

# Slide Handouts: Assessment – Gathering the Information



Recommended Practices Modules

Module 7

## Module 7: Lesson 2

Assessment: Gathering the Information

The image shows four silhouettes of children at different stages of development: a crawling baby, a sitting baby, a toddler standing and holding a ball, and a young child walking and holding a ball.

Welcome to Module 7: Lesson 2. Assessment: Gathering the Information

# Lesson Objectives

- Define Assessment
- Describe the purpose(s) of assessment
- Describe the legal requirements of assessment as it pertains to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Provide key considerations when using assessment

Continue

2

This lesson has 4 primary objectives, which are listed here. Review them and click continue when you have finished.

# Performance Indicators

- Understand the meaning of assessment and evaluation
- Understand the purposes of assessment in supporting children and families
- Understand the legal requirements related to assessment
- Identify the characteristics of assessment

3

After completing this lesson, you will Understand the meaning of assessment and evaluation as it relates to Part C and section 619 of Part B services; Understand the purposes of assessment in supporting children and families; Understand the legal requirements related to the use of assessment; And identify the characteristics of assessment.

# DEC Recommended Practices



- A1. Practitioners work with the family to identify family preferences for assessment processes.
- A2. Practitioners work as a team with the family and other professionals to gather assessment information.
- A3. Practitioners use assessment materials and strategies that are appropriate for the child's age and level of development and accommodate the child's sensory, physical, communication, cultural, linguistic, social, and emotional characteristics.
- A4. Practitioners conduct assessments that include all areas of development and behavior to learn about the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests.
- A5. Practitioners conduct assessments in the child's dominant language and in additional languages if the child is learning more than one language.
- A6. Practitioners use a variety of methods, including observation and interviews, to gather assessment information from multiple sources, including the child's family and other significant individuals in the child's life.
- A7. Practitioners obtain information about the child's skills in daily activities, routines, and environments such as home, center, and community.
- A8. Practitioners use clinical reasoning in addition to assessment results to identify the child's current levels of functioning and to determine the child's eligibility and plan for instruction.
- A9. Practitioners implement systematic ongoing assessment to identify learning targets, plan activities, and monitor the child's progress to revise instruction as needed.
- A10. Practitioners use assessment tools with sufficient sensitivity to detect child progress, especially for the child with significant support needs.
- A11. Practitioners report assessment results so that they are understandable and useful to families.

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Continue



The DEC Recommended Practices for Assessment can be found on this slide and are available as a handout by clicking the "Download" button. Take as long as you need to review the practices and then click "continue" when you are finished.

# What is Assessment?

“Assessment refers to the process of collecting information for the purpose of making informed decisions.”

-DEC, 2015



Continue

5

Let's begin by taking a look at the Division for Early Childhood's definition of assessment. Click continue when you are ready to move forward.

# Assessment to Inform Decision-Making

- Eligibility for services
- Planning service delivery
- Child learning and development



6

Assessment includes gathering information to evaluate eligibility for services, planning for service delivery and support, and reflecting on child learning and development. The purpose of this module is to help you understand the use of assessment information or “data” to make informed decisions related to supporting children and families.

## It's the Law

Evaluation/Assessment is a requirement of federal law to determine eligibility of EI/ECSE services AND educational planning.

