Speed DIAL-4: You Can Determine What a Young Child Needs to Succeed
Gloria Maccow, Ph.D.
Assessment Training Consultant

Objectives

• Describe the developmental abilities that predict early learning outcomes.
• Describe the components of the Speed DIAL-4.
• Describe how the Speed DIAL-4 can help early childhood professionals identify children’s strengths and needs.

Essential Foundational Skills

Success in Kindergarten requires
- pre-academic skills,
- social-emotional, and
- behavioral competencies.
Identifying Young Children at Risk:
Top 10 Predictors

| Extremely restless and easily distracted. |
| Difficulties following directions or routines. |
| Difficulties interacting with peers. |
| Clumsy (gross and/or fine motor skills.) |
| Poor articulation. |
| Slow vocabulary growth. |
| Talked late compared to peers. |
| Poor phonological awareness skills. |
| Poor letter-naming ability. |
| Difficulty naming known objects quickly. |

Behavioral Competence

... higher levels of self-control and lower levels of acting out among young children predict their academic performance in first grade, over and above their cognitive skills and family backgrounds.

Raver & Knitzer, 2002

Oral Language:
Critical to Reading

Reading and writing float on a sea of talk.

J. Britton (Quoted by Lance Gentile)
Oral Language: Critical to Reading

Children learn word meanings through conversations with other people.
- They often hear adults repeat words and use new and interesting words.
- The more words they hear, the more word meanings they learn.

(National Reading Panel Report, 2000)

Language Differences

At 11-18 months of age
✓ Children in poverty—heard 250,000 words per year
✓ Children in homes of professionals—heard 4 million words per year

Hart & Risley (2002)
DIAL-4 Quick Facts

Individually administered developmental screening test designed to identify young children in need of further diagnostic assessment

– Appropriate for children ages 2:6 through 5:11
– Administration Time 30 to 45 minutes
– English and Spanish versions

DIAL-4 Quick Facts

Screens in five areas in both the English and Spanish versions

– Motor
– Concepts
– Language
– Self-Help Development
– Social–Emotional Development

Performance-based measures

Ratings based on teacher/caregiver observation

DIAL-4 Quick Facts

Each performance area provides a rating scale of psychosocial behaviors that must be observed during the screening to help determine if the child is in need of further assessment in that domain (Behavioral Observations).
DIAL-4 Components

Parent Questionnaire

Teacher Questionnaire

Self-Help Development
Social-Emotional Development
[Overall Development]
Speed DIAL-4 contains a subset of items from the DIAL-4 test that can be administered in approximately 20 minutes.

10 Core items from Motor, Concepts, and Language areas.
Speed DIAL-4 Items

1. Stand, Hop, and Skip (Motor – Item 2)  
   Standing on One Leg, Hopping, Skipping
2. Body Parts (Concepts - Item 1)
3. Rapid Object Naming (Concepts - Item 3)  
   Object Identification, Rapid Naming
4. Colors (Concepts - Item 2)
5. Meaningful Counting (Concepts - Item 5)  
   Counting Blocks, Number Relationships
6. Articulation (Language - Item 2)
7. Actions (Language - Item 3)
8. Letters and Sounds (Language - Item 4)  
   Alphabet Song, Letter Naming, Letter-Sound Correspondence
9. Problem Solving (Language - Item 6)
10. Copying (Motor – Item 6)

A look at administration and scoring for each of the 10 items.

Calculating the Speed DIAL-4 Total Score

Age 5-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed DIAL-4 Total Score</th>
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<tr>
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What do the Data Mean?

Selecting a Cutoff

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<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (SD) below the mean</th>
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<tr>
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Normal Curve
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Making a Decision
(Potential Delay or OK)

Age 5-3

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<tr>
<th>Performance Areas</th>
<th>TOTAL SCORE</th>
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<tbody>
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Level (circle) | Potential Delay | OK | Percentile Rank | Standard Score |
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References


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