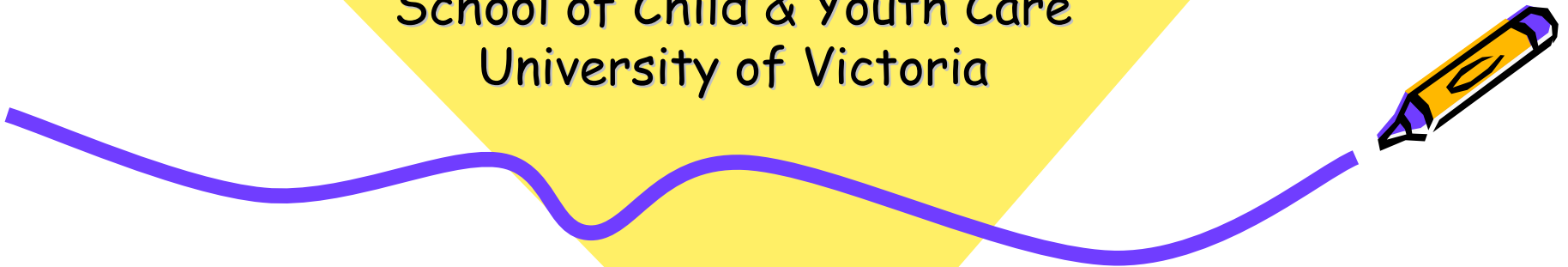


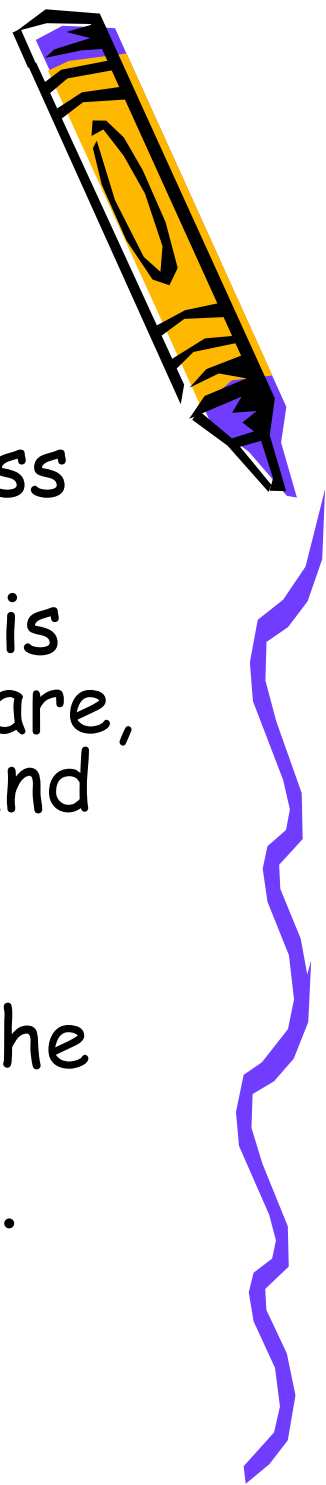


Developmental Assessment

Jessica Ball, M.P.H., Ph.D.
School of Child & Youth Care
University of Victoria



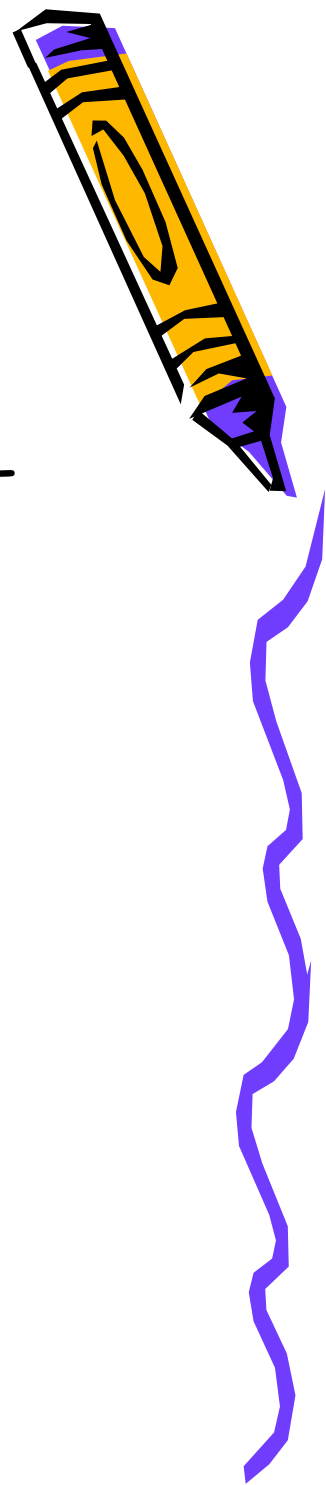
What is developmental assessment?



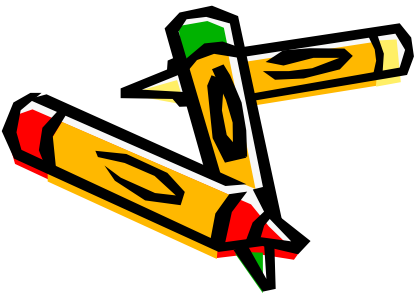
- Developmental assessment is the process of observing and recording the work children do and how they do it, as a basis for a variety of decisions about their care, suitable programs and program goals, and service needs.
- Developmental assessment is done everyday by attentive caregivers, but the term usually refers to various **STRUCTURED** systems for observation.



