

A Team Approach to Preschool Evaluation:

The Comprehensive
Developmental
Assessment Process

February 28 &
March 1, 2006



WARNING!

- Assessment of children is not for the weak of mind or heart (Lidz, 2003)
 - Reluctant Subjects
 - Difficult Diagnostic Questions
 - Artificial Environment for Assessment
 - Inadequate Assessment Tools

National Association of School Psychologists Position Statement

“ Standardized assessment procedures should be used with great caution in educational decision making because such tools are inherently less accurate and less predictive when used with young children” (NASP, 2002).

Purposes of Assessment

(Kelly-Vance et al, 1999)

- Program Planning
- Progress Monitoring
- Program Evaluation
- Screening
- Eligibility Determination
- Strengths/Weakness

What is a Comprehensive Developmental Assessment?

- A process of assessment that includes the 5 developmental areas required by law.
- All developmental domains must be assessed in the CDA.
- Outcome of CDA is documented by a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Report that describes skills in each developmental domain.

Rule of Two's

Required:

- Two Evaluators
- Two Instruments (excludes screening results)

Best Practice:

- Two Settings (e.g. parent interview)

Approaches to Assessment

- Multidisciplinary
- Interdisciplinary
- Transdisciplinary

Recommended Assessment Practices

- Should be ongoing-not in isolation
- Information gathered from one assessment (e.g. screening) should be used to guide assessment
- Assessments should yield information that is useful (Grisham-Brown, J, Hemmeter, M.L., Pretti-Frontczak, K. 2005).

Multidisciplinary/Traditional

- Each discipline conducts separate assessment and separate report.
- Advantages/Disadvantages

Interdisciplinary

- Team members maintain their roles.
- Each member writes a section of an integrated report.
- Team members are selected based on the needs of the child:
 - Identified concerns
 - Sensory Impairments
 - Language /cultural differences
 - Medical issues (see handout)
- Advantages/Disadvantages

Transdisciplinary

- **Follow the child!**
- **Assessment of all domains is delegated to one/two team members.**
- **Other team members are present and also collect data.**
- **Involves role release.**
- **Parent as assessment partner**

Transdisciplinary

- **CDA results in one integrated report.**
- **Cross team dialogue during assessment.**
- **Team members increase professional knowledge through cross training.**
- **Authentic Assessment**

Methods of Gathering Assessment Information

- Review of Existing Data
- Direct Measurement
- Indirect Measurement
- Observation
- Interview

Review of Existing Data

- IFSP
- Medical Records
- Battelle Developmental Inventory-II/HELP
- Previous Evaluation Results
- Screening Results
- Vision/Hearing

Direct Measurement

- Standardized Norm Referenced
 - Preschool Language Scale-4
 - Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-III
 - Stanford Binet-Fifth Edition
 - Differential Ability Scales (DAS in revision)
 - Bayley Scales of Infant Development-III
 - Battelle Developmental Inventory-II

Direct Measurement

- Criterion Referenced Measures
 - Assessment Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS Measurement Curriculum), OUNCE/Work Sampling (Meisels et. al., 2003)
- Individual Growth Developmental Indicators (IGDI's).

Indirect Measurement

- **Interview**

- Structured**

**Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale-II
Adaptive Behavior Assessment
System-Parent/Primary Caregiver).**

- Unstructured (e.g. parent interview)**

- **Rating Scales**

Observation

- **Anecdotal records**
- **Running records**
- **Work sampling**
- **Language sampling**
- **Play observation checklist**
- **Developmental checklist**
- **Assessment Activity Protocols (Pretti-Frontczak, K & Grisham-Brown, J, 2004)**

Assessment with Special Populations

Best Practice Recommendations:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)
 - Autism Diagnostic Interview
 - PEP-R
 - Other ratings scales (e.g. CARS/GARS)
- Sensory Impairment Diverse Linguistic/Cultural Background

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team Meeting

- Challenges of Sharing Results with Parents
- Suggested Strategies for Creating a Supportive and Collaborative IEP Meeting
- Community Referrals (e.g. TAFA)
- Core Curriculum for Sensory Impairment

Report Writing

- Assessment Results
 - Clear, Concise & Accessible to Parents
- See Resource Manual for Required Elements

Part II: Authentic Assessment

Play Based Model

Authentic Assessments

(Bagnato, S. J. et al, 1997)

- **Naturally occurring instructional routines.**
- **Common assessment strategy.**
- **Useful in planning instructional goals.**
- **Child led and teacher directed.**

Decisions to Make When Using an Authentic Model

- Who do you need?
- Who is doing what and when?
- What level of stimulation and structure is needed?
- How do you structure the environment?
- Who will write up what?

