

Assessment Information

Child Example: Ava - 40 Months

Background: Ava was 40 months old (3 years, 4 months) at this IEP meeting and COSF rating. She lives with her mother, father, and three older brothers. Ava has been receiving some speech and language services through another agency, but the agency recommended a re-evaluation to see if more services were needed. Ava's mother was concerned about her behavior problems. Ava has been throwing temper tantrums and screaming when she gets frustrated. Her mother also was concerned that Ava was not playing well with other children.

Family report: According to Ava's mother, Ava is a happy girl who likes to play with toys and games. She is very affectionate with everyone in the family, hugging and kissing them. Ava's mother said, "When I come home, Ava often greets me, calling my name at the door and giving me such a big hug that she just about knocks me over." But, her mother reported, "when we're around other children she doesn't try to play with them. She doesn't talk much and I think that makes it hard to play with other kids. She's quiet and doesn't play games or really play together with other children, especially if she doesn't know them. Ava does sometimes play with her older brothers, but mostly when they try to include her. She does participate and try to keep up the activity, but it usually doesn't last very long. She mostly plays by herself or shows the toys she's playing with to me so I will sit down and play with her." Ava's mother described, "With me, she does play a long time. We like to work together with the dollhouse and use the blocks to add on space, that she sometimes turns into other rooms or garages for the little cars. She shares well and hands me toys that go with the room I'm putting furniture in and goes to get other toys to make it look just the way she likes it. Then, she claps and finds her dad when she's pleased with it. Sometimes, she'll call one of her brother's names and find him to show him a toy she's playing with. But, her brothers are interested in different toys, so I do not see them play together very long." Her mother also said that Ava is good at figuring things out, especially how to play with new toys and games. She can do interlocking puzzles and she likes to look at books. She likes to color in coloring books.

When asked about Ava's behavior, her mother said that she expresses when she's happy, worried, and also when she doesn't like something. She also notices others' reactions. For instance, on a recent day her brother was crying, and she found her mother and said "Aiden sad". When she gets frustrated, instead of talking, she'll throw a tantrum. For example, she gets upset when something is broken because she doesn't understand. Her mother described her behavior, "It's so hard when we're out somewhere like at the grocery store and she doesn't understand when I ask her to do something. Or, at home, she won't follow directions. I tell her to pick up the toys and put them in the toy box and she just doesn't do it. She'll throw a tantrum if I keep at her to do it. The child care provider tells me that she doesn't follow directions there either."

Further describing her actions at home, Ava's mother said that Ava still needs assistance with things like dressing. She's able to anticipate some routines at home, for example when mother says it's time for bed Ava knows it is time to put her pajamas on. "She'll kind of try to put on her pajamas, but I still need to help her get dressed and help her put on her coat. If she has a problem, she comes to me for help. She might use phrases of a couple words to ask me, or if she doesn't know how to say something, then she'll try to show me. Of course, if it is something she can get on her own, she will. She's not toilet trained and that makes things a lot harder. It seems like she comes to me for help all the time. It's good that she asks for help when she wants or needs something (like when she's hungry), but it seems like she should be doing more on her own. I'm glad at least that she eats well." Ava's mother said that Ava uses a fork and spoon to eat and she drinks out of a cup without making a mess. She doesn't seem aware of danger when crossing the street.

Preschool Classroom Observation:

The assessment team observed Ava on two occasions. Both times, when she arrived in the classroom she acted shy at first, but came into the classroom and easily separated from her mother. Ava hugged her mother and said goodbye, but she didn't get upset when her mother left and quickly engaged in an activity of interest. Before long she was running around, jumping, and playing with toys.

On both occasions, Ava explored the room and the toys. She played appropriately with a variety of different toys and games, including easily manipulating smaller toys. She especially seemed to enjoy playing with blocks and building various designs. During one of the observations, Ava figured out how to unscrew with a nut and bolt and could then repeat it. She picked out a set of beads and put them on a string by stringing first the red beads and then the yellow ones without assistance. She put together puzzles, including an 8-piece puzzle, by herself. Ava also used a play phone by dialing buttons, holding it to her ear, nodding, and saying hello, but she did not carry on a pretend conversation or try to engage another child in a play conversation using the phones.

Ava mostly played alone. She chose to sit near other children, but did not invite them to play. No conflict was observed with other children. Ava would sometimes watch the other children and then copy them to figure out how to use some of the different toys. When another child asked her to share a toy, she gave it to him and picked up another one. When another child enthusiastically brought her some pretend food in the kitchen area, she smiled, said "yum", and pretended to eat it. But, she did not ask for more from the child or move to the kitchen area to join the child and continue the play. The interaction ended there when a third peer suggested that the cooking peer make something else. Ava quickly went back to playing with her toy.