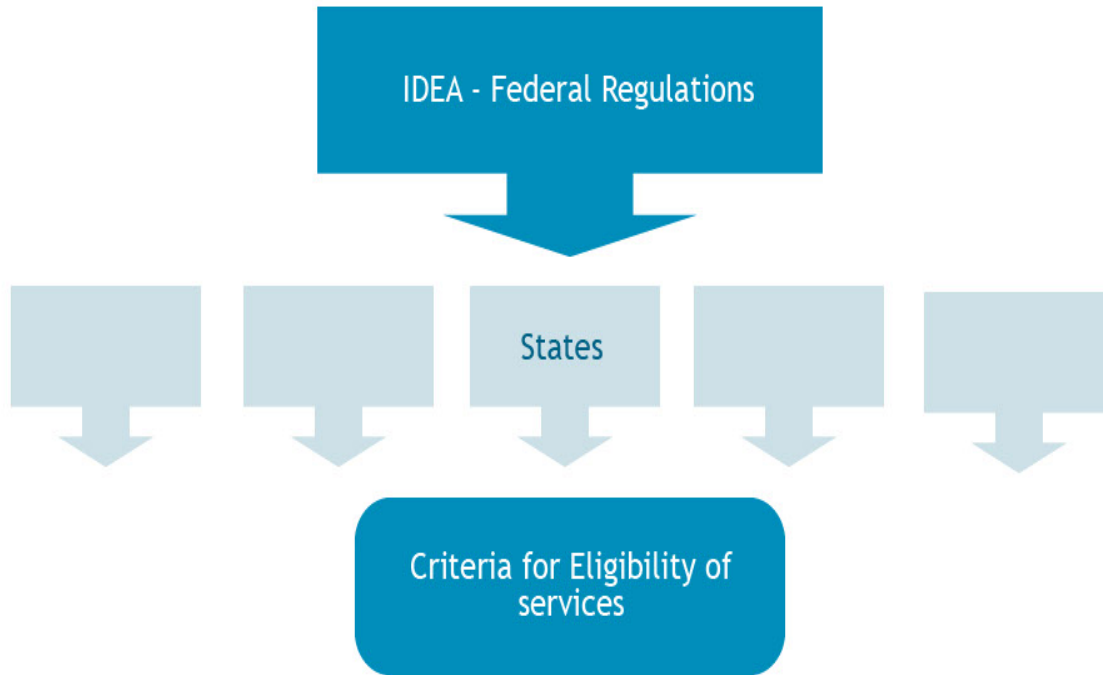


For more information and resources on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) visit the ECTA Center website:  
<http://ectacenter.org/idea/idea.asp>

7

Based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal law requires that evaluation and assessment be used to determine eligibility for early intervention and early childhood special education services and for the purpose of educational planning.

# Eligibility and Educational Need



8

Individual states determine the criteria for eligibility of early intervention and special education services but are guided by federal regulations in establishing that criteria.



# Special Education Services for Young Children



Early Intervention: Part C



Early Childhood Special Education:  
Section 619 of Part B



We will talk about 2 different types of services - early intervention services that serve children birth to three years and early childhood special education services that serve children ages three to five. We will explore early intervention services first, since they refer to the youngest children.

## Early Intervention: Part C Services of the IDEA



Early Intervention: Part C

- Children ages birth through three
- Children identified with a disability, developmental delay, or (if applicable, depending on the state eligibility criteria) at-risk for delay

Follow this link to find your state's or territory's definitions and criteria for IDEA Part C eligibility:

[http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/earlyid/partc\\_elig\\_table.pdf](http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/earlyid/partc_elig_table.pdf)

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10

Early Intervention is delivered through Part C Services of the IDEA. Part C serves children birth to three years with identified disabilities, developmental delays, and (if applicable, depending on the state eligibility criteria) children at-risk for delays.

So how do states determine which children are eligible for early intervention services? To better understand how the federal regulations guide states in using evaluation and assessment, read the segments of the federal regulations describing the evaluation procedures that support Part C that can be downloaded by clicking the "download" button. When you are finished, click continue to move on.

## Early Childhood: Section 619 of Part B Services of the IDEA

- Children ages three through five
- Children identified with a disability or a developmental delay.