Structured Observation of Play



Special Considerations

- **Determine if appropriate for child/family**
- **Developmental history/permission**
- **Parent//Support Coordinator as participant observers**

Who Benefits?

Children:

- **Transitioning from AzEIP**
- **With behavioral/social concerns**
- **With outside evaluations**
- **Who are not responsive to standardized assessments**
- **From diverse cultural/linguistic/experiential backgrounds**

Steps in Planning a Structured Play Assessment

- Room Arrangement
- Schedule of Preschool Activities
- Team Planning
- Ready, Set, Go
- Monitoring and Adjustment
- Exit/Debriefing

Room Arrangement



The Ocean Room



Ocean Room-Low Visual Stimuli



The Desert Room



The Garden Room



Create a Schedule of Preschool Activities

Activity

8:30 Rice Play
8:45 Table Time
9:20 Circle Time
9:30 Motor Play
9:45 Wash Hands
9:50 Snack
10:05 Free Exploration
10:25 Storytime/
Book Handling

Developmental Area

Sensory/Social
Cognitive/Fine Motor
Social/Self-Regulation
Gross Motor Planning
Self-Help
Oral Motor/Self Help
Social/Attention
Pre-Literacy/Following
Directions

Schedule 2

Activity

8:30 Team Meets

9:00 Play with Parent
Participation

9:30 Circle Time

9:40 Table Time

10:00 Motor Play

10:15 Snack

10:30 Storytime/Goodbye

10:40 Evaluation (if necessary)

Developmental Area

Social & Behavioral

Social/Self-Regulation

Cognitive/Fine Motor

Gross Motor Planning

Oral Motor/Self Help

Pre-literacy/Emotional
Regulation

Areas of Observation

(Koralek, 2004)

- Knowledge mastery
- Patterns of reasoning
- Performance skill
- Product development capabilities
- Dispositions

Sample Developmental Checklist

24-30 months

- Recognizes concept of one
- Demonstrates use of objects
- Engages in simple make-believe activities
- Obeys two-part commands
- Finds details in favorite picture book
- Knows sex of self-others
- Matches circle, square, triangle shapes
- Matches primary colors

Ready, Set, Go

- **Greet families**
- **Engage child**
- **One team member initiates activities**
- **Other team members phase in and out**
- **Information gathered in 5 domains**

Monitor and Adjust

- Based on child's response to activities
- Level of engagement and interest
- Attention and concentration
- Rapport with individual examiners
- Participation of parent
- Participation of siblings

Exit/Debriefing

With Parent Discuss:

- Was the assessment representative of their child?
- Schedule MET

With Team Discuss:

- Team processes assessment and drafts goal ideas.

Limitations

- Need additional information
- Child/parent overwhelmed
- Difficulty with role release

Why We Like It

- Child-oriented
- Opportunity to teach the task and assess learning within multiple dimensions.
- Creates opportunities to assess:
 - peer interactions
 - response to redirection
 - ability to make transitions
- Facilitates parent participation in IEP process

Why We Like It

- Powerful teaching tool for parents
- Families enjoy the process
- Empowers families
- Culturally sensitive
- Supports AzEIP transition process

References

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- National Association of School Psychologists (2002). Position statement on early childhood assessment. National Association of School Psychologists, Bethesda, MD. http://www.nasponline.org/information/pospaper_eca.html

List of Handouts

- I. NASP Position Statement
- II. CDA/Evaluation Process
- III. Medical Considerations
- IV. Linking Assessment and Early Intervention (Bagnato)
- V. Materials List
- VI. Sample CDA