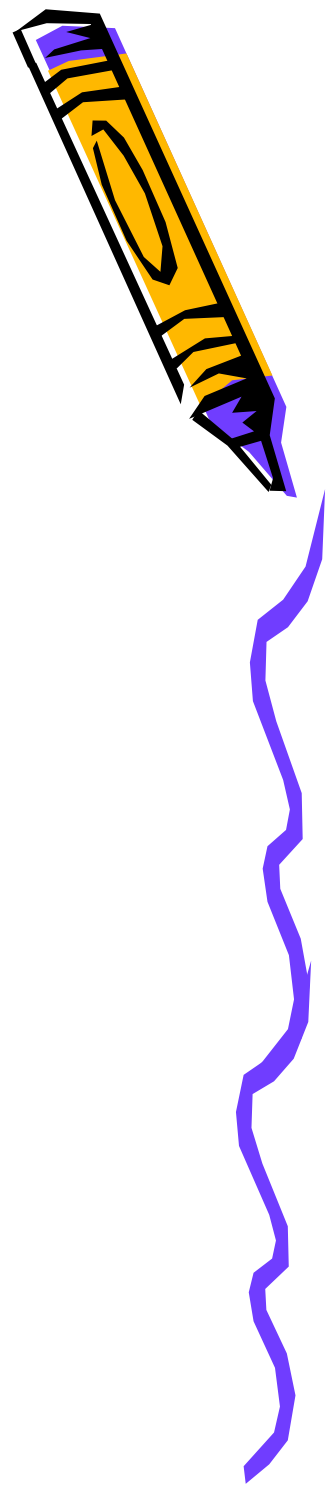
Why Assess?



- An assessment instrument is a decision-making tool
- Monitoring progress
 - Individualize programs, inform parents
 - Report to funders, revise programs
- Screening: 'red flags'
- Diagnosis
 - Identify special need(s)
 - Establish eligibility for funding or services



'Domains' of Assessment



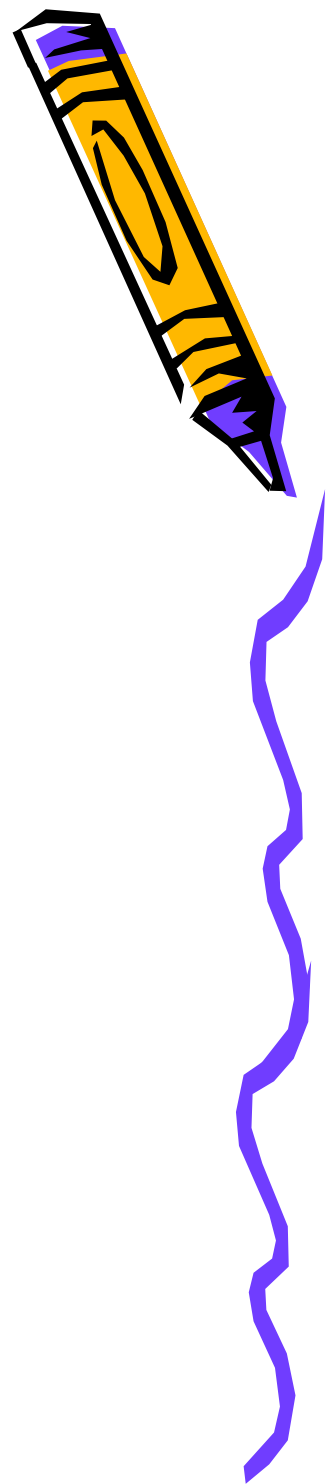
- Physical growth & movement
- Health
- Achievement
- Socio-emotional
- Cognitive
- Neuropsychological
- Personality
- Identity / Self-concept
- Spirituality??



Methods of Assessment

- Developmental Interview
- Clinical Interview
- Observation (see handout)
- Questionnaire
- 'Projective' (e.g., drawings, stories)
- Narrative assessment
- Dynamic Assessment

For each method, there are many 'tools' or 'instruments' for conducting an assessment.



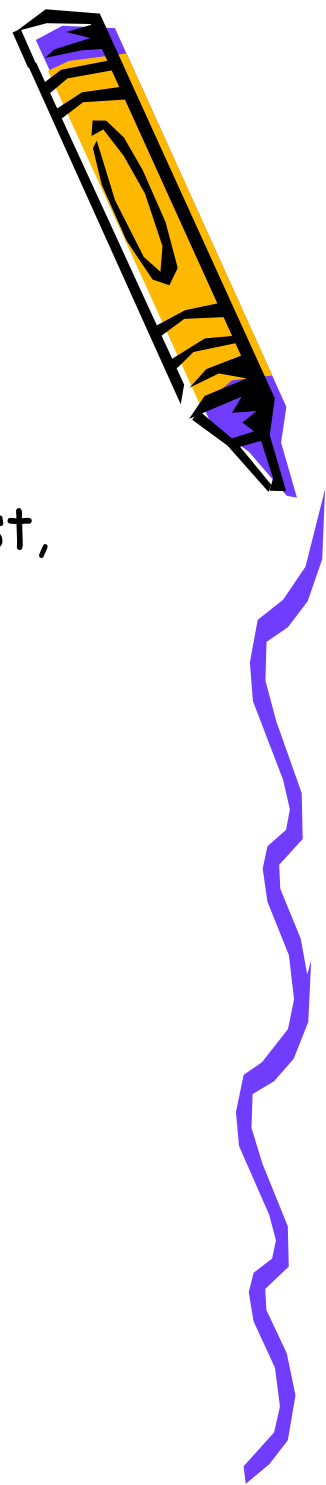
Assessment Approaches



- Norm-referenced assessment
 - Compare individual child to other children
- Criterion-reference assessment
 - Compare child as he/she is now to how he/she was at some earlier time
 - 'Milestone scales'
- Functional assessment
 - Observation of the child's 'performance' of everyday tasks in a natural setting (e.g., Work Sampling System, Child Observations Record, Ounce of Prevention Scale)



Good Assessments Are...