Ava also brought a book to her teacher to read. She looked at books with the teacher and pointed to some simple objects both spontaneously and upon request for specific ones, sometimes saying the single word name of the object if she knew it. She sat and listened happily when the teacher read to her. Looking at books by herself, she flipped through the pages slowly from front to back, but didn't pretend to read or show the pictures that she liked to others.

Ava's interactions with the teachers were positive. She noticed when the teacher left the room and looked for her and was pleased to see her when she returned. Ava requested the toys that she wanted that were out of reach from the teacher. When she asked for assistance, she used one or two words to communicate her need or she took a teacher by the hand to show her what she wanted. She needed help using scissors.

Ava responded to prompts such as music or seeing the circle time materials in place by sitting down in her spot for circle time. She also was able to observe the other children and copy their actions during routines or the way they were using a toy to help her figure out how to make a toys work that she couldn't get to work completely while she played. When the teacher asked her to "go put the toys away and then line up," she imitated other children putting away toys, but she did not line up until a teacher came over and prompted her again. She didn't have tantrums during the observation. She was only occasionally uncooperative by not participating in an activity when asked.

Child care provider: When asked about Ava's behavior in the classroom, the child care provider said that Ava "has a hard time understanding directions. I tell her how to do something, but she just doesn't seem to understand. It's easier when all the children are doing something because then she'll just watch them and try to follow along. But at least twice a week she gets real frustrated and throws a tantrum." The provider reported that "Ava is getting familiar with some of the signals we use to help the children transition to new activities and now will come over to walk around and sit in the circle when the music starts to play."

The provider also noted that Ava has difficulty interacting with the other children. For instance, one time another child invited Ava to buy chocolate or vanilla ice cream in a pretend game at the playground play house. Ava looked at the child, followed her, and said "ice cream", but she didn't answer which kind or pretend to get out money to pay for it. The other child got frustrated, turned away, and asked another child to play instead. The provider reported that Ava can be "affectionate and responsive" with the teachers. She maintains eye contact well, although initiates eye contact somewhat more so with teachers than she does with other children. The provider noted that Ava does recognize other children's emotions and often comments on them to the adult or comes nearer to a peer when other children are sad, excited, surprised, or unusually happy. Sometimes, she hands the other child a toy to try to help.

Toilet training was a particular concern for the child care provider. Ava does "show some awareness about when she is about to go and goes to another area of the classroom by herself to do this." According to the provider, Ava "needs help with other tasks as well though it's good that she comes to me when she needs help. When she wants something, she might use a word or a short phrase to indicate what she wants or she might pull me over toward something she wants." Staff members also have to help Ava with hand washing (pushing the soap dispenser, doing hand-over-hand to get all the soap off, and helping with drying because she wouldn't completely dry her hands all the way by herself, etc.). When asked about eating, the child care provider said Ava "does a great job using the silverware without spilling" and drinks out of a cup well. She uses them herself and will even choose the spoon instead of a knife or fork from among the different silverware and dishes in the play kitchen to pretend to feed a doll yogurt. The provider expressed concern about Ava's limited awareness of danger. For example, in the gym or on the play ground she might climb too high or otherwise not be safe on the equipment. "She doesn't understand that she could fall and get hurt."

Formal assessment: Ava had several formal assessments as part of the re-evaluation to determine the need for additional services (see results at end of report). Results of the PLS-4 showed that her receptive language skills were lower than her expressive language. She did not demonstrate understanding of descriptive concepts, such as one, first, not, empty, cold, tall, out of, or off. Ava did not identify uses/functions of objects when asked "tell me what you do with a spoon" or "show me what you wear on your feet." She was not able to repeat a full sentence presented orally by the assessor. Areas of difficulty in expressive language included limited naming in response to pictures of objects and challenges with word structure, such as adding *s* for plural or *-ing* to verbs.

In the cognitive testing, examiners reported that Ava was pleasant and followed one-step directions during the testing. Her cognitive scores were within the normal range. She didn't show any signs of being anxious around the examiner, but sometimes didn't seem to want to do what was being asked. She expressed displeasure and threw tantrums several times around toy transitions and quickly became non-responsive on more language-based items.

Ava used mostly two-word sentences often in repetition of what she was just asked or what was said to her. She spoke in a very quiet voice that often was difficult to hear or understand. Some of her challenges were that she was not yet matching by size, and she could not demonstrate two-step/multi-scene play (e.g. if she was asked "Give the bear a drink and put the bear to bed", she could only do one of the two activities). She also had difficulty with the concept of "one" (e.g. she didn't respond to the directive, "Give me one block."), she could not count objects with one-to-one correspondence; she had difficulty identifying a picture by discriminating against three pictures. She had difficulty recalling

objects, identifying their sizes, and with spatial concepts (e.g., under, behind, etc.). She wasn't able to follow two-step directions.

