

# Assessing infants and young children research paper examples

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



## **Introduction**

Recently, testing children has grown more aggressive and widespread because the concerning issues have arisen hence pressuring parents to conduct these tests to their children. For example, most kindergarten tests their children before enrolling them, which is also applicable in colleges. Surprisingly, assessing infants and young children is a practice that has been going on for more than 30 years ago. Even though some infant and children assessment are useful, conducted research conclude that most assessment and tests turn out to be less reliable. The research recommended that screening tests are not appropriate for measuring the readiness to exclude children from school. Furthermore, the research asserts that it should not be the means to tracking children to determine whether they ready to join kindergarten or first grade. The research paper will highlight the diagnostic and screening assessment among the infants and young children (Wortham, 2012).

## **Screening and diagnostic assessments**

Screening assessment refers to a general type of assessment that helps parents and professionals in understanding children development. The assessment efficiently identifies the young children between the 2-9 years old that are in need of thorough and detailed assessment. The testing is brief and cost-effective in order to enhance assessment of many children within a short period. The assessment has quickly developed procedures and tests in order to facilitate easy administration that requires less training. The most common places where screening assessments occur include the child-find

clinics within the community, kindergartens screening clinics found in schools and the home language survey offered during school registration for English learners. Screening assessment is commonly applicable in primary schools in screening problems encountered in learning and reading. Apart from homes and schools, it is essential for childcare to conduct the assessment (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004).

On the contrary, diagnostic assessment refers to a comprehensive procedure, which addresses specific questions regarding the development, knowledge and skills of young children between 1-5 years old. The assessment entails a careful and systematic process in order to diagnose problems related to developmental or academics. The assessment needs large amount of information in order to understand the problems affecting the child clearly. The results obtained in the assessment are essential in describing academic and developmental problems precisely.

The most commonly applicable diagnostic assessment includes the eligibility determination used by multi-disciplinary body, the tests done on infants and toddlers for early intervention, mental health services and the preschoolers for special education. The determination of eligibility among infants and young children can be through reviewing records, conducting interview, observation and testing. The main problem encountered in the assessment is the lack of connection between the collected information to determine eligibility and those important for instructions and intervention. However, the assessment helps children that show the learning and reading problems in the screening assessment (Hosp, Hosp & Howell, 2007).

The main purpose of screening assessment in early childhood is to analyze a large group of children in order to highlight in need of more in-depth assessment of special needs. This is so because research conducted in educational and medical fields indicates that, early identification and interventions of problems in young children leads to identification of significant solutions in time. However, it is true that many other types of screening are expensive, time intensive and requires a lot of training making it difficult for majority of parents to afford.

Consequently, screening assessment targets those parents because the process can assess many children at a short period. Additionally, the process limits the extensive and expensive assessment for those in need of it (Wortham, 2012).

Contrary, the main purpose of diagnostic assessment in early infants and young children is to implement required intervention services for children with difficulties in developmental and learning. To access the targeted intervention, it is imperative to identify the nature and severity of developmental, academic and the learning problems accordingly. Therefore, this implies that the assessment is applicable to infants and young children that fail to demonstrate normal growth as well as learning trajectories. These children show developmental and learning problems during the screening assessment. Therefore, the assessment helps in determining eligibility for programs like toddler early intervention, preschool special education and mental health among others (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004).

The screening assessment process involves gathering general information in order to assess large groups of children within a short period. The process identifies few children that will benefit from the comprehensive assessment in the areas of problem identification. The assessment involves few items implying that the gathering of information occurs only within major learning and development indicators. The comprehensive developmental screening instrument draws attention on comparing a child's performance in dissimilar sectors. These include the physical, social, cognitive and communication within children of the same age. For example, most kindergartens have criterion-referenced list of skills, which they apply while screening children's pre-academic knowledge to determine whether they can recognize numerals and letters. They also have referenced-criterion for vision and hearing. Primary schools grades screen children in order to identify those that can read mathematics and highlight those falling behind grade level expectations and are in need of instructions (Macy, Bricker & Squires, 2005).