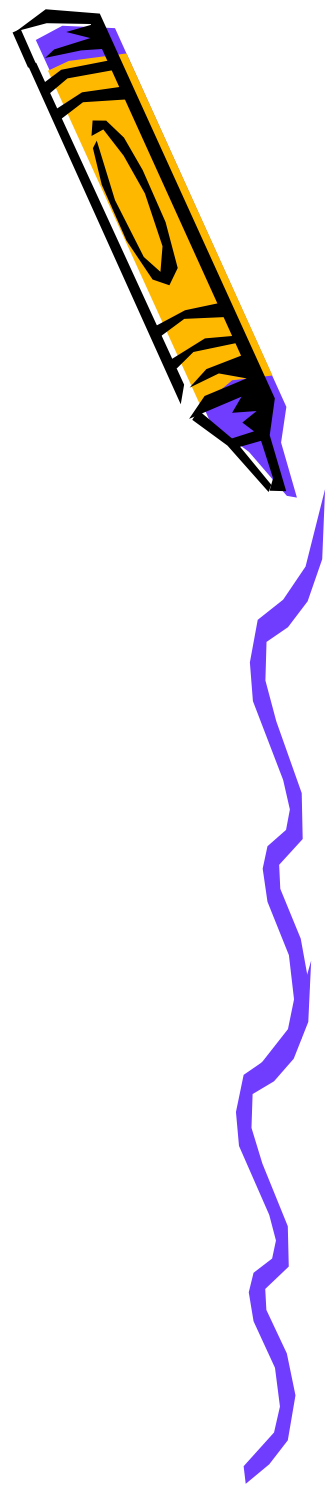
- Based on more than one method (e.g., observation & test, questionnaire & observation, parents & teachers)
- Reliable
- Valid
- Unbiased
- Helpful



A yellow diamond-shaped background. At the top left, a red crayon is shown with a red squiggly line extending from its tip. At the bottom right, a blue crayon is shown with a blue squiggly line extending from its tip. The text "Developmental Screening Measures" is centered in the middle of the diamond.

Developmental Screening Measures

Common Measures in Aboriginal ECD



- Child Observation Record (COR)
- Work Sampling System (WSS)
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)
- Nipissing Developmental Screen
- Denver Developmental Screening Test, Second Edition (DDST-II)



Child Observation Record (COR)



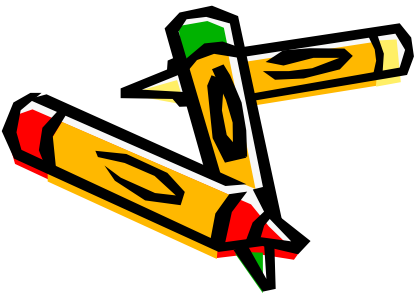
- Observational assessment tool completed by teachers
- **Assesses:**
 1. initiative and social relations
 2. creative representation, movement and music
 3. language and literacy
 4. mathematics and science.



COR Continued



- A functional, performance assessment
- Used with children 2.5-6 years old
- No age or grade norms
- an observational assessment instrument that documents changes in children's competencies to perform tasks in their everyday environment over time



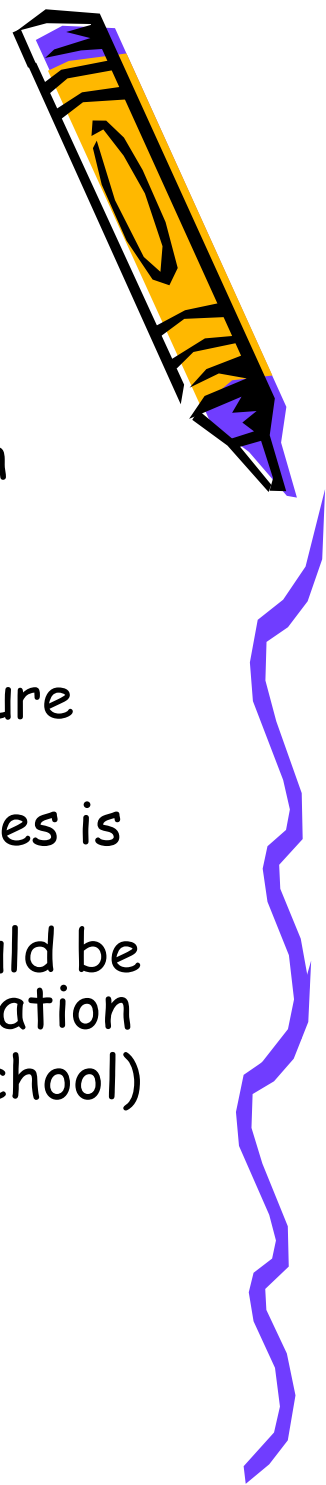
COR Pros



- CORS is **embedded within the curriculum**, thus the pitfalls of standardized assessment are avoided
- Children may demonstrate proficiency on items in many ways
- Parents are encouraged to contribute their own CORS ratings therefore they are included in the assessment process
- CORS enhances student motivation by emphasizing what children can do instead of what they cannot do
- The CORS does not use potentially biased age and grade based norms



