

## Common Special Education Evaluations (Ages 3–5)

This document provides an overview of the most commonly used special education evaluations for preschool-aged children (ages 3–5), including required qualifications and training expectations. All evaluations must be conducted by appropriately trained personnel and administered according to publisher guidelines.

### Key Evaluation Domains

Preschool evaluations typically assess the following areas:

- Cognitive / Developmental
- Communication (Speech-Language)
- Social-Emotional / Behavioral
- Adaptive (Daily Living Skills)
- Physical / Motor Development

### Cognitive / Developmental Evaluations

Assess early learning, problem-solving, attention, and memory.

#### Common tools include:

##### Developmental Tools

- Battelle Developmental Inventory, 3rd Edition (BDI-3)
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC-2)
- Brigance Inventory of Early Development III – Standardized (IED III Standardized)
- Mullen Scales of Early Learning

##### Standardized IQ Tests (WPPSI, DAS-II)

- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI)
- Differential Ability Scales – Second Edition (DAS-II)

#### Administered by:

- ECSE teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, developmental specialists- developmental tools (BDI-3, DAYC-2)
- Licensed psychologist- standardized IQ tests (WPPSI, DAS-II)

#### Key Requirements:

- Developmental tools (BDI-3, DAYC-2): Broad qualifications; must be trained in administration & scoring
- Standardized IQ tests (WPPSI, DAS-II): Standardized IQ tests require advanced training & licensure

### Speech-Language Evaluations

Assess expressive/receptive language, articulation, and social communication.

#### Common tools include:

- Preschool Language Scales – Fifth Edition (PLS-5)
- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Preschool (CELF-P)
- Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation (GFTA-3)
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-4/5)

#### Administered by:

- Licensed Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs)

#### Key Requirements:

- Formal training in standardized administration required

## Adaptive Behavior Evaluations

Measure functional life skills (e.g., communication, daily living, socialization).

**Common tools include:**

- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales
- Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS-3)

**Administered by:**

- School Psychologists
- Special Educators

**Key Requirements:**

- Training in ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of clinical assessments

## Social-Emotional / Behavioral Evaluations

Assess behavior, emotional regulation, and social functioning.

**Common tools include:**

- Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC-3)
- Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)
- Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-2)
- Conners Early Childhood (Conners EC)
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschool, 2nd Edition (DECA-P2)
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment, Clinical Form (DECA-C)

**Administered by:**

- School Psychologists
- School Social Workers
- Counselors

**Key Requirements:**

- Training varies by tool, see publisher guidelines.

## Autism-Specific Evaluations (if indicated)

Used when autism spectrum disorder is suspected.

**Common tools include:**

- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2)
- Autism Spectrum Rating Scale (ASRS)
- Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS-2)

**Administered by:**

- Psychologists
- Developmental specialists
- Multidisciplinary teams

**Key Requirement:**

- ADOS-2 requires specialized training and should be administered by highly trained clinicians

## Occupational Therapy (OT) Evaluations

Assess fine motor skills, sensory processing, and functional performance.

**Common tools include:**

- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales (PDMS-2)
- Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency (BOT-2)
- Sensory Profile 2

**Administered by:**

- Licensed Occupational Therapists (OTR/L)

**Key Requirements:**

- Formal training in standardized administration required

## Physical Therapy (PT) Evaluations

Assess gross motor development and mobility.

**Common tools include:**

- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales (PDMS-2)
- Test of Gross Motor Development (TGMD-3)

**Administered by:**

- Licensed Physical Therapists (PTs)

**Key Requirements:**

- Formal training in standardized administration is required.

## Developmental Screening Tools

Brief tools used to determine the need for further evaluation.

**Examples:**

- Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)
- Brigance Early Childhood Screens III
- Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-4)
- Early Screening Inventory (ESI-3)

**Administered by:**

- ECSE Teachers
- SLPs
- School Psychologists

**Note:**

- Screenings do not diagnose; they guide referral decisions.

## Key Takeaways for Administrators

- Ensure staff meet qualification and training requirements for each assessment
- Assign licensed psychologists for standardized cognitive (IQ) testing
- Support ongoing training and fidelity checks for developmental tools (BDI-3, DAYC-2)
- Promote a team-based approach for comprehensive evaluations
- Use screening tools appropriately to guide referrals—not for diagnosis

## For Additional Information

These websites offer module training, online training, and in-person options:



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<https://www.pearsonassessments.com/professional-assessments/training.html>

<https://www.ahead.org/events-programming/ahead-academy/online-diagnostic-course>

<https://shadetreelarning.org/product/gross-motor-development/>

[https://cdikids.org/professional-training/developmental-screening-](https://cdikids.org/professional-training/developmental-screening-<br/>certificate/#:~:text=A%20Strength%2DBased%2C%20Family%20Centered,Questionnaire%20%E2%80%93%20(ASQ%2D3)/)

[certificate/#:~:text=A%20Strength%2DBased%2C%20Family%20Centered,Questionnaire%20%E2%80%93%20\(ASQ%2D3\)/](https://cdikids.org/professional-training/developmental-screening-<br/>certificate/#:~:text=A%20Strength%2DBased%2C%20Family%20Centered,Questionnaire%20%E2%80%93%20(ASQ%2D3)/)

<https://agesandstages.com/free-resources/articles/free-training-resources-right-at-your-fingertips/>