



ALIGNMENT

Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children, Third Edition (AEPS®-3)

WITH

NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Position Statement on Practices for Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning

Alignment of Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children, Third Edition (AEPS®-3) with NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Position Statement

This document aligns the *National Association for the Education of Young Children Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Position Statement on Practices for Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning* with the *Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children, Third Edition (AEPS®-3)*.

References

Bricker, D., Dionne, C., Grisham, J., Johnson, J.J., Macy, M., Slentz, K., & Waddell, M. (2022). *Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children, Third Edition (AEPS®-3)*. Brookes Publishing Co.

NAEYC. (2020). *NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice*. Washington, DC: NAEYC. Retrieved from: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/dap-statement_0.pdf

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| NAEYC Assessment Practices | AEPS-3 |
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| <p>A. Observation, documentation, and assessment of young children’s progress and achievements is ongoing, strategic, reflective, and purposeful. Educators embed assessment-related activities in the curriculum and in daily routines to facilitate authentic assessment and to make assessment an integral part of professional practice. They create and take advantage of unplanned opportunities to observe young children in play and in spontaneous conversations and interactions, in adult-structured assessment contexts as well as when children are participating in a group activity and doing an individual activity. Observations, documentations, and the results of other formal and informal assessments are used to inform the planning and implementing of daily curriculum and experiences, to communicate with the child’s family, and to evaluate and improve educators’ and the program’s effectiveness. Especially in K–3 classrooms, care must be taken to avoid overuse of standardized assessments, which can cause stress for young children and interfere with time for learning. Educators limit the use of digitally-based assessments, especially for young children who (appropriately) should have limited exposure to screen media.</p> | <p>AEPS-3 is designed to be used throughout the year to assess and monitor children’s progress in an ongoing, strategic, reflective, and purposeful manner. AEPS-3 relies on authentic assessment accomplished by observing children engaged in play or daily routines and activities. The measure yields educationally relevant, meaningful, and functional information for formulating developmentally appropriate learning outcomes and goals for children. AEPS-3 family materials engage families, encourage active input and family participation in the assessment process, and facilitate communication and gathering complete assessment data to address child and family needs.</p> <p>AEPS has been shown to improve program quality when used appropriately by experienced teachers and interventionists (Grisham-Brown, 2007). The system provides extensive supports for educator and program effectiveness, including flexible assessment activities that streamline individual and group assessment, clear criteria and examples for every assessment item for clarity and reliability, and sample goals and outcomes to serve as guides or models to write educational targets such as IFSP/IEP goals.</p> |
| <p>B. Assessment focuses on children’s progress toward developmental and educational goals. Such goals should reflect families’ input as well as children’s background knowledge and experiences. They should be informed by developmental milestones including use of state early learning standards. Goals should be aspirational and achievable and should foster a sense of pride and accomplishment for educators, families, and children. Children, educators, and families should have opportunities to celebrate both small and large achievements, while recognizing that all children need time to build mastery on a current skill before progressing to the next challenge.</p> | <p>AEPS-3 provides a comprehensive assessment of a child’s skills with items in eight key areas of development and early academics—fine motor, gross motor, adaptive, social-emotional, social-communication, cognitive, literacy, and math. Results clearly show current developmental status and provide educationally relevant, meaningful, functional information to track progress toward developmental and learning goals. AEPS-3 supports gathering family input about skills, child and family routines, and priorities. AEPS-3 Test items reflect essential abilities and are aligned with state early learning standards. Strands of related goals and objectives capture mastery of skills, highlight small increments of change to celebrate, and target next steps.</p> |