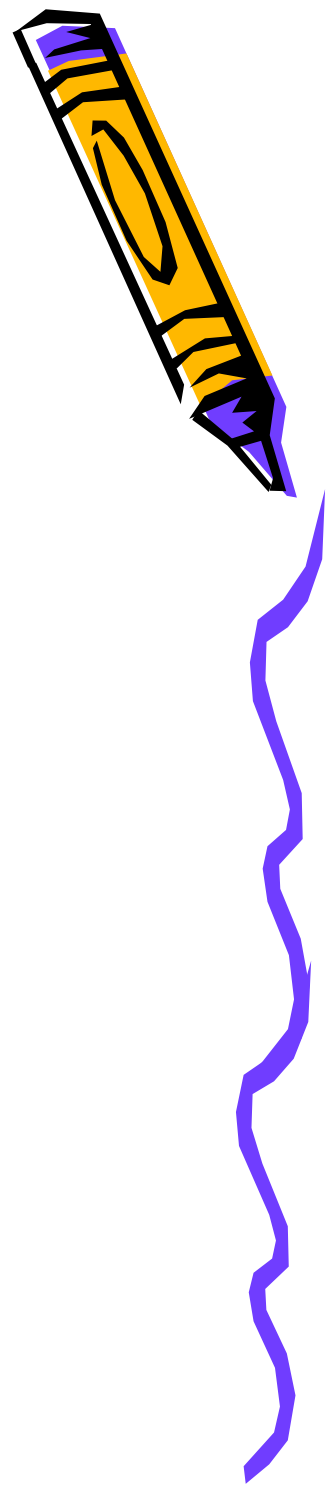
COR Cons



- The areas assessed by the CORs were not developed in consultation with individuals from diverse cultures therefore they may be inadequate and inappropriate
- The COR is entirely dependent on teacher ratings and teachers may be untrained and/or unaware of how culture may impact a child's performance
- The reliability and validity of the COR in diverse cultures is unknown
- Given that the COR generates no numerical data, it would be exceedingly difficult to use the COR for program evaluation
- Observation occurs in only one context (preschool or school)
- The COR requires a lot of teacher time



Work Sampling System (WSS)



- A performance assessment system completed by program staff in consultation with primary caregivers
- Used from preschool to grade five
- Consists of three elements:
 1. Developmental guidelines and checklists
 2. Portfolios
 3. Summary reports



WSS Pros

- WSS is embedded within the curriculum, thus the pitfalls of standardized assessment are avoided
- Children may demonstrate proficiency on items in many ways
- Summary reports include parents in the assessment process
- Individualized portfolios help capture the uniqueness of each child



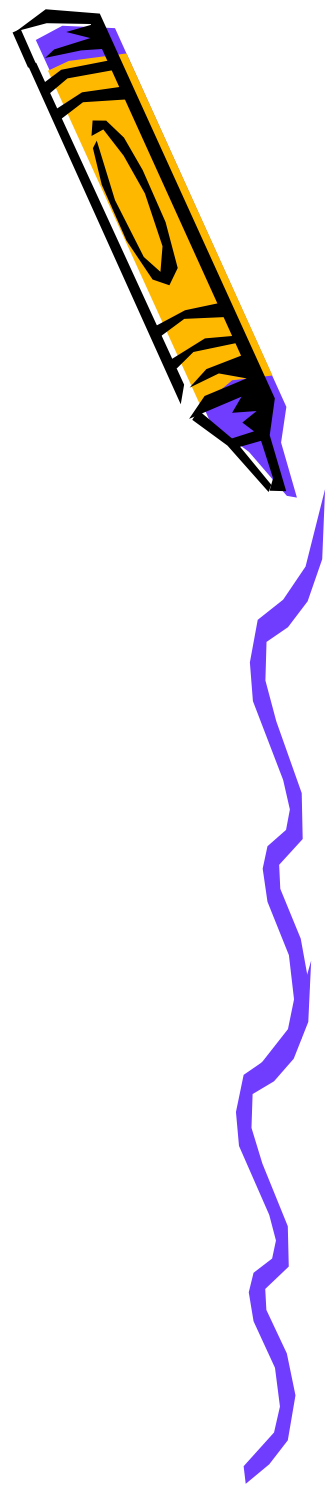
WSS Cons



- Developmental expectations and areas assessed on the WSS were not developed in consultation with individuals from diverse cultures.
- Therefore they may be inappropriate for children from some cultures
- Program staff rating the child may be untrained or unaware of how culture may impact a child's performance
- Observation occurs in only the program (or school) environment
- The reliability and validity of the WSS in diverse cultures is unknown



Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)

