

# **Practitioner's Guide to Developmental and Psychological Testing**

## CRITICAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

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**PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENTAL AND  
PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING**  
Glen P. Aylward, Ph.D.

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# **Practitioner's Guide to Developmental and Psychological Testing**

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To my wife and children  
for their support and understanding,  
and to Philip and Conner  
who I wish could have seen the final product



## Preface

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The practice of primary health care has expanded beyond the “traditional” medical model. Primary-care physicians and allied professionals are called upon more frequently to address parental concerns about developmental delays, poor school performance, or behavioral problems. As a result, pediatricians, family practitioners, pediatric nurses, social workers, and speech/language specialists are faced with the issue of developmental and psychological testing. The degree of the clinician’s involvement in testing varies from interpretation of reports to performing screening or assessments. In many cases, the primary health care professional assumes the role of case manager.

Unfortunately, cooperation between disciplines often has been limited because of poor communication, particularly in regard to developmental and psychological testing, where acronyms, statistics, and jargon abound. Even professionals from mental health disciplines such as child psychiatrists or psychiatric social workers sometimes are overwhelmed.

The purpose of this book, therefore, is to provide the clinician with practical information regarding developmental and psychological testing, thereby making the health care professional an “educated consumer.” This text does not simply describe how psychologists perform testing; rather, it provides information to help clinicians understand what the tests contain, what their strengths and limitations are, and how they can be incorporated into practice. The book is unique in that rather than simply providing the clinician with a voluminous listing of developmental and psychological tests, it is couched within the framework of addressing two of the most common “new morbidity” problems, namely, suspected developmental delay and difficulties in school performance. Within this framework, selected tests that are used to evaluate different areas of function are discussed in applied terms. Descriptions of the tests, an overview of their strengths and limitations, and suggestions as to how these techniques might be applied to office practice are provided. Related topics such as learning disabilities, attention deficits, language disorders, providing

feedback, clinical clues, and diagnostic algorithms are discussed. Care is taken to minimize the amount of detail, and clinical applications and illustrative examples are emphasized. Insight is provided into clinical decision making that is based on developmental and psychological test results.

The text is geared for physicians, allied health professionals, and psychologists who practice in clinical settings. It is hoped that this book will serve as an explanatory reference guide for health care professionals who work with children, enabling these professionals to provide *total* care to their young patients and their families.

GLEN P. AYLWARD



# Contents

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## I. DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>1. Introduction and Terminology</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1.1. Introduction .....	3
1.2. Terminology .....	5
1.2.1. Terminology Used to Detect Dysfunction in Populations .....	6
1.2.2. Psychometric Terminology .....	8
1.2.3. Test Interpretation Terminology .....	9
1.3. Examples .....	11
References .....	13
<b>2. Overview of Evaluation Considerations</b> .....	<b>15</b>
2.1. Introduction .....	15
2.2. Developmental Evaluation Instruments .....	17
2.2.1. Denver Developmental Screening Test .....	17
2.2.2. Denver II .....	20
2.2.3. Prescreening Developmental Questionnaire .....	22
2.2.4. Bayley Scales of Infant Development .....	23
2.2.5. Gesell Developmental Schedules .....	25
2.2.6. Bayley Infant Neurodevelopmental Screen .....	27
2.2.7. Milani-Comparetti–Gidoni Neurodevelopmental Screening Examination .....	30
2.2.8. Battelle Developmental Inventory .....	31
2.2.9. Differential Ability Scales .....	34
2.2.10. McCarthy Scales of Children’s Abilities .....	37
2.2.11. Cattell Infant Intelligence Test .....	41
2.2.12. Fagan Test of Infant Intelligence .....	42
2.2.13. Kent Infant Development Scale .....	42



