APPROVED TOOL LIST

Frequently Asked Questions

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Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program

The following questions were gathered from the Birth to 3 Program workforce in response to the release of the Approved Tool List and accompanying materials in April and May of 2023.

1. **What do you define as a 'tool'?**
The use of the word 'tool' is meant to include tests and formal procedures used for evaluation and assessment purposes. The Research to Practice Project (R2PP) team included only recognized, published tools in the review process.

2. **Why did you call it the *Approved* Tool List?**
The culmination of the R2PP review process was a list of all tools reviewed. Although this comprehensive list (shared at Professional Development Leadership Forums in April 2023) includes tools that are not approved for use in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program, the R2PP team felt that it was important to share information about why tools were not recommended or were cautioned. The term *approved* was intentionally chosen to move practitioners across the state toward using high quality evaluation and assessment tools that meet the needs of our workforce, children and families. The Approved Tool List may take on different forms as the state moves toward consistent evaluation and assessment practices.

3. **What does it mean for programs to use a green/yellow/red tool? Can we still use tools in yellow?**
The R2PP team used the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) Hexagon Tool[1] to systematically determine ratings for each tool using 6 factors including: evidence, fit, support, capacity, usability and need. The average rating of the combined factors was used to determine color rating (green, yellow and red). Green tools, used to fidelity, are approved for the purpose indicated on the list. Yellow rated tools are supported only when all components of the R2PP cautions have been considered. Practitioners must review the cautions to determine if continued use of yellow tools (as currently implemented in practice) is supported, particularly for those tools used for the purpose of evaluation and ongoing child assessment. Yellow supplemental tools may still be valuable in practice when used in line with the listed cautions. For example, the Rossetti, which is a yellow tool, is cautioned for use in eligibility determination, but may be appropriate for supplemental use. Red tools should be discontinued and alternate tools be considered.

4. **Why is only one purpose listed for a tool even if there might be potential for other uses in the early intervention process?**
There are many tools being used across the state for different purposes. The R2PP team worked to define and categorize these tools based on research into the recommended use - or purpose - within the early intervention process. Although some tools may have the potential to be used in different ways, intentional recommendations have been made about the purpose for each tool in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program in an effort to work towards a more similar process of evaluation and assessment across the state. DHS 90 requirements state that "[Testing instruments and other materials and procedures employed by the EI team] shall be validated for the specific purpose and age group for which they are used."[2]

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[1] Metz, A. & Louison, L. *The Hexagon Tool: Exploring Context*. (Chapel Hill, NC: National Implementation Research Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.2018) Based on Kiser, Zabel, Zachik, & Smith (2007) and Blase, Kiser & Van Dyke (2013).
[2] Wisconsin Administrative Code DHS 90.08 (7) (d)

5. **What about other tools that aren't on the list?**
The R2PP team gathered, organized and reviewed a list of over 55 tools that were identified as common to the field of early intervention or were reported to be used in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program. It was anticipated that additions or updates might be necessary in order to keep the list current and accurate. Formal, published tools that meet designated criteria may be eligible for future review. Informal tools (i.e. checklists, interview questions, etc.) developed for internal program use will not be reviewed at this time. Even though program autonomy and creativity is valued, the Approved Tool List is the culmination of efforts to use the best available research and practices in our Birth to 3 Program. This includes supporting only published tools that have adequate rigor in their development.

6. **Can we "modify" the use of any of the tools on the list? (for example, we modified the RBI, can we state we are using a modified RBI)?**
In most cases, no. Modifications, or adaptations, to the administration of a particular assessment tool are at the discretion of the developer. Often developers allow modifications only for accommodating individual needs of the child or family. To inherently change the items, administration, or scoring of identified tools often invalidates the outcome of the assessment. It is strongly encouraged that tools be used in that manner outlined by the developer in order to obtain the intended results. DHS 90 states: "[Testing instruments and other materials and procedures employed by the EI team] shall be administered by trained personnel in accordance with instructions of the developer."[3]

7. **What is the real difference between tools for evaluation and tools for ongoing child assessment in early intervention? Why do we have to use different tools?**
Evaluation tools used as one part of the initial evaluation process produce point-in-time, child-level domain scores for the purpose of determining eligibility for the Birth to 3 Program. It should be noted that they are intended to be used in conjunction with other evaluation methods/authentic assessment practices such as observation in natural settings, parent interview and input, and review of records. Although there are certain circumstances when re-testing to obtain a score might be necessary or beneficial, use of evaluation tools for the purpose of ongoing child assessment is not recommended. Approved tools on the Approved Tool List for the purpose of evaluation are those that are norm-referenced and capable of producing a standard score.