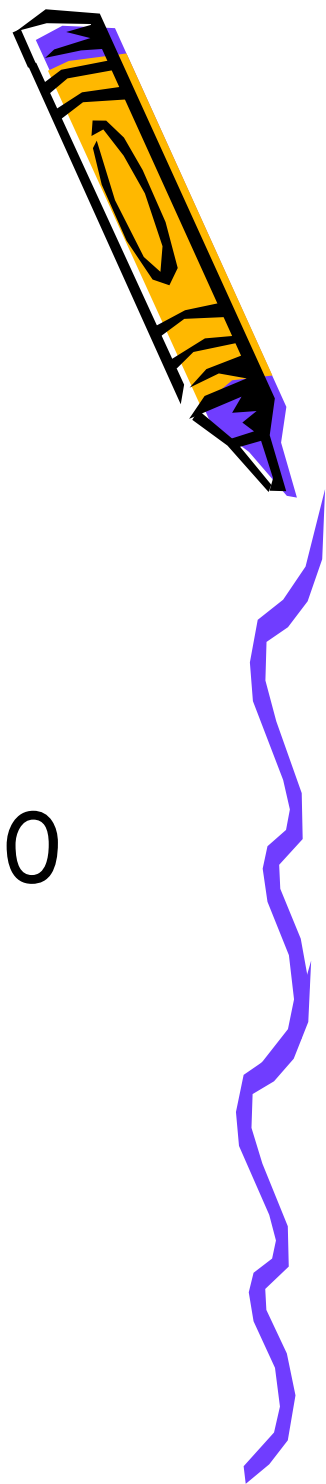


- A 30-item parent-completed questionnaire
- Assesses:
 1. Communication
 2. Gross motor
 3. Fine motor
 4. Problem solving
 5. Personal-social



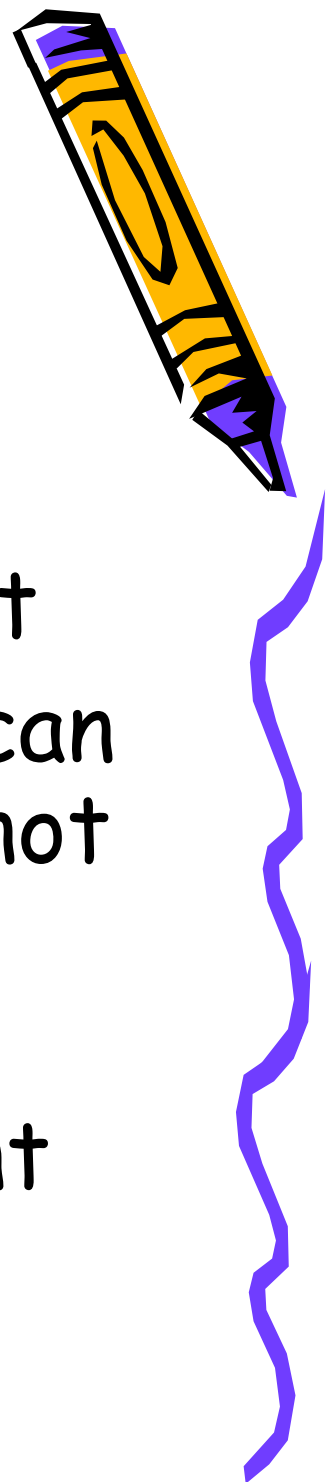
ASQ Continued

- 19 different versions for children from 4-60 months old
- Normed on a non-representative sample of 2,008 children from 1980 to 1988

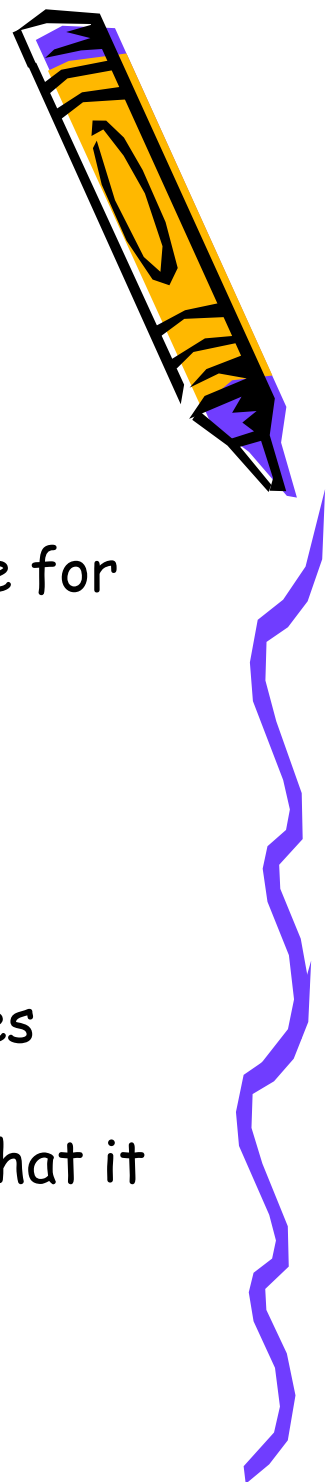


ASQ Pros

- Low cost
- Includes parents in the assessment
- Includes a section where parents can record general concerns that are not captured in the questionnaire
- It stimulates conversation with parents about a child's development



ASQ Cons



- The areas assessed by the ASQ were not developed in consultation with individuals from diverse cultures and therefore they may be inadequate and/or inappropriate for individuals from certain cultures
- Cut-off points distinguishing 'normal' from 'abnormal' development are based heavily on the development of children from European heritage
- The ASQ does not address behavioural/emotional issues
- It might intimidate parents from some cultures given that it requires parents be able to read English