Download

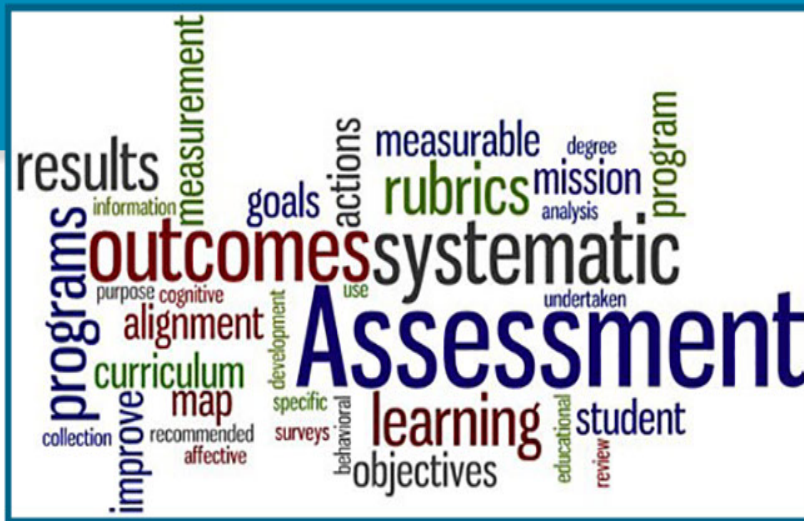
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Early Childhood Special Education:  
Section 619 of Part B

11

Early Childhood Special Education services, or section 619 of Part B services, are provided to children ages three to five years who have been identified with a disability or developmental delay that interferes with their ability to participate in educational activities. Read the law as it pertains to assessment by downloading the handout. Click continue to move on when you have finished.

# Purposes of Evaluation/Assessment



12

Next, we will discuss the four primary purposes of evaluation and assessment.

# Four Purposes of Evaluation/Assessment

1. Determine eligibility for services
2. Develop an IEP
3. Monitor child progress
4. Evaluate child outcomes



13

The first purpose of conducting assessments is for determining a child's eligibility for services. Remember these services are either early intervention, also referred to as Part C or early childhood special education, also referred to as Part B, 619.

# Determining Eligibility

OSC Assessment Practice Topics and ASSESSMENT | Practitioner Practice Guide: Assessment 1.1

## Engaging in Informed Clinical Reasoning

Informed clinical reasoning is a process team members use to gather information about a child's developmental function in order to make decisions about the child's eligibility for the services services. This process requires knowledge of both typical and atypical child development, clinical guidelines, data from observations of the child, and review of results from evaluations and developmental assessment instruments. This information is used to determine the learning potential of a child based on developmental status and needs of the child in everyday activities and natural environments.

**Watch a video of this Learning Guide.**

### Learning Guide: Gathering multiple sources of information for assessment

- Have at least three people gather information about a child's strengths (e.g., skills, abilities, interests, preferences) and for overall strengths and challenges. Find out how a child is able to interact with objects and people in everyday activities and routines. Learn about the things the child has difficulty doing as part of everyday life. Pay particular attention to the child's usual behaviors and to situations and activities where the child struggles or performs well.
- Gather the information from multiple sources in multiple ways. Talk with parents and other caregivers who best know the child's strengths and most concerns about the child's development. Together with caregivers, observe the child's capabilities in different every day activities and routines. Use developmental checklists or other assessment tools to identify behaviors that are atypical or, as yet, unknown to you, and to see what you are not yet doing.
- Keep written records of all the information. Record the methods used and the individuals who are involved in gathering the information. The information you gather should be shared with family members, other providers and other professionals who are involved in the child's care.
- Summarize all of the information that was gathered by the team and discuss how the information provides a picture of the child's functioning and developmental status. Discuss how the child's response rate, attention and ability, challenge the child has participating in everyday activities, and any unusual or atypical child behaviors or skills development.
- Consider how the team can use all of the information from all sources to make an accurate picture of the child's developmental status of the child. Determine whether the evidence, taken together, confirms that the child has a developmental delay (according to a state's criteria). Come to an agreement about the child's strengths, needs, and ability to participate in everyday activities.
- Explain to the family how the eligibility decision was made and how available information informed the decision. Provide the family with a written summary of the eligibility determination process, including a description of the findings on the child's functioning (e.g., strengths, skills, and areas of delay). The child's level of severity of delay, and the criteria for that decision.



