

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Overview

What is the DECA?

The DECA is a 1-page early childhood assessment that provides information about a child's social-emotional strengths and needs.

What scores does the DECA provide?

For infants and toddlers, the DECA provides scores for: 1) **Attachment**, or the mutual, strong, long lasting relationship between the child and significant adults; 2) **Initiative**, or the child's ability to use independent thought and actions to meet her or his needs; and 3) a **Total Protective Factors** scale, which provides an overall indication of the strength of a child's protective factors. For toddlers only, the DECA also provides a score for **Self-Regulation**, or the child's ability to gain control of and manage emotions, and sustain focus and attention.

What do DECA Questions look like?

When filling out the DECA, you will answer how often a child exhibited a specific behavior in the past four weeks. You will rate the child on a 5-point scale, ranging from Never to Very Frequently.

Sample Questions:

During the past 4 weeks, how often did the toddler...
try to do new things?
enjoy interacting with others?
easily follow a daily routine?

This form describes a number of behaviors seen in some toddlers. Read the statements that follow the phrase: *During the past 4 weeks, how often did the toddler ...* and place a check mark in the box underneath the word that tells how often you saw the behavior. Answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer every item. If you wish to change your answer, put an X through it and fill in your new choice as shown to the right.

Item #	During the past 4 weeks, how often did the toddler ...	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	enjoy interacting with others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	show affection for a familiar adult?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	adjust to changes in routine?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	seek comfort from familiar adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	makes needs known to a familiar adult?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	act happy with familiar adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	show interest in her/his surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	respond when spoken to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	show concern for other children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	try to comfort others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	act happy when praised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How do I score the DECA?

When finished filling out the DECA, pull off the perforated section of the form and gently separate the pages of the form. You will find instructions for scoring the DECA on the back page of the form. Video instructions are available at https://youtu.be/L97e8ZO_788.

Is there anything else I should know before filling out a DECA?

You should know a child for at least 4 weeks before completing a DECA on the child.

There are two DECA forms, a Yellow Infant Form for ages 0-17 months; and a Green Toddler Form for ages 18-36 months.

Use behaviors observed over the most recent 4-week period to answer the questions.

Do not consult with other adults in the classroom when filling out the DECA.

Do not compare children to each other when filling out the DECA.