Nipissing Developmental Screening

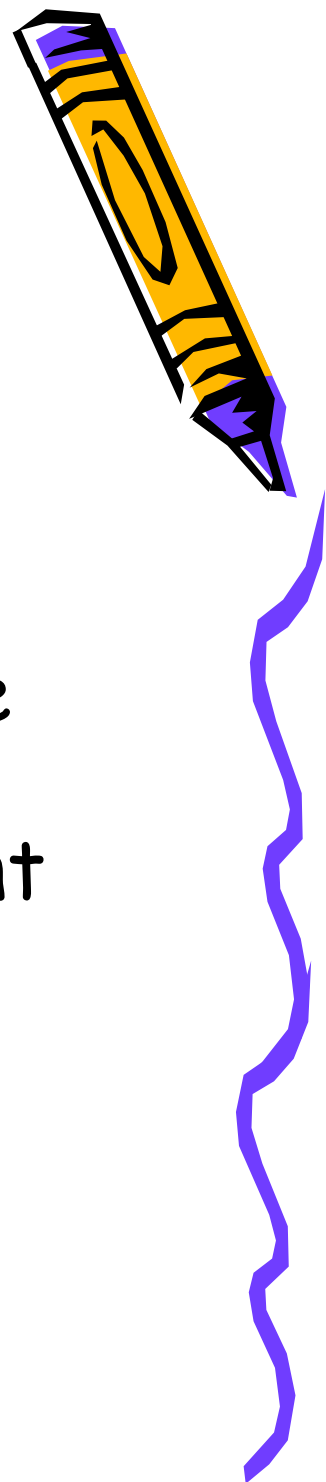


- Checklist for recording child's progress & for screening for special needs
- Different versions for ages 3 mo. to 5 yrs.
- Completed by primary caregiver
- Covers a range of social, physical, and readiness skills



Nipissing Pros

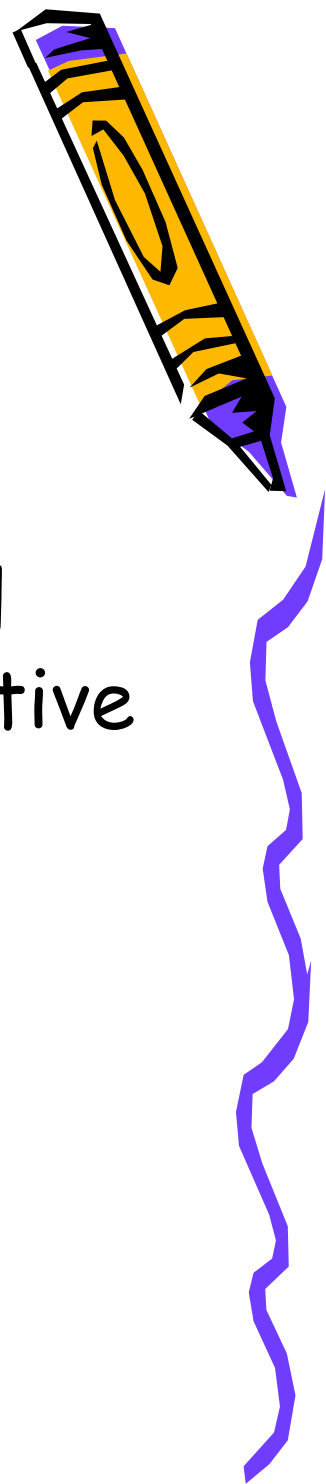
- Inexpensive
- Quick to administer and easy to score
- It includes the primary caregiver in the assessment process and stimulates conversation about a child's development
- Chinese and Spanish versions
- Includes a parent education handout
- Parents like the look of it



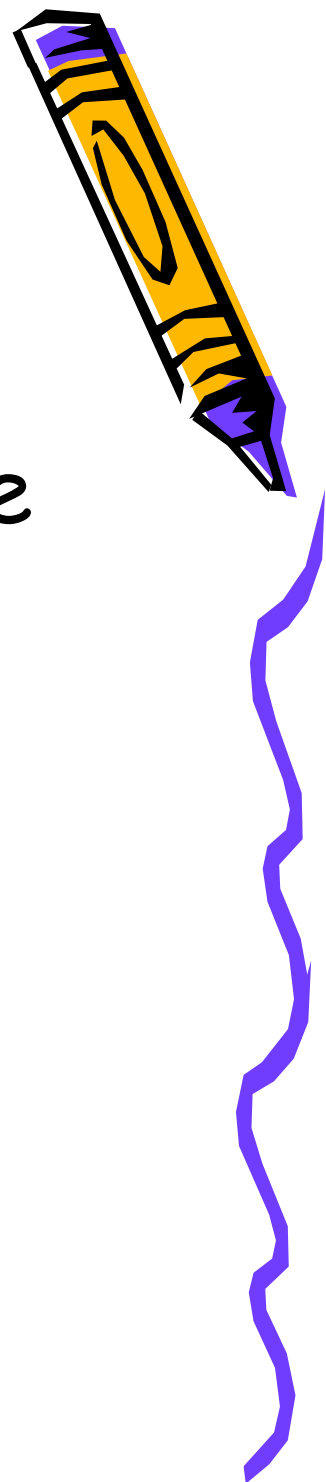
Nipissing Cons

Is it sufficiently comprehensive?

