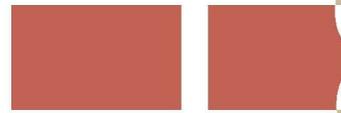
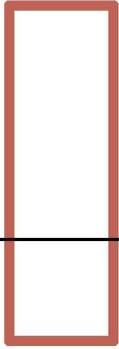


Child Assessment

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The following *Review Guidelines* are intended to help service providers and individuals involved in personnel preparation determine the congruence between the beliefs, values, and practices of the individuals in your community and current recommended practices in early childhood/special education. The *Review Guidelines* will first help you consider the overall effectiveness of presentation of a material. Next, questions follow which pertain specifically to the content area of **Child Assessment**.

It is important to realize that no material is likely to match the exact needs of individuals in your community. Therefore, in many instances, you may wish to make some simple adaptations to the materials before using them.

A separate set of *Review Guidelines* is available to help select materials that have been translated from one language to another. In addition, other suggestions for choosing materials are available on the CLAS Web site (<http://clas.uiuc.edu>). It is our hope that you may use these *Review Guidelines* to engage in meaningful dialogue with families and colleagues in your community, as you decide which materials to use in your early childhood setting.

Effectiveness of Presentation

Please respond to all that apply.

CLARITY

- (a) Is the purpose of the material clear?
- (b) Is the presentation of the information easy to follow?
- (c) If there are directions on how to use the material, are they clearly stated?
- (d) Does the material include an effective explanation of technical terms or jargon?

- (e) Does the language in the material acknowledge diversity (e.g., family structures, multi-generations, disabilities, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, etc.)?
- (f) Is the format (e.g., print, audio, video, etc.) appropriate for the intended users of this material?
- (g) Are contact agencies or persons for accessing additional information or support easily identifiable?

COMPREHENSION LEVEL

Easy = mainly simple sentences with minimal or no technical jargon;

Average = a mix of simple and complex sentences with some technical jargon (e.g., USA Today);

Difficult = mainly complex sentences with a lot of technical jargon or discipline-specific terms (e.g., College-level text or New York Times).

- (a) For printed materials, the reading level of the material is:

Easy / Average / Difficult / N/A

- (b) For video and audio materials, the comprehension level of the material is:

Easy / Average / Difficult / N/A

GRAPHICS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOS

Do the graphics:

- (a) Represent a non-stereotypical view of cultural (e.g., contemporary dress) and linguistic groups?
- (b) Represent a wide variety of groups (e.g., disabilities, gender, race, generation)?
- (c) Enhance the materials (e.g., photo prints and designs are appropriate and of high quality)?

**PRE-ASSESSMENT PLANNING**

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Honor the families' preferred language or mode of communication (if other than spoken English) by: (1) suggesting that the persons conducting the assessment are fluent in that language, and (2) when the former is not possible, the material includes strategies for using a cultural guide to review assessment items and procedures to identify those that are insensitive or mismatched to cultural norms or language usage?
- (b) Recommend that information and results from the screening activities are obtained from family or caregiver feedback, as well as through written reports?
- (c) Encourage that information regarding the "reason for referral" be obtained from families as well as professionals during the initial special education eligibility process?
- (d) Include strategies to obtain information from families in a culturally sensitive manner regarding their concerns about their child's behavior and development?
- (e) Ensure that there is a match between what the professionals and families feel is the major concern regarding the child's behavior and development, as well as the reason for referral?
- (f) Provide guidance for determining whether the referral for evaluation for special education services is appropriate?
- (g) Provide guidance about the assessment of challenging behaviors, which might result in a child being diagnosed as having a behavior disorder? Does the material direct the assessment team to consider: (1) environmental factors (*e.g., discontinuity in practices between home and center*), or (2) cultural bias in labeling certain behaviors as problems?
- (h) Provide strategies for assessing language dominance and proficiency to help distinguish between a suspected developmental delay and a language/dialectical difference?
- (i) Provide strategies for distinguishing between suspected developmental delays and differences in achievement of developmental milestones, which may be influenced by child-rearing or cultural practices?

2.