Ava's fine and gross motor skills were within the average range.

Formal Assessment Results:

Assessment	Score	Average score range
Preschool Language Scale (PLS-4) (Administered by the Hospital 7-25-07)		
Auditory Comprehension	69 below average range	85-115
Expressive Communication	82 below average range	85-115
Hearing test (Administered by the Hospital 7-25-07)	Within normal range	
Bayley Scales of Infant Development (BSID-II) (Administered by ECSE team members 8-5-07)		
Mental/Cognitive	87 (average range, showed some difficulty in expressive and receptive language)	85-115
Motor	88 within average range	85-115

Creative Curriculum Results (expected level is I-II)
Administered by the child care provider (observations 8/1 - 8/25)

Sense of self		
▪ 1. Shows ability to adjust to new situations	I-II	Treats arrival and departure as routine, accepts changes in routine only if appropriate action is modeled by other children or teacher
▪ 2. Demonstrates appropriate trust in adults	I	Shows confidence in parents' and teachers' abilities to keep her safe/healthy and summons help from them as needed. Does not yet seek advice or use parent as a resource or role model to imitate
▪ 3. Recognizes own feelings and manages them appropriately	Forerunner	Cries and uses facial expressions to express feelings. Does not yet identify and label own feelings
▪ 4. Stands up for rights	Forerunner-I	Cries or yells in protest when slighted or wronged. Sometimes grabs or pushes when seeking desired toy. Not yet verbally asserting needs and desires to teacher. Sometimes physically asserts needs and desires by continuing to hold tightly the desired toy.
Responsibility for self and others		
▪ 5. Demonstrates self-direction and independence	I - II	Chooses and becomes involved in own activity, beginning to complete multiple tasks in chosen project without requiring adult assistance
▪ 6. Takes responsibility for own well-being	Forerunner	Allows adult to attend to personal needs without resistance and uses self-help skills to meet needs with help from adults
▪ 7. Respects and cares for	I-II	Uses materials in appropriate ways. Just beginning to put

classroom environment and materials		away used materials before starting another activity
▪ 8. Follows classroom routines	I	Participated in classroom activities with prompting (usually nonverbal).
▪ 9. Follows classroom rules	Emerging Forerunner	Follows simple rules with physical help and picture cues. Rarely follows simple directions and limits when told by an adult.
Prosocial Behavior		
▪ 10. Plays well with other children	Forerunner - I	Tolerates being near others and playing alongside them. Enjoys simple back and forth games with them. Plays beside other children and responds with relevant comments, but rarely initiates interactions or maintains sustained cooperative play with peers.
▪ 11. Recognizes the feelings of others and responds appropriately	Forerunner-I	Notices expressions of feelings in adults. Imitates other children's expressions or feelings. Sometimes says "sad" when she sees another child crying.
▪ 12. Shares and respects the rights of others	Forerunner - I	Plays alongside other children using the same materials without conflicts. She shares with other children and may take turns with others, if prompted by a teacher.
▪ 13. Uses thinking skills to resolve conflicts	Forerunner	Generally not many conflicts with peers due to minimal interaction. But, Ava does seek adult assistance if conflict arises, usually by running to the adult in tears. . If adult intervenes, she usually accepts the adult's solution if adults use physically visible solutions like splitting the toys into two piles rather than long verbal explanations.
Gross motor		
▪ 14. Demonstrates basic locomotor skills	II	Moves with direction and increasing coordination
▪ 15. Shows balance while moving	II	Walks along wide beam, such as the edge of sandbox
▪ 16. Climbs up and down	II	Climbs up and down stairs and ladders and around obstacles
▪ 17. Pedals and steers a tricycle	I-II	Pedals in forward direction, beginning to steer around obstacles and increasingly sharp corners
▪ 18. Demonstrates throwing, kicking and catching skills	II	Throws, catches, and kicks with increasing control toward targets. Does not play ball with other children.
Fine motor		
▪ 19. Controls small muscles in hands	I -II	Mostly manipulates smaller objects with increasing control, including using a fork and fitting pegs in a pegboard. She makes some snips with scissors, but is not yet cutting with scissors along a line.
▪ 20. Coordinates eye-hand	I -II	Performs simple manipulations with increasing control,