Does it accurately indicate developmental delay or difficulty? Research on predictive validity is thin.



Denver Developmental Screening Test (DDST-II)

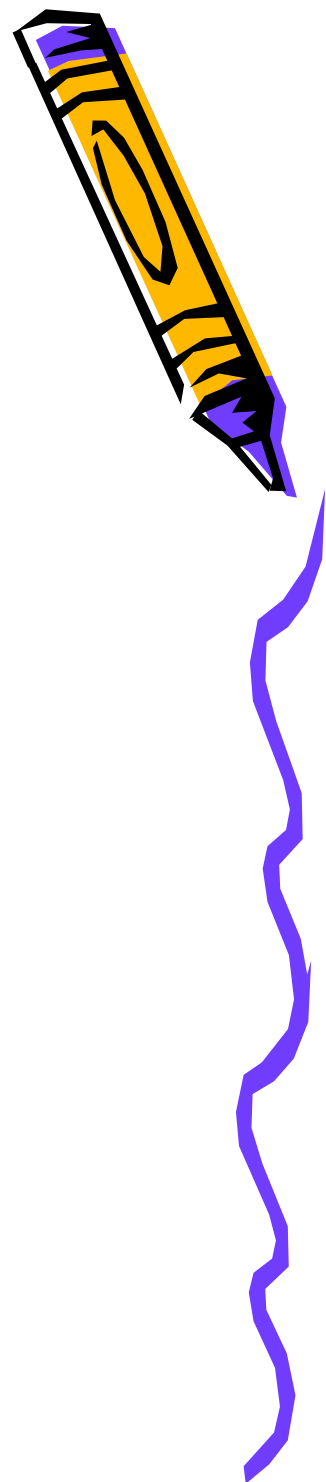


- A 125-item standardized measure
- Assesses
 1. Gross motor (32 items)
 2. Fine motor/adaptive (29 items)
 3. Personal/social (25 items)
 4. Language (39 items)



DDST-II Continued

- Includes both direct child assessment (e.g., questions and manipulatives) and parent report
- Used from birth to age six
- 10-20 minutes to administer



DDST-II Pros



- Inexpensive
- Quick to administer and easy to score
- The authors emphasize that the DDST-II must be interpreted within the context of the individual child, his or her family, and the child's environment
- It includes parents in the assessment process and stimulates conversation about a child's development



DDST-II Cons

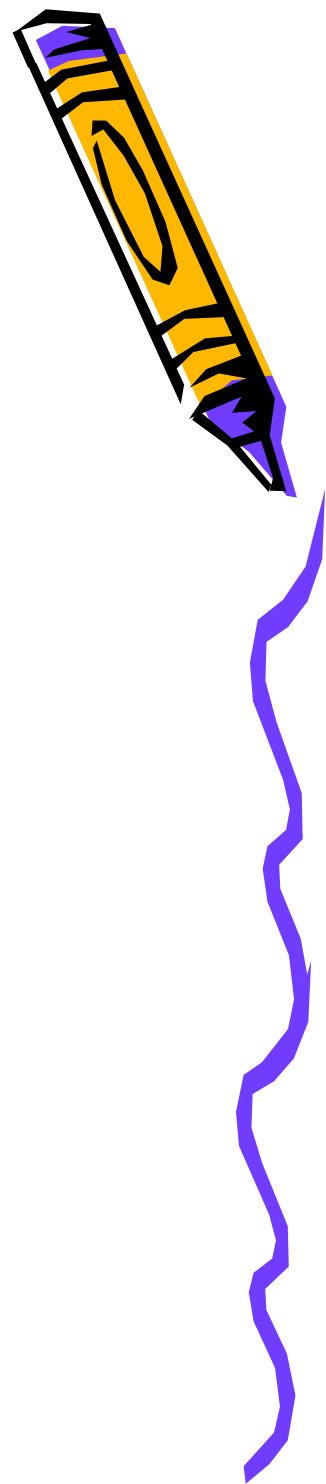


- DDST-II items were not developed in consultation with individuals from diverse cultures and therefore the content may be inadequate or inappropriate for certain cultures
- DDST-II normative data is out of date (collected in 1987) and not representative (only children from Colorado were included)
- The DDST-II comes only in English and Spanish translations
- The reliability and validity of the DDST-II in diverse cultures is unknown

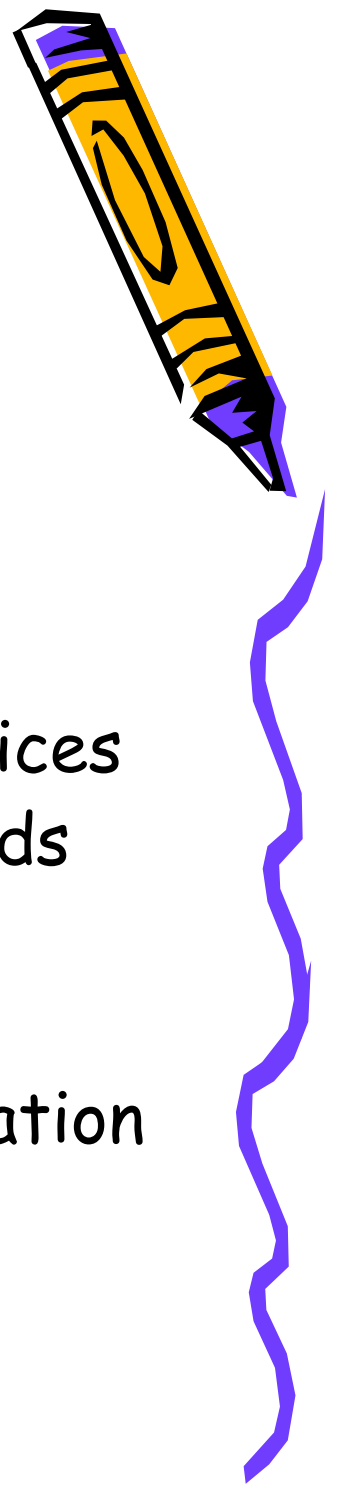


Other Assessment Instruments

- There are many of them
- Many are reviewed at:
<http://www.earlyonmichigan.org>



