The Benefits of Functional Assessment in Early Intervention

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Early Intervention - Part C

The Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (Part C of IDEA) is a federal grant program that assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through age 2 years, and their families.

Disclaimer:

Andrea Gallo does not have any financial relationship relevant to the context of this presentation.
Non-financial relationship: Andrea Gallo is a paid employee of Prince William County Government, VA. She may reference her place of employment along with clinical case studies based upon her roles and responsibilities as an early intervention provider.

Product Disclosure: n/a

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Early Intervention - ITC of VA

The Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia provides early intervention supports and services to infants and toddlers from birth through age two who are not developing as expected or who have a medical condition that can delay normal development.

Early intervention supports and services focus on increasing the child’s participation in family and community activities that are important to the family. In addition, supports and services focus on helping parents and other caregivers know how to find ways to help the child learn during everyday activities. These supports and services are available for all eligible children and their families regardless of the family’s ability to pay.

Services include the Office of Special Education Programs and Part C Early Intervention Programs. DBHID is the lead agency for Part C in Virginia.

Assessment of the young child’s skills in the real life contexts of family, culture and community rather than discrete isolated tasks irrelevant to daily life.

“The science of the strange behavior of children, with strange adults, in strange settings for the briefest possible period of time.”

Functional Assessment

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

Benefits of Functional Assessment

Continuous

from referral throughout the early intervention experience

Collaborative Process

Building and maintaining rapport and relationships among early intervention team members including the service providers and family members/caregivers

Active Listening:
listening and responding

Connecting with the family to gain a comprehensive understanding of their priorities and concerns based on their resources, values and culture
**Intentional Observation**

Observations, including videos, of the child in the home and in other natural environments.

- Be intentional
- Gather objective/concrete information
- Encourage parents to record routines

**Asking Meaningful Questions**

Promoting a conversation with the family using open-ended questions to convey respect that enhances family-centered services.

It helps me learn more about your child and gives me a broader, more rounded picture of your child.

**HELP: 0-3 years (Hawaii Early Learning Profile)**

HELP 0-3 is widely recognized as a comprehensive, on-going, family centered curriculum based assessment process for infants and toddlers and their families.

The Chart provides a clear picture of a child’s development and progress making it easy to show parents and staff great for involving parents in child’s plan.

[Link](https://www.hc.hawaii.edu/HELP)

**The Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP™) provides a systematic method for observing the skill development of any child functioning in the birth to 36-month age range, including children with special needs.**

- A child-centred assessment instrument
- Provides a complete picture of a child’s acquired and emerging skills in 5 domains of development: gross motor, fine motor, cognition, language, self-help, and social-emotional.
- Effective for communicating and collaborating with parents about their child’s progress.

[Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Vxx55k6veE&list=PL466B9BD50B3C50B)

**Traditional Testing (Anchor Tests)**

**Functional Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>Our Focus Shifts</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knows how to make eye contact, smile, and give a hug</td>
<td>Initiates affection toward caregivers and respond to others’ affection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knows how to initiate a gesture when prompted by others</td>
<td>Watches what a peer says or does and incorporate it into his/her own play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses finger in painting motion</td>
<td>Points to indicate needs or wants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows a skill in a specific situation</td>
<td>Uses a skill in actions across settings and situations to accomplish something meaningful to the child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This product was developed collaboratively with staff from ECTA Center and WRRCD in response to the need expressed from state and local providers to have specific information and resources about developing IEP outcomes and IEP goals. The full training package, including a full reference list, is freely available online.

[Link](http://www.ecta.com/makingaccomplishmentsandgoalswork)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Testing (Anchor Tool): Discrete items on test (Closed Door)</th>
<th>Functional Assessment: Open ended questions (Open Door) (“This helps show what is important”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Is your child walking yet?</td>
<td>• How does your child get around the house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does your child talk?</td>
<td>• How does your child communicate what he/she needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does your child give hugs and kisses?</td>
<td>• How does your child greet you or the important people in his/her life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do you like to do with your child?</td>
<td>• What’s challenging about your day with your child?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If your child could talk what would it look like?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**I Don't know**

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**Multiple Situations And Settings:**

A skill becomes mastered when a child is able to do it in multiple places with multiple people.

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**Analyzing**

Putting together information about the child from all sources (parent report, observation, age-anchored assessment tool, etc.) in order to understand the child’s functioning compared to same age peers.

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**Naturally Occurring:**

The activities and routines the child participates in that are unique to the family’s culture, community, and values.
Questions

GOOD JOB!

Resources:

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