2.2.14. Miller Assessment for Preschoolers .....	43
2.2.15. FirstSTEP: Screening Test for Evaluating Preschoolers .....	45
2.3. Summary .....	46
References .....	46
<b>3. Evaluation of Language Function .....</b>	<b>51</b>
3.1. Introduction .....	51
3.2. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised .....	54
3.3. Early Language Milestone Scale .....	58
3.4. Preschool Language Scale/Preschool Language .....	58
3.5. Boehm Test of Basic Concepts-Revised .....	59
3.6. Receptive-Expressive Emergent Language Scale .....	60
3.7. Arizona Articulation Proficiency Scale-Revised .....	61
3.8. Northwestern Syntax Screening Test .....	62
3.9. Clinical Linguistic and Auditory Milestone Scale .....	63
3.10. Summary .....	63
3.11. Diagnostic Clues .....	64
References .....	66
<b>4. Evaluation of Behavioral/Adaptive Functioning .....</b>	<b>69</b>
4.1. Introduction .....	69
4.2. Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales .....	70
4.3. Preschool Attainment Record .....	72
4.4. Minnesota Child Development Inventory .....	72
4.5. Scales of Independent Behavior .....	74
4.6. Inventory for Client and Agency Planning .....	75
4.7. AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale .....	76
4.8. Summary .....	77
References .....	77
<b>5. Summary of Developmental Assessment .....</b>	<b>79</b>
5.1. Introduction .....	79
5.2. Recommended Protocol for Early Developmental Screen/ Assessment .....	80
5.3. Decision Tree for Suspected Developmental Delay .....	81
5.4. Explaining Test Results .....	83
5.5. Self-Monitoring .....	84

---

5.6. Problem Cases .....	86
References .....	87
<b>II. EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS</b>	
<b>6. Overview of School Performance Problems .....</b>	<b>91</b>
6.1. Introduction .....	91
6.2. Defining Learning Disabilities .....	92
6.3. The Discrepancy Issue .....	94
6.3.1. Aptitude–Achievement Discrepancy .....	94
6.3.2. Intracognitive Discrepancy .....	95
6.3.3. Intra-Achievement Discrepancy .....	95
6.3.4. Specific Issues .....	96
6.4. Ancillary LD Issues .....	97
6.5. Mental Retardation .....	98
6.6. Summary .....	100
References .....	101
<b>7. Assessment of Cognitive/Intellectual Functioning .....</b>	<b>105</b>
7.1. Introduction .....	105
7.2. Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence- Revised .....	105
7.2.1. Performance Subtests .....	106
7.2.2. Verbal Subtests .....	108
7.3. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised .....	110
7.3.1. Verbal Subtests .....	110
7.3.2. Performance Subtests .....	111
7.4. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III .....	113
7.5. Stanford–Binet-Fourth Edition .....	116
7.6. Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children .....	118
7.7. Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning .....	122
7.8. Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test .....	124
References .....	127
<b>8. Assessment of Academic Achievement .....</b>	<b>131</b>
8.1. Introduction .....	131
8.2. Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised .....	132

8.3.	Basic Achievement Skills Individual Screener .....	134
8.4.	Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement .....	135
8.5.	Woodcock–Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised: Tests of Achievement .....	137
8.6.	Peabody Individual Achievement Test-Revised .....	138
8.7.	Boder Test of Reading–Spelling Patterns .....	140
8.8.	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test .....	141
8.9.	Summary .....	145
	References .....	146
<b>9.</b>	<b>Attention/Concentration .....</b>	<b>147</b>
9.1.	Diagnostic Issues in Attention-Deficit Disorders .....	147
9.2.	Evaluation of Attention/Concentration .....	148
9.2.1.	Rating Scales .....	149
9.2.2.	Instruments That Evaluate Specific Aspects of ADD .....	149
9.2.2.1.	Computerized Assessment .....	149
9.2.2.2.	Gordon Diagnostic System .....	150
9.2.2.3.	Test of Variables of Attention .....	151
9.2.2.4.	Conners Continuous Performance Test .....	151
9.2.2.5.	Summary of Computerized Assessment .....	152
9.3.	Other Measures .....	153
9.3.1.	Matching Familiar Figures Test .....	153
9.3.2.	Children’s Embedded Figures Test .....	154
9.4.	Psychometric Techniques .....	154
9.5.	Interrelationships between Measures .....	156
	References .....	158
<b>10.</b>	<b>Behavioral Assessment .....</b>	<b>161</b>
10.1.	Introduction .....	161
10.2.	Rating Scales That Measure Attention-Deficit Problems (Unidimensional) .....	163
10.2.1.	Parent Rating Scales .....	163
10.2.1.1.	Conners Parent Rating Scale .....	164
10.2.1.2.	CLAM Questionnaire .....	164
10.2.1.3.	DSM-III-Based Checklists .....	166
10.2.1.4.	Self-Control Rating Scale .....	166
10.2.1.5.	Child Behavior Checklist .....	166