Culture



Culture is:

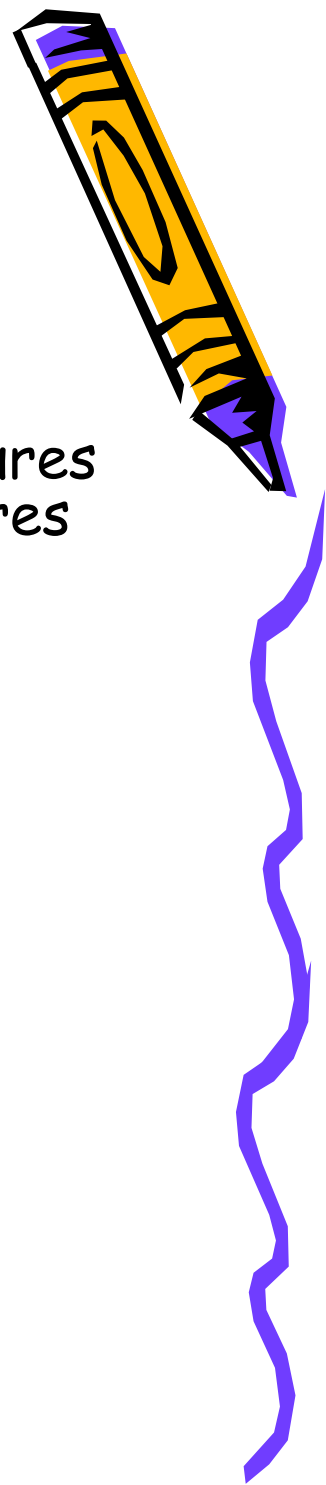
- Language
- Religion
- Economics
- Dress
- Social Relationships
- Gender Roles
- Technology
- Everything!

Culture influences:

- Childbearing age
- Pregnancy diet
- Childrearing practices
- Normality standards
- Early achievement
- Construct of self
- Mother-infant relation
- Everything!



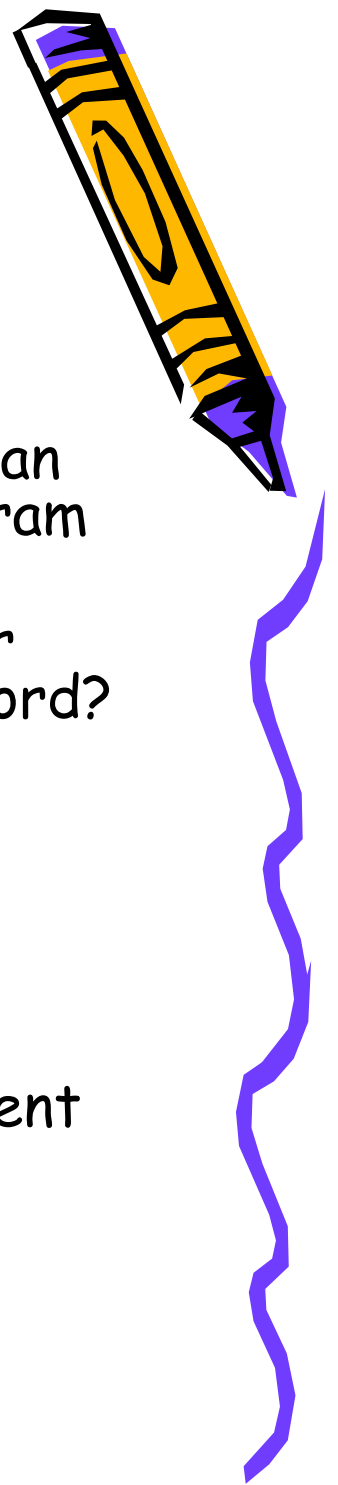
Problems with Cross-Cultural Assessment



- The development of children in European heritage cultures has become the norm for child development in all cultures
- Inadequate and inappropriate measures
- Lack of:
 - Exposure
 - Motivation
 - Rapport
- Differences in
 - Willingness to report
 - Time perception
 - Competition
 - Language



Current Approaches



- Ask: What are the values that have led to the items in an assessment tool. Do the parents of children in my program share those values?
- Ask: What will using a tool do that we could not know or achieve just from what we already know or have on record?
- When moving to structured, formal assessment:
- Start with relationship building
- Be open to listening & learning rather than telling
- Fully explain the purpose(s) (before) and the result(s) (after) of the assessment
- Include parents and family in all stages of the assessment process



Current Approaches

- 'Emic' assessment instruments
- Dynamic assessment
- Collaborative assessment
- Collect additional norms
- Criterion-referenced tests
- Narrative accounts

