

**Age Equivalent Score:** A measure of development or performance expressed in terms of the average chronological age at which the observed score is obtained.

Source: Adapted from APA Dictionary of Psychology

<https://dictionary.apa.org/age-equivalent>

**Assessment Tools:** Published child and family assessment tools that have been researched and tested and are accepted as a credible source in assessing child development or family function.

Source: Adapted from Resources for Early Learning

<http://resourcesforearlylearning.org/fm/early-childhood-assessment>

**Authentic Assessment:** Recording developmental observations over time about the functional skills of young children during daily routines in natural environments across multiple settings by familiar and knowledgeable caregivers.

Source: Adapted from Bagnato, S.J., Neisworth, J.T., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2010)

LINKing Authentic Assessment and Early Childhood Intervention: Best Measures for Best Practices (2nd ed.) Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

**Child Assessment:** "The process of gathering information to make decisions.

Assessment informs intervention and, as a result, is a critical component of services for young children who have a developmental delay or disability and their families."

Source: Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

<https://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-assessment.asp>

**Comprehensive Evaluation:** An evaluation of each child with a disability that is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

Source: Adapted from Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA §§300.304](#)

**Comprehensive Assessment Tool:** For the purposes of definition in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program, an assessment tool that assesses a child's development in the 5 domains required by Department of Health Services Administrative Code [DHS](#)

[90.08\(5\)\(a\)3](#): "a. Cognitive development; b. Physical development, including vision and hearing; c. Communication development; d. Social and emotional development; and e. Adaptive development which includes self-help skills."

Source: [Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Approved Tool List](#)

**Criterion Referenced Tool:** Assessments that measure a child's performance against a set of predetermined criteria or performance standards (e.g., descriptions of what a child is expected to know or be able to do at a specific stage of development or level of education).

Source: Adapted from American Speech and Hearing Association  
<https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/clinical-topics/late-language-emergence/assessment-tools-techniques-and-data-sources/>

**Curriculum-Based Assessment Tool:** "An assessment tool in which curricular objectives act as criteria for identifying instructional targets and assessing status and progress. Curriculum-based assessments provide a direct assessment of a child's skills upon entry into a curriculum; guide development of individual goals, interventions, and accommodations; and allow for continual monitoring of developmental progress."

Source: Bagnato, S.J., McLean M., Macy, M. Neisworth, J.T. (2011) Identifying Instructional Targets for Early Childhood via Authentic Assessment: Alignment of Professional Standards and Practice-Based Evidence *Journal of Early Intervention*, 33, 243-253.

**Developmental Screening:** A brief, formal review of developmental skills intended to identify children with potential delays who should be referred for additional evaluation.

Source: Adapted from Salvia, J., Ysseldyke, J. E., & Bolt, S. (2013). *Assessment in Special and Inclusive Education*. Cengage Learning

**Early Intervention Team:** "'El team' or 'early intervention team' means the interdisciplinary team consisting of the parent, service coordinator and appropriate qualified personnel that conducts the evaluation or assessment of a child."

Source: [Department of Health Services Administrative Code DHS 90.03\(17\)](#).

**English Language Learner:** "A student whose primary language is not English, and whose English proficiency or lack thereof provides a barrier to successful learning."

Source: Council for Exceptional Children

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/topics/english-language-learners>

**Evaluation:** "The process used to determine eligibility for Part C early intervention; the process used to determine the existence of a delay or disability and the child's strengths and needs in all areas."

Source: [Division for Early Childhood DEC Special Instruction Position Statement](#)

**Family-directed Assessment:** “The ongoing process by which the parent and service providers work together in partnership to identify and understand the family's strengths, resources, concerns and priorities including relevant cultural factors, beliefs and values, in order to provide support and services to increase the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the child.”

Source: [Department of Health Services Administrative Code DHS 90.03\(20\)](#).

**Functional Assessment:** “A continuous collaborative assessment process that combines observing, asking meaningful questions, listening to family stories, and analyzing individual child skills and behaviors within naturally occurring everyday routines and activities across multiple situations and settings.”

Source: McLean, M. et al. (Eds.).(2020). Assessment: Recommended practices for young children and families (DEC Recommended Practices Monograph Series No. 7). Washington, DC: Division for Early Childhood.

**Informed Clinical Opinion:** The use of professional expertise and experience in combination with information gathered through eligibility determination or assessment for service planning, or both, to determine the child's developmental status and eligibility under Part C.

Source: Adapted from Law Insider <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/informed-clinical-opinion>

**Multidisciplinary:** “The involvement of two or more separate disciplines or professions with respect to evaluation of the child and assessments of the child and family. It may include one individual who is qualified in more than one discipline or profession.”

Source: Individuals with Disability Education Act [IDEA Part C 34 CFR 303.24](#)

**Norm Referenced Tool:** “Any assessment in which scores are interpreted by comparison with a norm, generally the average score obtained by members of a specified group.”

Source: APA Dictionary of Psychology <https://dictionary.apa.org/norm-referenced-test>

**Standard Deviation:** “A measure of the variability of a set of scores or values within a group, indicating how narrowly or broadly they deviate from the mean (i.e. numerical average).”

Source: APA Dictionary of Psychology <https://dictionary.apa.org/standard-deviation>

**Standardized:** In the context of educational assessment, "standardized" refers to the process of designing assessments or tests in a way that ensures uniformity and consistency in their administration, scoring, and interpretation. One key component of a standardized test is uniform administration. This means that a test is administered to all test-takers under the same conditions, using the same instructions, timing, and materials.

Source: Adapted from Salvia, J., Ysseldyke, J. E., & Bolt, S. (2013). *Assessment in Special and Inclusive Education*. Cengage Learning.

**Standard Score:** A statistical measurement used to assess and compare a child's performance in relation to their same-age peers. Standard scores provide a common scale for comparing a child's abilities across different assessments. The most common type of standard score used in special education is a standard deviation. This type of standard score has a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.

Source: Adapted from Salvia, J., Ysseldyke, J. E., & Bolt, S. (2013). *Assessment in Special and Inclusive Education*. Cengage Learning.

**Supplemental Tool:** A tool that provides additional information to support decisions about eligibility, developmental status, intervention planning or family considerations.

Source: [Approved Tool List for the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#)