth to 30 months Birth to 6 years 3 to 10 years</p>
<p><b>Standardized/Norm-Referenced</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)</li> <li>* Bayley Scales of Infant Development</li> <li>* Kaufman Assessment Battery For Children (K-ABC)</li> <li>* Miller Assessment for Preschoolers (MAP)</li> <li>* Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training Scales Birth to 3 years (Teaching Scale)</li> <li>* Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, 4th Edition</li> <li>* Symbolic Play Checklist</li> <li>* The Infant Mullen Scales of Early Learning (MSEL)</li> </ul>	<p>Birth to 8 years 1 through 42 months 2.6 to 12 years 2.9 to 5.8 years Birth to 1 year (Feeding Scale) and  2 through adult 9 months to 5 years Birth to 42 months</p>

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## References, Resources, Websites

### Books & Articles

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### **Websites**

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### **Videos**

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### **Other Resources**

The following items are a sample of screening/assessment tools that are available for checkout through the Early Childhood Resource Center. This list should not be viewed as an endorsement of specific tools by the KITS Project.

### **Screening Tools**

- Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), Second Edition
- Bayley Infant Neurodevelopmental Screener (BINS)
- Birth to Three Assessment and Intervention System, Screening Test of Developmental Disabilities, Second Edition
- Bracken Basic Concept Scale, Revised
- Brigance Screening Instruments
- Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning, (DIAL 3), Third Edition
- Denver II Developmental Screening Test
- Early Screening Inventory (ESI-R), Revised
- JOLIET 3 Minute Preschool Speech and Language Screen
- Screening Test for Evaluating Preschoolers (First STEP)

### **Developmental Scales**

- Infant Development Inventory (IDI)
- Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)
- Bayley Scales of Infant Development, Second Edition
- Boehm 3, Boehm Test of Basic Concepts – Preschool
- Child Development Inventory (CDI)
- Children’s Memory Scale (CMS)
- Cognitive Abilities Scale (CAS-2), Second Edition
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children, (DAYC)
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Program
- Early Learning Accomplishment Profile for Young Children (E-LAP) Revised
- Individual Developmental Early Assessment (IDEA)
- Infant-Toddler Developmental Assessment-Administration (IDA)
- Mullen Scales of Early Learning (MSEL)
- Preschool Evaluation Scale (PES)

### **Social Emotional /Behavioral**

- Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC)
- Early Childhood Behavior Scale (ECBS)
- Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales (PKBS-2), Second Edition
- Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)
- Scales of Independent Behavior (SIB)
- TABS (Temperament and Atypical Behavior Scale), Early Childhood Indicators of Developmental Dysfunction

- Vineland Social-Emotional Early Childhood Scales (SEEC)
- Wiig Criterion Referenced Inventory of Language (CRIL)

### **Motor Skills**

- Movement Assessment Battery for Children
- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales and Activity Cards (PDMS-2), Second Edition
- Test of Visual-Motor Skills (TVMS), Revised

### **Communication Skills**

- Bankson Language Test (BLT-2)
- Bangs Receptive Vocabulary Checklist for Preschool and Kindergarten Children
- CELF (Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals)
- Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales (CSBS)
- Early Language Milestone Scale (ELM Scale-2)
- Goldman Fristoe 2 Test of Articulation (G-FTA)
- MacArthur Communicative Development Inventories
- Preschool Language Assessment Instrument (PLAI-2), Second Edition
- Test of Early Language Development (TELD-3)
- Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test Technical References (PPVT-III), Third Edition

### **Functional Assessment Tools**

- Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS)
- The Carolina Curriculum
- Child Observation Record (COR), High/Scope
- The Child Preference Indicators
- The Creative Curriculum
- Developmental Observation Checklist System (DOCS)
- Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)
- High/Scope Child Observation Record For Infants and Toddlers
- Infant-Preschool Play Assessment Scale, (I-PAS)
- Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R), Revised Edition
- Preparing Children to Learn: Manual and Curriculum. A Family-Centered Approach to Functional Skills Assessment
- Preschool Child Observation Record (COR), Second Edition
- System to Plan Early Childhood Services (SPECS)
- Transdisciplinary Play Based Assessment
- The Work Sampling System, Complete Reference Set

**\*These resources can be borrowed from the  
KITS Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC)  
2601 Gabriel, Parsons, KS 67357  
620-421-6550 ext. 1651**

**email: [resourcecenter@ku.edu](mailto:resourcecenter@ku.edu)**

**They can also be checked out online at: [kskits.org/ecrc](http://kskits.org/ecrc)**