Screening results are applicable at a time in identifying the academic and developmental level. The test has a cut off score and those children who scores below the cut-off indicates that they performed lower than expected. For example, most toddlers score above the cut-off score in motor and social domains but tend to score below the cut-off in cognitive and communication tests. Consequently, this helps the assessor to know that such toddlers have problems in language development. Additionally, the kindergarten teachers highly appreciate the screening test because it helps them in identifying children with problems in learning letters and numbers hence helping them

accordingly. Moreover, the assessment is beneficial to children that scores below the cut-off point for the grade level expectations because the teachers refers them to more intensive assessment and instructions (Berry, Bridges & Zaslow, 2004).

Screening is the initial step involved in analyzing the development and learning of children. However, the results are applicable in sorting children into groups as per their scores. The results indicate whether the development process of a child is on track, there is no delay in language development and whether children incur hearing problems (Macy, Bricker & Squires, 2005).

However, diagnostic assessment differs from screening assessment, as the process is relatively lengthy and detailed. The process calls for medical and social histories, intensive developmental testing done by differing professionals in collaboration with parents. Performance of the assessment occurs in standard deviation in relation to mean, age, grade equivalencies and the percent delay. Moreover, unlike the screening assessment, the conduction of diagnostic assessment is by trained professionals. The test draws attention in determining eligibility among infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The obtained results are presented as a standard score, which are imperative in comparing the child's physical, adaptive, social, cognitive and communication domains (Macy, Bricker & Squires, 2005).

However, both diagnostic and screening assessments entail multiple source of information, which gives special attention to the family perspective while

gathering and interpreting information. Both assessments include children in placements and services and avoid all forms of discrimination. The results obtained in both assessments are applicable for the purpose of their development that is identifying eligible children in order to enhance additional help, special services and relevant interventions. The instruments used in diagnosis have available data, which encourages reliability and validity (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004).

The specified assessments are advantageous because educates parents on how to encourage their children to play and come up with problem solving skills. Parents implement strategies that suit their children and supports parents to play their necessary roles. The obtained results can be helpful for the child and entire family. On the contrary, the assessments have some disadvantages such that there is lesser connection between the instruments used in testing and the subsequent intervention process. The assessments are time consuming because they entails filling out forms. However, there is a feel of losing privacy when answering questions during the assessment. Sometimes it is painful to discuss children's development and needs. Finally, the results obtained from the assessments can be disappointing and unexpected leading to some form of denials (Berry, Bridges & Zaslow, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

Assessing and testing children is a difficult process because it entails consideration of dissimilar factors. However, in modern society, it is essential for each child to undergo some form of testing and assessment. The assessment is also vital to the society as it screens children for dissimilar

problems hence coming up with early interventions that turn out to be effective. Moreover, the assessors should note that it essential for them to follow the required procedures in order to come up with reliable and valid results. They should also know that assessing infants and young children is not an easy task because most children are always active and alert hence requiring patience, control and perseverance. Parents should also note that assessing children is critical because detection of problems during early stages aids effective treatment.

## References

Berry, L. Bridges, K & Zaslow, M. (2004). Child Trends Early Childhood Measures Profiles. Retrieved from:

<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/ECMeasures04/report.pdf>

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2004). The words we use: A glossary of terms for early childhood education standards and assessments Retrieved from: <http://www.ccsso.org/eceaglossary>

Hosp, M., Hosp, J., & Howell, K.(2007). The ABCs of CBM: A Practical Guide to Curriculum-Based Measurement New York: Guilford

Macy, M. G., Bricker, D. D., & Squires, J. K. (2005). Validity and reliability of a curriculum-based assessment approach to determine eligibility for Part C services *Journal of Early Intervention*, 28, 1-16.

Wortham, S. C. (2012). *Assessment In Early Childhood Education*. (6th edition) Upper Saddle River: New Jersey.

<https://assignbuster.com/assessing-infants-and-young-children-research-paper-examples/>