PLANNING THE ASSESSMENT

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Include recommendations for obtaining information from family members by:
 1. First increasing staff awareness of family cultural preferences and roles,
 2. Discussing how service providers can establish rapport with families before gathering information,
 3. Acknowledging that parental consent must be obtained before an evaluation is conducted?
 4. Helping providers to respect families' desires and readiness to share information and meeting families at their level of readiness,
 5. Including and supporting extended family members in this information-gathering stage,
 6. Including recommendations for obtaining and utilizing information from all caregivers working with the family, and
 7. Identifying and honoring the family's views on native language maintenance and the learning of another language?

- (b) Provide guidance to staff about the importance of:
 1. Inviting families to participate in their child's assessment in a manner that is comfortable for the family, and
 2. Sharing information with families about the assessment process?

- (c) Include recommendations for identifying and supporting family preferences on where and when professionals will observe and assess the child?

- (d) Recommend that the assessment process include observations of the child in two or more environments on more than one occasion, whenever possible?

3

CONDUCTING THE ASSESSMENT AND DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY, SERVICES, AND MONITORING

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Recommend that professionals gather information from multiple sources and use multiple measures (*e.g., norm-referenced, interviews, observations, etc.*)?
- (b) Include procedures and adaptations that accommodate the child's sensory and response capacities?
- (c) Recommend that professionals employ individualized, developmentally compatible assessment procedures and materials that capitalize on the child's interests, interactions, communication style, language preference, and culture?
- (d) Acknowledge that professionals should assess strengths as well as problems across all areas of the child's suspected disability?
- (e) Recommend that professionals seek assistance from a family member or cultural guide to confirm their interpretations of the child's behavior during the assessment process?
- (f) Address the need for using an interpreter/translator for children for whom spoken English is not their primary language?
- (g) Acknowledge the need to ensure that the reason for a child's learning difficulty is not due to a lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency?
- (h) Recognize the shortcomings of standardized and norm-referenced materials and therefore stress the importance of:
 - 1. Selecting alternative methods for establishing a baseline for measuring progress for children who are culturally and linguistically diverse, and
 - 2. If standardized and norm-referenced procedures must be used, then suggestions are included for culturally and linguistically competent modifications and interpretation of results?
- (i) Emphasize that the measures and procedures are used to facilitate education and treatment rather than to diagnose and classify?
- (j) Emphasize that eligibility decisions are to be based on the assessment information from the consensus of a team of professionals and the child's family as opposed to being based on information from one professional?

4

ANALYZING AND REPORTING THE RESULTS IN WRITTEN OR ORAL FORMAT

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Provide guidelines for including a qualified representative of the child's cultural and/or linguistic group to assist in the interpretation of the results when bilingual professionals are not available? The role of this individual is to consider the degree to which perceived delays may be related to cultural or child-rearing practices, difficulties in language translation, or other factors that may have influenced the assessment process.
- (b) Include recommendations for reporting information to families in a way that is understandable, useful, respectful, and in the preferred language?
- (c) Address the range of reactions that a family may experience when assessment information is shared (*e.g., grief, denial, mistrust, anger*) and provide recommendations for providers to:
 - 1. Be sensitive to and supportive of the family, and
 - 2. Recognize that even the labeling of these reactions is often a culturally based perception?
- (d) Emphasize that professionals maintain confidentiality and discretion when sharing information about the child and family?
- (e) Recommend that professionals report child and family strengths, as well as priorities for promoting optimal development?
- (f) Recommend that professionals report limitations of the assessment (*e.g., cultural bias, sensory requirements*), as well as conflicting interpretations of the assessment results?
- (g) Recommend that professionals organize reports by developmental/functional domains or concerns, rather than by assessment devices?
- (h) Acknowledge the need to gather information related to the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum?

The following two questions are intended to deepen the analysis of the ways materials address issues of diversity. In some cases, these issues may have been addressed in the preceding questions.

5.

Does the material acknowledge and address complex and sometimes subtle aspects of diversity as they relate to child assessment, such as:

- (a) Power (refers to the division of members of society into levels with unequal access to resources, knowledge, and authority)
- (b) Racism (refers to systems advantage based on race)
- (c) Prejudice (refers to an adverse judgment or opinion based on preconceived beliefs and ideas about different groups)
- (d) Socio-Economic Class (refers to the division of society into levels with unequal wealth and prestige)

6.

Are there any spoken or unspoken assumptions, values, or beliefs in this material that could conflict with the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services (e.g., assuming all parents view themselves as advocates or equal partners)?