movement		such as pouring water into a funnel with accuracy. She can make part of a necklace with small beads, but tires of it quickly and often chooses medium sized beads instead.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 21. Uses tools for writing and drawing 	Forerunner - I	Holds large writing tool and marks with it. Makes simple strokes. Occasionally holds marker with thumb and two fingers, often still uses a palmar grasp.
Learning and problem solving		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 22. Observes objects and events with curiosity 	I	Examines objects in environment with attention to detail. Notices attributes, but does not ask questions or use materials in ways that convey understanding of similarities and differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 23. Approaches problems flexibly 	I-II	Repeats and persists varying different approaches with trial and error, uses objects in multiple ways and experiments when things don't work. Imitates peers' use of objects to gather ideas to try to solve problems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 24. Shows persistence in approaching tasks 	II	Continues to work on task even when encountering difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25. Explores cause and effect 	Forerunner	Notices an effect and tries to repeat it. Does not comment on effects or test possibilities of what would happen if...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 26. Applies knowledge or experience to a new context 	Emerging forerunner	Only beginning to follow familiar self-help routines at school with assistance. Does not yet draw on everyday experiences and apply knowledge to similar situations.
Logical thinking		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 27. Classifies objects 	Forerunner - I	Finds two objects that are the same and puts them together. Groups or sorts similar kinds of toys by color. Does not yet sort by size, shape, or object, use consistently..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 28. Compares/measures 	Forerunner	Displays excitement and curiosity when she notices that something is new or different with materials. Notices similarities in objects as well, but she rarely verbally describes or labels it to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 29. Arranges objects in a series 	Forerunner - I	Uses self-correcting toys (e.g. graduated stacking rings) and sometimes notices when an object in a series is out of place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30. Recognizes patterns and can repeat them 	Emerging forerunner	Usually completes a formboard. Does not repeat patterns in sounds, songs, sentences or recreate simple patterns with objects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 31. Shows awareness of time concepts and sequence 	Forerunner	Demonstrates understanding of what comes next (pajamas at bedtime) and follows simple steps in routines. Does not demonstrate understanding of past and future.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 32. Shows awareness of position in space 	Forerunner	Moves objects between containers, but does not follow simple positional directions with assistance or show comprehension of positional words and concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 33. Uses one to one 	Forerunner	Places objects in their designated spaces, but does not

correspondence		regularly match pairs of objects in one to one correspondence.
▪ 34. Uses numbers and counting	Emerging forerunner	Sometimes understands the concept of "one" or "more" when asked.
Representation and symbolic thinking		
▪ 35. Takes on pretend roles and situations	Forerunner	Imitates simple actions observed. Beginning to imitate routines with adult support (e.g., pretend to feed or sleep)
▪ 36. Makes believe with objects	I	Interacts appropriately with objects or replicas in pretend play. Does not yet use a substitute object or gesture to represent object or talk in likely scripts associated with pretend actions.
▪ 37. Makes and interprets representations	Not yet forerunner	Not yet labeling scribbles as objects or using labels to describe construction play. Builds with blocks, but does not interact while building.
Listening and speaking		
▪ 38. Hears and discriminates the sounds of language	Forerunner	Notifies sounds in the environment. Does not yet join in nursery rhymes, songs, or play with words and sounds. Sometimes moves to the music in a group.
▪ 39. Expresses self using words and expanded sentences	Forerunner	Uses nonverbal gestures, single word, and sometimes 2-word phrases to communicate.
▪ 40. Understands and follows oral directions	Forerunner	Associates words with actions and sometimes follows oral instructions, but only if one step and if combined with a gesture.
▪ 41. Answers questions	Forerunner - I	Answers questions with yes/no response or gesture, may occasionally answer simple questions with one or two words.
▪ 42. Asks questions	Emerging forerunner	Sometimes uses facial expressions to ask a question. Does not yet use rising intonation or "wh" words to ask questions.
▪ 43. Actively participates in conversations	Forerunner	Initiates communication through eye contact, smiling, waving and saying "Hi" with familiar adults. She also responds to other children in a limited verbal way, but less frequently initiates those contacts.
Reading and writing		
▪ 44. Enjoys and values reading	Forerunner-I	Looks at books by self or with adult and listens to story being read. Points to objects, but does not complete phrases in familiar stories or participate interactively in story time.
▪ 45. Demonstrates understanding of print concepts	Emerging Forerunner	Does not point to print and ask for it to be read or recognize logos. But, she brings favorite books to parents or teachers, recognizing them by their covers.
▪ 46. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet	Not yet forerunner	Does not participate in songs, fingerplays, or point out print in the environment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 47. Uses emerging reading skills to make meaning from print 	Not yet forerunner	Does not use familiar logos and words to read print or recognize own name printed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 48. Comprehends and interprets meaning from books and other texts 	Emerging Forerunner	Repeats words and actions demonstrated in books. Does not yet relate story to self and share information or imitate in act of reading in play.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 49. Understands the purpose of writing 	Not yet forerunner	Does not yet watch others write or pretend to write.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50. Writes letters and words 	Forerunner	Scribbles with crayons and experiments with writing tools, but does not yet draw simple pictures to represent something or use scribble writing and letter-like forms.