### A Quick Peek

Janeen is a 35-month-old African American mother. Janeen has completed an eligibility determination for early intervention. She is concerned about James' interactions with others. Jane and practitioners on the evaluation team make plans for an assessment that includes observing James in everyday activities at home to identify his strengths and challenges. On the day of the assessment, the practitioners also work with Jane about the words James uses, the kinds of activities that seem to encourage his interest, how he lets others know what he wants, and what she does in interactions with other people. Together, they observe James playing with some of his favorite toys, talking to him with care and interacting with his grandpa. They also work with Jane to complete a developmental checklist of James' abilities. At the assessment team meeting, the team members discuss the information that was gathered and sort out James' strengths and challenges in everyday activities. They note that although James's assessment scores do not show a 35% delay in his development, his skills in everyday activities and communication are not typical for a 35-month-old child and score that he is eligible for early intervention services based on his atypical developmental pattern.

### You'll know the practice is working if ...

- Multiple sources of information about the child's functioning in everyday activities are used to identify strengths and challenges.
- The child's abilities, strengths, skills, and behavioral objectives in everyday activities are identified.
- The family practices responsible use of the child's strengths and challenges and the supports for the eligibility determination.

Watch resources providing additional information on this video that refers to informed clinical reasoning to make a research summary from the [OSCE's "Take a Peek at the Practice"](#).

**ECTA Center** | 1-800-368-5848 | www.ectacenter.com | www.ectacenter.org

Download

Continue

14

Download and read the practice guide for practitioners, Engaging in Informed Clinical Reasoning. When you are finished reading, click continue to check what you've learned.

## Four Purposes of Evaluation/Assessment

1. Determine eligibility for services
2. Develop an IEP
3. Monitor child progress
4. Evaluate child outcomes



16

The second purpose of assessment is for developing a child's individual education plan. This plan includes the types of intervention services needed and frequency of services. In Part B 619 services, this is referred to as the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

An individual child education plan is written based on the comprehensive, multi-disciplinary evaluation and assessment that includes family input. Part C uses the term "instructional planning" to refer to the developmental goals and activities that support a child's and family's individualized family service plan. Throughout this module the term "educational planning" is used to encompass both Part C's "instructional planning" and Part B's "educational planning."

## Developing an IEP



17

Part of developing an individual child education plan is collaboratively writing highly functional goals for the child that the team has agreed upon and will address through intervention services. For additional information and training on developing highly functional goals, please visit the following link or the reference list provided at the end of the lesson.



## Four Purposes of Evaluation/Assessment

- 1) Determine eligibility for services
- 2) Develop an IEP
- 3) Monitor child progress**
- 4) Evaluate child outcomes



18

Monitoring child progress to determine if modifications are needed is another reason to conduct assessments and evaluations. For example, determining that the use of an instructional adaptation or assistive technology may be necessary to further support the child's progress.

# Four Purposes of Evaluation/Assessment

1. Determine eligibility for services
2. Develop an IEP
3. Monitor child progress
4. Evaluate child outcomes



19

And finally, assessment is used to evaluate the child outcomes or desired results as specified on the Individualized Family Service Plan or Individualized Education Program to determine when a child has met a goal or achieved an outcome or desired result.

# Selecting Assessment Tools and Strategies



20

Selecting the tools and strategies that you will use for assessment is a complex process that has four primary steps. We will discuss those steps next.

# Selecting Assessment Tools and Strategies

Step 1: Determine what information you need from an assessment tool.



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21

The first step to the selection of an assessment tool is determining what information you need. Remember that the regulations state that multiple strategies are used for gathering information to determine eligibility AND for educational planning, such as observation and parent interview.

# Selecting Assessment Tools and Strategies

Step 2: Determine how the information will be used.

- to determine eligibility
- to plan intervention services
- for educational planning
- to monitor child progress
- to evaluate child outcomes



22

In Step 2, you will need to determine how this information will be used. Is it to help determine a child's eligibility for services? Or to help plan for intervention or educational goals? Or are you looking to monitor progress or evaluate outcomes?

