

Suggestions for Interpreting Screening Results

1. What observations can be made during screening?
 - a. Signs of vision or hearing problems
Rubbing eyes, holding head near paper, one eye crossed, red eyes, saying "what," misunderstanding words, turning head to hear.
 - b. Social and/or emotional behavior
Very shy, refuses or withdraws, unusually willful, telling frightening or bizarre stories.
 - c. Information processing problems
Needs instructions repeated often, very distractible or unable to move on to the next task, does not monitor own performance or examines work overly carefully.
 - d. Fine motor skills
Awkward pencil grip, jerky movements, switching hands during pencil tasks.
 - e. Language development
Articulation: note sounds that are mispronounced, overall intelligibility, immature syntax, impoverished or rambling expressive language.
 - f. Gross motor
Peculiar gait—stiff or jerky, toe walking, hands waving during balancing.
2. What other sources of information are available?

- a. Watch the parent and child together. Is the parent concerned, angry, uninterested, relaxed?
 - b. Ask the parent whether the child's performance was unusual or as expected.
 - c. Analyze the Parent Questionnaire for information about pre- and perinatal history, illness, opinions of child's temperament and abilities.
 - d. Consult the child's teacher about the child's competence with classroom activities and behavior in a group.
3. What factors should be considered when interpreting the child's score on the ESI-R?
 - a. Did the child just barely miss or earn points?
 - b. Were most points lost in one section?
 - c. Do points lost across sections fall into a pattern (e.g., child experiences difficulty when tasks are presented verbally, difficulty sequencing information on visual or auditory sequential memory, problems with instructions)?
 - d. Did the child just move into the next older age group? Review the ratings you would have used if the screening had taken place a few days sooner.
 4. How should the decision about follow-up be made?
 - a. Does the information from various sources suggest a consistent interpretation and recommendation?

- b. Is additional information needed in an area not specifically scored on the ESI-R (i.e., vision, hearing, speech, medical, social/emotional adjustment).
 - c. Have you made use of all available resources before recommending follow-up?
5. Final Points
- a. Screening is not diagnostic. No decisions about further evaluation or program planning should be made

- on the basis of screening alone. No conclusions about a child's preferred learning modality or other behavior patterns can be justified on the basis of screening alone.
- b. Gather as many observations as possible about a child during screening so that hunches developed during this process may be confirmed or eliminated by subsequent interactions with the child.

Suggestions for Discussing Screening with Parents

- Remember that a screening test is not diagnostic. It can only indicate that further evaluation may be needed. Be sure to let the parents know this.
- For children who do not do well on the screening, arrange a meeting with the parents or a phone conversation if a meeting is not possible.
- Be supportive and indicate what the child is doing well, in addition to things that puzzle or concern you.
- Listen carefully to what the parents say. Work with them as a team to determine what is best for their child.
- Be available for the parents to call you back with further questions after your meeting.
- If you are going to make a referral for further evaluation, know what is available and who to contact.
- Express your concern by asking the parents to be in touch with you after the evaluation.