



## Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children (AEPS®) Second Edition

AEPS® is a criterion-referenced/curriculum-based assessment that can be used by **all** team members (families, community caregivers, teachers, home visitors, Itinerant teachers, related service personnel, assistants, school psychologists etc.). AEPS® covers all domains of development and includes many strands related to various state/agency standards around early numbers and literacy. Items from the AEPS® span development from birth to age six. AEPS® (as a system) aims to **counter** practices which yield scores or outcomes that are (a) invalid for young children, (b) inappropriate for use with young children with disabilities, and (c) difficult to use for developing meaningful goals and intervention content.

AEPS® is a comprehensive system that ties together assessment, goal development, intervention, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The test components of the AEPS® yield educationally relevant, meaningful, and functional information that can be used to formulate developmentally appropriate goals and objectives for young children. These goals and objectives, in turn, link directly to intervention content and procedures offered in the curricular components of the AEPS®.

### Advantages:

- **Empirically validated with OSEP child outcomes** and can be aligned with many state's standards
- Comprehensive and appropriate to use with **all** young children
- Extensively studied and well established (first developed in 1975)
- Allows for modifications to accommodate children with disabilities and to ensure assessment practices are culturally and linguistically relevant and sensitive
- Criterion-referenced with a focus on individual children's strengths and needs
- Allows staff to write appropriate goals, plan individualized intervention, and monitor children's progress over time
- Promotes family involvement and a team approach to service delivery

### Considerations for Programs:

- Requires a strong working knowledge of child development – but at the same time provides those with limited training in child development a strong foundation from which to grow.
- Is a comprehensive system and requires time and effort to learn and use – need to ensure the system is a good match so it can meet a program's needs for many years to come.
- Lacks standard scores; however, comparing children's performance (particularly young children with disabilities) to a normal sample has been repeatedly shown to be invalid and unreliable.

### OSEP Accountability:

A series of crosswalks that show the alignment between various assessments and OSEP child outcomes are being developed in order to meet federal accountability mandates (see <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ECO/crosswalks.cfm>). These crosswalks are designed to give teams information on how a particular assessment addresses OSEP child outcomes. Beyond the development of initial crosswalks, it is critical for teams to ensure that their selected assessment(s) not only align "on the face of it", but that there is empirical support for the alignment/crosswalk.

For several months, AEPS® researchers have been examining the alignment between AEPS® items and OSEP child outcomes. First, we conducted an expert validation of the crosswalk between AEPS® items and OSEP outcomes. Then we conducted research to examine the internal consistency of the alignment. (For more information about our research see <http://fpsrv.dl.kent.edu/ecis/Web/Research/CRIEI%20Presentations.htm>). Currently, the validated AEPS® crosswalks are being piloted in Louisiana and an Item Response Theory analysis is being conducted to generate cutoff scores for interpreting children's performance in relation to OSEP outcomes.

### Next Steps:

1. Conduct a **web-based seminar** "Everything You Need to Know About AEPS and OSEP Outcomes" on May 11. Visit [www.brookespublishing.com/aeaps](http://www.brookespublishing.com/aeaps) for details.
2. Provide AEPS® users with an **online system** that will allow them to:
  - a. **systematically** document, interpret, and report children's performance and progress toward OSEP outcomes
  - b. make **team** decisions regarding eligibility for Part C and/or Part B (619) services
  - c. design **functional intervention plans** by identifying children's strengths, emerging skills, and areas of need
  - d. **monitor** children's progress over time toward general curricular outcomes and IFPS/IEP targeted skills.
3. Continue to **research and revise** the AEPS® (visit <http://aeapslinkedsystem.com> to learn more about current research).

### For More Information:

- Contact Kristie Pretti-Frontczak ([kprettif@kent.edu](mailto:kprettif@kent.edu)) to learn more about using the AEPS® for (a) meeting OSEP accountability mandates, (b) programming for young children, and (c) determining eligibility.
- Talk to other AEPS® users by visiting <http://aeapslinkedsystem.com>.