



Highlights of Activities to Support SLPs to Implement California's Desired Results Assessment System

As the California Department of Education (CDE) began rolling out the Desired Results Assessment System for California's preschool-age children with Individualized Education Programs, speech and language pathologists (SLPs) reported a number of challenges in implementing the system. The Desired Results Assessment System is comprised of the Desired Results Developmental Profiles: observational instruments designed to assess children's developmental progress in the Desired Results for children: social-emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development. The DRDP instruments were developed for program evaluation within CDE's Child Development Division and Special Education Division.

Through a number of formal and informal conversations and focus groups with key stakeholders, four primary challenges were identified (see the following page). The Desired Results *access* Project has initiated the following activities to address these challenges and support SLPs to implement California's Desired Results Assessment System.

1. **Formal and informal conversations and focus groups with key stakeholders.**

The Desired Results *access* Project conducted a number of discussions and focus groups over the past year to identify the issues and challenges perceived by SLPs.

2. **Ongoing Literature Review**

We have begun to search for relevant literature and resources, including the American Speech and Hearing Association's (ASHA) position statements and literature regarding work flow.

3. **Advocate for Family Involvement in the Assessment Process**

The Desired Results *access* Project learned that SLPs questioned the reliability and validity of parents' observations in informing the completion of the assessment. We wrote and disseminated the document "The Role of Family Observations in the DRDP Assessment System" to advocate that parent observations are reliable and valid and should be considered an essential component of a comprehensive assessment process. This document can be found at: <http://www.draccess.org/families/RoleOfFamilyObsv.html>

4. **Task Force**

See the following page.

5. **Family Report Form**

The Desired Results *access* Project developed a Family Report Form (FRF) to assist SLPs to collaborate with families to gather their observations to inform the ratings on the DRDP. The validity of the FRF was tested using a case control design, group comparisons, and correlational techniques. Research questions included:

- Do SLPs use the information that parents record on the FRF?
- Is completing the FRF feasible for families?
- Does the use of the FRF to complete the PS DRDP-R affect the validity of the OSEP outcome scale scores?

Task Force Session

On February 28, 2007 the Desired Results access Project invited key stakeholders to generate strategies to address the challenges that had been identified. The group identified personal strategies that individual practitioners could put in place as well as programmatic or systemic strategies that would require more collaborative planning. The groups identified both short-term and long-term strategies. The worksheet below illustrates how the conversations were framed. The final report can be found at: <http://www.draccess.org/slp.html>

Challenges	Personal Strategies		Programmatic or Systemic Strategies	
	Short-Term	Long-Term	Short-Term	Long-Term
<p>Issue One: Finding the Time</p> <p>The DRDP takes time to complete. SLPs have reported that it can be difficult finding the time to complete the assessments as it takes time to observe children and collect data from others and complete the instrument. Compounding issues include limited amounts of time spent with children on a weekly basis and high case loads.</p>				
<p>Issue Two: Service Settings</p> <p>The DRDP is based on naturalistic observation of children in everyday routines and activities. SLPs have reported that it can be difficult to make such observations because the time they spent with children is frequently spent out of context of children's typical daily routines and activities.</p>				
<p>Issue Three: Expertise</p> <p>The DRDP focuses on many aspects of children's development. Some SLPs have reported that they do not have sufficient broad based developmental knowledge to complete the non-speech/language/communication indicators of the DRDP.</p>				
<p>Issue Four: Collaboration Strategies</p> <p>In addition to making direct observations, assessors base ratings on information gathered from others. SLPs have reported that they have infrequent contact with families and other providers and do not currently have specific mechanisms in place for communicating on a regular basis with families and other providers.</p>				

For more information about the Desired Results access Project please visit: www.draccess.org

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