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| <p>C. A system is in place to collect, make sense of, and use observations, documentation, and assessment information to guide what goes on in the early learning setting. Educators use this information in planning curriculum and learning experiences and in moment-to-moment interactions with children—that is, educators continually engage in assessment for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. Educators also encourage children to use observation and, beginning in the preschool years, documentation to reflect on their experiences and what they have learned.</p> | <p>With AEPS-3 and its online system, educators are readily able to observe children during daily activities, interview family members and caregivers, document performance data quantitatively (with numerical scores) and qualitatively (with written notes), and access core information for improving teaching and learning. Educators can easily summarize each child’s performance across developmental areas using a combination of numerical, visual, and narrative reports. Data can be used to track child performance on individually targeted behaviors as well as on broad outcomes and to drive key decision-making and planning in the early learning setting. Assessment and progress monitoring results connect directly with teaching content and strategies in the associated tiered curriculum, though AEPS-3 assessment results can inform instruction with any early childhood curriculum. Educators can use AEPS-3 to systematically collect comparative data to determine the effectiveness of instruction for individual children and groups of children.</p> |
| <p>D. The methods of assessment are responsive to the current developmental accomplishments, language(s), and experiences of young children. They recognize individual variation in learners and allow children to demonstrate their competencies in different ways. Methods appropriate to educators’ assessment of young children, therefore, include results of their observations of children, clinical interviews, collections of children’s work samples, and children’s performance on authentic activities. For children who speak a language the educators do not know, native speakers of the child’s language such as family or community members may need to be recruited to assist with the assessment process. A plan should be in place for employing volunteer and paid interpreters and translators as needed and providing them with information about appropriate interactions with young children and ethics and confidentiality, as well as about the features and purposes of the screening or assessment tool. Once collected, the results are explained to families and children (as appropriate) in order to extend the conversations around what is collected, analyzed, and reflected upon.</p> | <p>As an authentic assessment measure, AEPS-3 is ideal for assessing the developmental status of young children because is completed by observing children as they play or engage in familiar environments (home, center, classroom) and interact with familiar adults and peers and familiar toys and materials during routine activities (snack time, bath time) or fun assessment activities that address a range of developmentally important behaviors.</p> <p>AEPS-3 is appropriate for use with all young children, including those who are developing typically, learning English, at risk, and who have a documented disability. It accommodates diversity with items that reflect highly relevant, broad concepts applicable to all children written in generic language to encompass a broad range of acceptable behaviors. Assessors are encouraged to use materials familiar to the child—not a pre-constructed test kit—to elicit the best examples of a child’s performance. AEPS-3 allows modifications for individual differences and needs. Its flexible content and administration methods are designed to recognize individual children and cultural variations.</p> |

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| <p>E. Assessments are used only for the populations and purposes for which they have been demonstrated to produce reliable, valid information. If required to use an assessment tool that has not been established as reliable or valid for the characteristics of a given child or for the intended use, educators recognize the limitations of the findings, strive to make sure they are not used in high-stakes decisions, and advocate for a different measure.</p> | <p>AEPS-3 is a curriculum-based, observational assessment for children from birth to age six. An authentic assessment that occurs during everyday routines, AEPS-3 can be used for assessing children’s current skill levels, identifying a disability, determining eligibility, targeting instruction, and monitoring child progress. Extensive evidence speaks to its use for these purposes and the significant help it offers users. It has psychometric support for its reliability, validity, and utility, and educators can find clear guidance on how to use AEPS-3 for different populations and purposes.</p> |
| <p>F. Decisions that have a major impact on children, such as enrollment or placement, are made in consultation with families. Such decisions should be based on multiple sources of relevant information, including that obtained from observations of and interactions with children by educators, family members, and specialists as needed.</p> | <p>AEPS-3 provides a comprehensive, ongoing examination of children’s development, combining a wide variety of information from family members and caregivers about the child’s daily activities, interests, and development with the teacher’s and other professionals’ observations of the child during authentic daily activities. Observations from both child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities are included. AEPS-3 data and reports can be used in concert with other data sources to make sound educational decisions in consultation with families.</p> |
| <p>G. When a screening assessment identifies a child who may have a disability or individualized learning or developmental needs, there is appropriate follow-up, evaluation, and, if needed, referral. Screening is used to identify issues needing more thorough examination by those qualified to do so; it is not used to diagnose or label children. Families are involved as essential sources of information.</p> | <p>AEPS-3 can be used effectively for further assessment following screening. It is a linked system that uses functional objectives and goals to assess young children and guide appropriate teaching and intervention. The ongoing nature of the assessment ensures that a child’s developmental status is continually monitored. AEPS-3 was developed by the same developer as the ASQ screening tools and shares its family-oriented philosophy, with materials that encourage active family input and participation in the assessment, goal development, intervention, and evaluation processes for their children.</p> |