

New York City Department of Health

**CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY
APPROPRIATE EVALUATIONS:
WHAT EVERY EI EVALUATOR IN NYC
NEEDS TO KNOW**

Module 5: Developing Informed Clinical Opinion Through Observational Skills

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The evaluator must demonstrate the child’s level of functioning by using **specific descriptions of the child’s skills.**

A listing of what the child got “right” or “wrong” a test or chart is completely inadequate.

Also woefully inadequate is simply listing the NYSDOH “Causes for Concern.”

Evaluators must incorporate the specific data learned during the assessment and evaluation process and make “vignettes” or “holograms” of the child in the report to illustrate the child’s functioning levels based on the evaluator’s **informed clinical opinion.**

OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS ARE CRITICAL

Abigail - 20 months.

What do you learn about cognition, communication, motor, pragmatics/socialization?

What do these “holograms”, “vignettes”, or “bringing the child to life” look like?

This 13 month old demonstrated relatively good interactive skills, which are essential prelinguistic skills to develop communication. For example, this evaluator shook a rattle and made some bilabial sounds. The baby watched her and the rattle. When she put it down, the child looked at her directly, smiled broadly, waved his hand in the same way she shook the rattle before, and said, “Da, da, da, da, da.” The child is functioning at the 6 to 9 month level in language comprehension and expression.

**Comprehension, Expression, Phonology, Cognition
What do we learn here?**

The 30 month old boy requested toys by saying, “Ma ka” (Mommy [give me the] car). When his mother told him that he could play with a different toy if he put the other one away, he put the toy away, pointed to it, looked at his mother and said, “Ya de”, meaning “Ya garde” (I put it away).

**Cognitive, Communication, and Motor Skills:
What do we learn here?**

When the 30 month old boy was given some plastic bugs to play with, he was clearly interested in them and wanted to know their names. He held each one up to his mom and said, “Uh?” with an intonation that he wanted to know what it was, and his mother named each bug. When he discovered the second beetle in the group, he fished out the first beetle and held both up demonstrating that he was engaged in the activity and intellectually involved in grouping and categorizing the bugs.

Abe, 36 mths

Why is it important to separate out motor development from cognition?

Separating out domains

Abe demonstrated motor delays but advanced cognitive and inferencing skills

REMEMBER

Informed Clinical Opinion
does not correlate with the number of
EI evaluations an evaluator
has completed.

REMEMBER

Just because someone has many years of
experience does not mean that they have
Informed Clinical Opinion

**How do evaluators acquire
informed clinical opinion?**

1. By being on top of the research and understanding the statistical base of any assessment tool they use;
2. By identifying biases in assessment materials and in many current developmental milestones;
3. By spending time assessing typically developing children from the same age and cultural and linguistic background as the ones they are evaluating for EI; and
4. By ensuring that they have a deep understanding of appropriate developmental milestones.

After reading the report can the person close
his/her eyes and see the child?

Not all delays rise to a level so the child qualifies for EI services

NYSDOH Definition of Developmental Delay

“In New York State, consistent with federal requirements, a child must be experiencing a delay in an area (i.e., domain) of development that is significant enough to require early intervention.”

What if a child does not have a “SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH” delay?

WHEN A CHILD DOES NOT QUALIFY

EI professionals should be prepared to discuss the results of the evaluation with the family and make suggestions and recommendations to support the child’s development.

Evaluations must be certain not to “make the child look worse” so the child qualifies for EI services.

That is fraud.

The change needs to happen in the trenches.



Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Evaluations only happen if evaluators find out "Who Is This Child?" and have the Informed Clinical Opinion needed to analyze the data and draw appropriate conclusions.



For further information:



- 1) LEADERSproject.org
- 2) Teachers College's Bilingual Extension Institute for SLPs. A discipline-specific bilingual extension cert.
- 3) *Bilingual Extension Institute* Facebook page

www.LEADERSproject.org

Grammar Fundamentals for a Pluralistic Society
Differential Diagnosis in a Preschool Evaluation
Disorder, Difference, or Gap? A School-Age Disability Evaluation
Model Speech-Language and Psychological Evaluations
Test Reviews of most commonly used tests

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www.LEADERSproject.org