Ongoing child assessment (child assessment following initial evaluation and eligibility determination) should be done with the purpose of tracking the skills of a child and to plan for intervention throughout the child and family's time in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program. Research by the R2PP team found that a curriculum-based assessment tool is recognized as the most useful form of assessment for intervention planning[4]. Approved tools on the Approved Tool List for the purpose of ongoing child assessment include those that are comprehensive (cover all areas of development) and are curriculum-based (have age level, sequential skills and accompanying resources to support intervention).

Resources to support the alignment of evaluation and ongoing child assessment practices, as well as the alignment of ongoing child assessment and the child outcome rating process are being developed. Programs may want to refer to the current Assessment Tip Sheet series for additional information about evaluation and ongoing child assessment.

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[3] Wisconsin Administrative Code DHS 90.08 (7)(d)
[4] Stephen Bagnato, John Neisworth, Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, "LINKing Authentic Assessment & Early Childhood Intervention (Paul H Brookes Publishing Company, 2010), 39.

8. **The Developmental Assessment for Young Children - 2 (DAYC-2) and the accompanying "chart" are commonly used in the Birth to 3 Program, why do you recommend that the DAYC-2 NOT be used for ongoing child assessment?**

   The R2PP team is **not** recommending that the DAYC-2 evaluation tool be used for ongoing child assessment. The DAYC-2 is a norm-referenced tool that produces a standard score to contribute to eligibility determination. It is recommended to be used for the purpose of evaluation in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program. See the previous response in question #7 to the difference between tools for evaluation and tools for ongoing child assessment.

   The R2PP team is **not** recommending the Early Childhood Developmental Chart (that accompanies the DAYC-2 kit) for ongoing child assessment as it is not a formal assessment tool. This chart is simply a supplemental component that is useful for parents who would like more information about their child's development.[5] County input during engagement sessions and regional forums in 2022 revealed that the chart is being used as an ongoing child assessment tool to inform child outcomes which is why it was reviewed individually by the R2PP team and included separately in the Approved Tool List. It is acknowledged that the chart and DAYC-2 domain scoring forms were used in previous Child Outcome trainings; however, the R2PP review has led us away from use of the DAYC-2 (or chart) for ongoing child assessment.

9. **How did your team make considerations for equity, inclusion and diversity when reviewing tools?**

   The original intent behind the work of the R2PP team was to use research to develop recommendations for moving the Birth to 3 Program toward more consistent evaluation and assessment practices that would assure equitable access to services across the state. When specifically looking at issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the tool review, R2PP considered multiple factors. Considerations included:
   - Is the tool available in multiple languages?
   - What are the indications for use with children and families who are dual language learners or have a primary language other than English?
   - Did the normative sample of the tool represent a diverse sample of children?
   - Is there any evidence of cultural bias reported for the tool?
   - How does the tool allow for adaptations for child and/or caregiver disabilities?
   - Is the tool being used internationally?

   These considerations weighed heavily in decisions about ratings and potential cautions for use. Additional support for the use of tools in practice will be necessary to assure that the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program continues to account for and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

10. **Will there be alignment between the Approved Tool List and other systems (i.e. PPS, OSEP child outcome rating, Metastar reviews)?**

    Yes, efforts are being made to reference the Approved Tool List whenever applicable within the Birth to 3 Program system. Additional support is being developed for use of the approved tools in data reporting and program review. It is encouraged that programs bring forward specific examples of misalignment to inform future support.

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[5] Voress, J.K. & Maddox, T. (2013). Developmental Assessment of Young Children, Second Edition (DAYC-2) [Examiner's Manual]. Austin, TX: PRO-ED, Inc.