

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

INTRODUCTION

The hard copy version of this packet includes the following article:

Neisworth, J. T., Bagnato, S. J. (2004). The mismeasure of young children: The authentic assessment alternative. *Infants and Young Children*, 17(3), 198-212.

**Compiled by Misty Goosen, Ed.S. & David P. Lindeman, Ph.D.
June 2004 (Updated December 2008)
Kansas Inservice Training System
Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities
2601 Gabriel, Parsons, Kansas 67357
620-421-6550 ext. 1618
kskits.org**



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Dear Colleague,

When IDEA was first authorized the focus was on the rights of a child with a disability to access public education (FAPE). Since that time professionals involved in special education evaluations relied heavily on norm-referenced, standardized tests that documented and categorized specific disabilities. However, when IDEA was reauthorized in 2004, a new focus was established: Access to the general curriculum (for preschoolers – age appropriate activities). Therefore, a new question was added to the evaluation process. “If a disability exists, how is it affecting the child’s ability to participate and progress in age appropriate activities?” This question cannot be answered using the traditional methods of the past.

This packet was created to provide early childhood special education professionals guidance in conducting early childhood evaluations and assessments that are based on best practice and adhere to state and federal requirements. During the development of this packet, input was provided from staff at the Kansas State Department of Education, Student Support Services. Much of the information provided was adapted from the *Kansas Special Education Process Handbook* (July 2001). This document can be downloaded in its entirety at <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3152>

We hope that when you have taken the time to review this packet you will find that it contains helpful information. Please complete the enclosed evaluation and return it in the self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your interest and your efforts toward the development of quality services and programs for young children and their families.

Sincerely,

David P. Lindeman, Ph.D.
KITS Director

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

This packet has been developed as a resource to enable you to understand the issues related to evaluating young children for special education services. The packet contents were chosen based on your requests and needs assessment results. We would like you to evaluate how helpful this packet has been for you. Please respond to the following questions and return this form to us in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Please check the parts of the packet that you found most helpful. In the space provided briefly tell us how or why each part was helpful to you.

Position Statement *Best Practices* *Collecting & Using Information* *Example of Informal Assessment Measures* *Self Assessment Measures* *Glossary/Bibliography*

Please identify why each part you checked was helpful:

Please check the parts of the packet that you found were not helpful to you. Then in the space provided, briefly tell us how or why each part was of little use to you.

Position Statement *Best Practices* *Collecting & Using Information* *Example of Informal Assessment Measures* *Self Assessment Measures* *Glossary/Bibliography*

Please identify what about this part(s) made it of little use:

Please tell us what was not available in the packet that would have been helpful to you.

Please describe how you plan to use the information in this packet.

Other comments or suggestions for future packets:

Thank you for completing this form and returning it to us!

Kansas Inservice Training System

KUCDD-Parsons

2601 Gabriel

Parsons, KS 67357

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