Assessments, Screeners and Checklists for the Pre-K Initiative

Laura A. Annunziata, New Orleans, September 2017
Process
Considerations and Resources

Considerations for Pre-K Assessment in Migrant Education Settings

There are many different assessment and screening instruments and processes used with children in early care and education environments. Some have been created at the national level, some in states and territories -- or for particular populations, and others that are available for purchase.

How can a Migrant Education Program begin to decide what approaches and instruments for assessment most useful for them?

You can use the following resources to gain information about, and think through approaches to child assessment for the children enrolled in your program.

1. Getting to Know Your State’s Early Learning Guidelines

Each state has some form of early learning guidelines that inform their practices with very young children. You will find variety in the way states look at early learning and describe and organize their own early learning guidelines. The guidelines have been written at different times and reflect their state’s individual needs and structures. Some include questions, checklists or assessment materials that might be useful for your programs and students.

Migrant children and families may pass through many states. You might find it helpful to take a look at the guidelines provided by states you know your students and families will be going to
Getting Familiar with State Early Learning Standards and Guidelines

Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards (2009)
http://www.education.pa.gov/Early Learning/Early Learning Standards/Pages/default.aspx - tab-1

https://www.cde.state.co.us/early/eldgs

Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (2010)
http://flfs5.floridaearlylearning.com/
Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011)
http://flfs5.floridaearlylearning.com/BT5_Uploads/fldsfoyo.pdf

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (2013)
Georgia’s Pre-K Program Content Standards (Revised March 2009)
Questions for Reflection on State Early Learning Guidelines

When thinking about your state’s Early Learning Guidelines you might consider the following:

- How recently were the guidelines reviewed/created?
- Are the materials available in languages other than English?
- Do the guidelines include suggestions, requirements or a framework for working or sharing observations and findings with parents and families?
- Do the guidelines address the needs of dual language learners and English language learners?
- Do the guidelines include suggestions, requirements or a framework that would be usable by your programs?
  - If not – Why?
- Do you feel that the guidelines include approaches or materials are useful for assessing migrant students in your program?
  - Why?
  - Why not?
- What kind support would staff need to use all or part of the guidance/instruments/approach from the state early learning guidelines?
2. Considering Assessment and Screening

Programs conduct child assessments for many reasons. Child assessments are often used to provide information about progress and needs of individual children, to help plan and individualize care and instruction, and to guide program and curriculum design and planning.

What is the difference between assessment, screening, and a checklist?

- Generally, **assessment** is a process or approach used to gather information about specific a child for the purpose of making evaluative decisions.

- A **screening instrument** or **diagnostic tool** is used to help make identification and placement decisions for individual children; or to determine if the child needs more comprehensive evaluation.

- **Checklists** come in many formats and are used for many purposes, but typically include a series of questions that can give the interviewer a targeted look at specific items related to the child or family.
Comparing Assessment and Screening Instruments

- “Understanding and Choosing Assessments and Developmental Screeners for Young Children Ages 3-5: Profiles of Selected Measures”, Office of Planning Research and Evaluation

This resource will provide you with information regarding the reliability and validity of many commonly used assessment and screening tools. In addition, it includes descriptions of each instrument; examining factors such as type of information collected, languages in which it is available, training requirements for staff, parent involvement, and cost.


- “Child Assessment”, National Center on Childcare Quality Improvement

This resource includes a comparative description of a number of child assessment tools, key considerations for designing and implementing assessment, descriptions of child assessment practices in individual states and links to relevant national level organizations.

4. Evaluating and Selecting Assessments, Screenings and Checklists for your Program

How can individual Migrant Education programs decide whether particular screening instruments are right for their use?

Here are some questions you might consider to get started.

- Do I/we think this assessment framework or instrument is something that our staff could use effectively?
  - If yes - Would staff need any particular support/s to use with our families and children?
  - If no - Is there training or support available that could help our staff use this instrument?

- Is this assessment framework/instrument/approach available in both English and Spanish (or other home languages)?

- Does the instrument or approach include ways to include families in the assessment process?

- Does the instrument or approach include ways to clearly communicate assessment findings with parents and families?

- Will we be able to provide information to families about this assessment in a language or format that is accessible to families?

- Does the instrument/framework/approach seem culturally appropriate for the families and children you work with? If not, why?
### Table 1
**Examples of Assessment Instruments for Use with Pre-School Aged Children**

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<tr>
<td>Desired Results Developmental Profile</td>
<td>A formative assessment instrument developed by the California Department of Education for young children and their families and used to inform instruction and program development.</td>
<td>(1) Approaches to Learning - Self Regulation (2) Social and Emotional Development (3) Language and Literacy Development (4) English Language Development (5) Cognition Including Math and Science (6) Physical Development – Health (7) History-Social Science (8) Visual and Performing Arts</td>
<td>Early Infancy through Kindergarten entry</td>
<td>English, Spanish, Chinese</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Galileo Pre-K Online System for the Electronic Management of Learning</td>
<td>A multi-method standards-based approach to child assessment that uses observation, work samples and parent input.</td>
<td>(1) Approaches to Learning (2) Literacy (3) Physical Development and Health (4) Creative Arts (5) Language, Logic and Reasoning (6) Social and Emotional Development (7) English Language Acquisition (8) Early Math (9) Social Studies (10) Language</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>English, Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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### Table 2
Examples of Screening Instruments for Use with Pre-School Aged Children

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<tr>
<td>Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3)</td>
<td>This frequently used screener is designed to pinpoint a child’s developmental progress with 21 questionnaires that each contain 30 items.</td>
<td>Communication, Problem Solving, Personal-Social, Fine Motor, Gross Motor</td>
<td>1 - 66 months</td>
<td>English, Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test</td>
<td>A general developmental screener made up of items from the Battelle Developmental Inventory, a 450-item standardized assessment.</td>
<td>Adaptive, Personal-Social, Communication, Cognitive, Motor</td>
<td>Birth - 7 years</td>
<td>English, Spanish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Available in Spanish</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Web Location</td>
<td>Supporting Materials</td>
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| CDC “Learn the Signs, Developmental Milestones Checklist” | Yes, selected materials | These short developmental checklists were developed for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as part of the “Learn the Signs; Act Early” Campaign.

The instrument is intended for use by caregivers, educators and families at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18 months; and 2, 3, 4 and 5 years, of age.

The checklist is divided into subsections including: social/emotional skills, language and communication, cognitive skills, movement and physical development. It also includes suggestions for activities that families can try at home to promote school readiness skills. | [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/all_checklists.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/all_checklists.pdf) | [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html) | "Learn the Signs" Home Page: [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html) | "Learn the Signs" Resources in Spanish: [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html) |
“Assessment Considerations for Young English Language Learners Across Different Levels of Accountability”, Linda M. Espinosa & Michael L. López

This paper includes a broad look at special concerns in the assessment of young English language learners.

http://www.pewtrusts.org~/media/legacy/uploadedfiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/reports/pre-k_education/assessment20for20young20ellspew2081107finalpdf.pdf

“Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation, Building an Effective, Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8, A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE)”

This position statement created by NAEYS and NAEC/SDE provides overarching guidance for entities building systems for curriculum, assessment and program evaluation.

Questions?