# Selecting Assessment Tools and Strategies

Step 3: Determine whether the assessment tool provides the needed information for the intended purpose(s).



23

Step 3 may appear simple but is often overlooked. You will need to examine if the assessment tool provides the needed information for the intended purposes. For example, the selected assessment instrument may provide information to determine eligibility of services, but not enough information to plan educational goals for a child.

## Key Considerations

Step 3: Determine whether the assessment tool provides the needed information for the intended purpose(s).

- Is the formal assessment instrument based on research? Is it evidence-based?
- Who is the population for which this assessment is intended? Is this intended to be used for children with disabilities or developmental delays?
- Does the assessment instrument list limitations for use?
- Where is the assessment conducted?

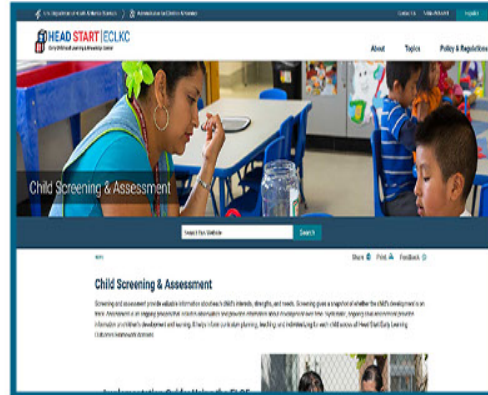
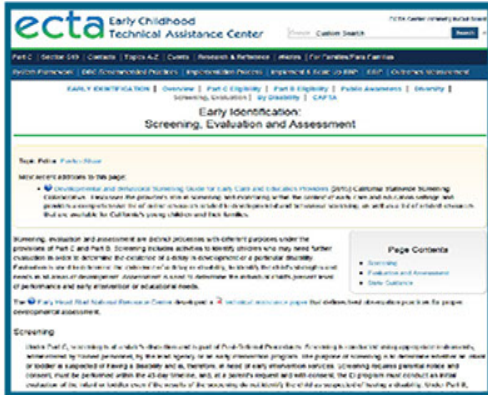


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24

Review these key considerations for selecting an appropriate assessment tool. Click continue when you have finished.

# Additional Information: Selecting Assessment Tools



Additional information can be found at these links :

<http://ectacenter.org/topics/earlyid/screeneval.asp> and

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/child-screening-assessment>

Continue

25

If you are interested in learning more about the process of selecting assessment tools and strategies, you may want to visit one or both of the links provided on the screen.



# Selecting Assessment Tools and Strategies

Step 4: Determine what resources are needed to support the use of the assessment too.

- What are the costs of training personnel to use and interpret the assessment?
- How much time is required to complete the assessment?



26

The final step is to determine whether the resources needed to support the assessment are available. For example: If a formal standardized norm-referenced assessment instrument is being used, are personnel qualified to administer and interpret the assessment instrument? In most instances, a practitioner must complete training in order to receive certification in using a particular assessment instrument. The certification typically ascertains that the person has been trained to administer, score, and summarize the results of the assessment instrument.

# Check Your Knowledge



27

Let's check your knowledge!

# Summary

Module  
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Lesson 2 accomplished the following:

- Defined and identified characteristics of assessment
- Provided an understanding of the legal requirements of assessment in relation to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- Introduced the purposes of using assessment to support positive outcomes for children and families

29

Lesson 2 defined and identified characteristics of assessment. It provided an understanding of the legal requirements of assessment in relation to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In addition, lesson 2 introduced the purposes of using assessment to support positive outcomes for children and families. Lesson 3 will demonstrate the purposes of assessment in greater detail by providing multiple mini-lessons.

# References and Resources

References - Assessment

RPMs Early Childhood Recommended Practice Modules

References

Module 7: Assessment

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30

This concludes Module 7 Lesson 2. Thank you for participating. To learn more, see the resources listed here.