10.2.1.6.	Revised Behavioral Problems Checklist .....	167
10.2.1.7.	Aggregate Neurobehavioral Student Health and Education Review .....	167
10.2.1.8.	Home Situations Questionnaire .....	167
10.2.1.9.	Children's Attention and Adjustment Survey .....	168
10.2.1.10.	Attention-Deficit Disorders Evaluation Scale .....	169
10.2.1.11.	Summary .....	171
10.2.2.	Teacher Rating Scales .....	171
10.2.2.1.	Conners Teacher Rating Scale .....	172
10.2.2.2.	IOWA Conners Teacher Rating Scale .....	172
10.2.2.3.	ADD-H Comprehensive Teacher Rating Scale .....	172
10.2.2.4.	Edelbrock Child Attention/Activity Profile .....	174
10.2.2.5.	School Situations Questionnaire ....	174
10.2.2.6.	Summary .....	175
10.3.	Multidimensional Rating Scales .....	175
10.3.1.	Child Behavior Checklist .....	179
10.3.2.	Personality Inventory for Children .....	180
10.3.3.	Louisville Behavior Checklist .....	181
10.3.4.	Behavior Problem Checklist/Revised Behavior Problem Checklist .....	182
10.3.5.	Behavior Assessment System for Children ....	182
10.3.5.1.	BASC Teacher Rating Scales .....	183
10.3.5.2.	BASC Parent Rating Scales .....	183
10.3.5.3.	BASC Self-Report of Personality ....	183
10.3.6.	Devereux Behavior Rating Scales .....	184
10.3.6.1	Devereux Clinical Form .....	184
10.3.6.2.	Devereux School Form .....	185
10.3.7.	Conclusions .....	185
References	.....	185
11.	<b>Visual-Motor/Visual-Perceptual Function .....</b>	<b>189</b>
11.1.	Introduction .....	189
11.2.	Tests That Require Reproduction of Figures .....	191
11.2.1.	Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test .....	191
11.2.2.	Modified Version of the Bender-Gestalt Test for Preschool and Primary School Children .....	194

11.2.3. Developmental Test of Visual–Motor Integration	194
11.2.4. Minnesota Percepto-Diagnostic Test	195
11.3. Tests Involving a Memory Component	197
11.3.1. Revised Visual Retention Test	197
11.3.2. Memory-for-Designs Test	197
11.4. Tests Measuring Visual–Perceptual Function	198
11.5. Summary	198
References	200
<b>12. Assessment of School-Performance Problems</b>	<b>203</b>
12.1. Introduction	203
12.2. Possible Etiologies for Poor School Performance	204
12.2.1. Intellectual Limitations	205
12.2.2. Learning Disabilities	205
12.2.3. Attention Deficits	206
12.2.4. Behavior Problems	206
12.3. Areas of Assessment	207
12.3.1. Evaluation of Intelligence	207
12.3.2. Evaluation of Academic Achievement	209
12.3.3. Assessment of Attention/Concentration	211
12.3.4. Assessment of Behavior	213
12.3.5. Assessment of Visual–Motor and Visual– Perceptual Function	215
12.4. Problem Cases	217
12.5. Summary	218
References	219
<b>13. Additional Considerations</b>	<b>221</b>
13.1. Introduction	221
13.2. Caveats and Issues in Developmental Assessment	222
13.3. Caveats and Issues in Evaluation of School Problems	224
13.4. “Pearls”	225
13.4.1. Explaining Learning Disabilities	226
13.4.1.1. Circuit Board	226
13.4.1.2. Racing Car	226
13.4.2. Learning Disability Explanations for Parents	227
13.4.3. Grade Retention	227
13.4.4. Explaining Attention-Deficit Disorders to Children	229

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13.4.5. Explaining Attention-Deficit Disorders to Parents .....	229
13.4.6. Explaining the Use of Medication to Children	230
References .....	230

**APPENDIXES**

<b>A. Sources for Selected Screening and Evaluation Instruments</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>B. Additional Sources for Rating Scales .....</b>	<b>239</b>
<b>Index .....</b>	<b>241</b>

# **Practitioner's Guide to Developmental and Psychological Testing**