

Example of developmental assessment report using the HELP® Strands as a framework for conducting a family-centered assessment in natural environments. Assessment can be use to support and inform clinical opinion and the development of Individualized Family Service Plans.

Early Intervention Program

Developmental Assessment Summary

Dates of Current Assessment: 7/21/2004; 7/29/2004; 8/3/2004

Child: Katy Martinez	Parents: Carmen Martinez
DOB: 6/20/2003	John Harless
Age at end of assessment period: 13 mo	Months premature: N/A

Referral Source, date, reason: Katy's mother, 7/6/2004. Katy "doesn't act like other children her age - she's in her own world".

Assessment team:

Carmen Martinez and John Harless, Katy's parents
Sharon Jones, M.A., Ed., Developmental Specialist
Robin Daniels, M.S., OTR/L

Assessment Process and Instruments:

Family and Clinical staff observations at home and daycare
Medical record review
Family and daycare provider interviews
Inside HELP and HELP Strands 0-3 Curriculum-based Assessment

History: Katy was born full term, 8 lbs. 3 oz. without apparent distress. She lives at home with her mother, father, and 3 year old brother Matt. She has a history of ear infections, however a recent audiology evaluation was considered "normal". Katy has no reported allergies, but periodically has mild skin rashes with unknown etiology. Her parents have been concerned about her since birth because she didn't seem the same as her older brother, didn't smile and never liked to cuddle. She has attended day care since 9 months, approximately 20 hours per week.

Developmental Observations and Findings

Regulatory/Sensory Organization: This portion of the assessment included observing and learning about how Katy reacts to different sensations such as touch, sound, sight and movement. It also includes observing how she focuses her attention and interacts with people and objects. It is not appropriate to report an approximate developmental age range for this area of assessment because sensory/regulatory responses are generally not age specific. Instead they are considered typical, over-reactive, under-reactive, or mixed.

Sensory and social reactions: Katy displayed minimal response to typical or novel speech, environmental, or toy sounds. She sometimes glanced and showed some interest in loud novel toys and sounds such as an animated “cookie monster”, but maintained a sober or uninterested expression to most toys and people. Her parents report no sleep difficulties, but she often has a “sleepy expression, and rarely seems to look very alert”. She briefly alerted and looked toward her brother when he ran through the playroom pretending to be “Spiderman”. **Responses to movement and handling:** Katy does not resist being held, but she does not mold, cuddle, or appear to enjoy or seek out being picked up or held. When Katy’s parents picked her up to move her from one place to another, she had little response and seemed almost unaware of the change. Katy’s parents are experimenting with many types of toys and interactions to try to attract and maintain her attention. They express their frustration and difficulty in understanding and responding to Katy’s responses and reactions.

Cognitive Development: This portion of the assessment included observing and learning about how Katy learns, plays with toys, and solves problems.

Katy displayed several problem solving skills typical for children 13 months. For example, she pulled a string (toy links) to obtain the object at the end of the string (measuring cup to stack), and was able to find another measuring cup when it was hidden under three screens. She tried to restart a mechanical toy by hitting it and then repeatedly turning the knob, but never looked toward her parents for help.

An approximate developmental age level could not be estimated for other areas of cognition (symbolic play, gestural imitation, awareness of sounds) because Katy displayed many behaviors that are not typical at any age. She became preoccupied with certain parts of toys (e.g. the eye on a doll, pretend butter on pretend toast) and how she could stack toys, rather than exploring or playing with them according to. She did not display toy preferences in terms of color, or texture, but spent a considerable amount of time seeking objects that she could stack or “nest” inside each other repetitively such as measuring cups or toy pans. She did not imitate any gestures and as noted earlier, she seemed unaware of sounds.

Katy has a variety of safe and developmentally appropriate play spaces and toys in her home and at her day care provider’s home. Her caregivers and brother “work hard” to engage her in learning in play, but sometimes give up because they get little feedback from Katy.

Language Development: This portion of the assessment included observing how Katy understands what is being said to her, and, how she communicates both verbally and gesturally. An approximate developmental age level could not be estimated. Katy was primarily silent with some periodic “squealing” sounds during each observation period. Her parents report that is typical for her; Her parents and child care provider report that they rarely hear her say anything and she does not let others know what she wants, but sometimes she makes some unusual sounds to herself rather than others. They report that she doesn’t babble or say “mama” or “dada”. It is difficult to assess what Katy understands when others communicate with her because she provides no eye-contact and appears disinterested. No examples of “back and forth” communication, either verbally or non-verbally were observed or reported.

Gross Motor Development: This portion of the assessment included observing how Katy uses her muscles in various positions and is able to coordinate and use them to balance and move from place to place. Although Katy appears to have some low muscle tone, she displayed gross motor milestones expected for her age. She sits without support, stands, walks alone without support, and can stoop to pick up something from the floor. Her parents report that much of her walking appears aimless and they are concerned that she will bump into things because she does not seem to be watching where she is going.

Fine Motor Development: This portion of the assessment included observing how Katy uses her eyes and hands to explore and manipulate toys and objects during play, feeding, and interacting. Katy displays many fine motor skills expected for her age. She uses a pincer grasp to pick up cereal bits, grasps a crayon in her fist to make repetitive marks on paper, uses both hands freely, transfers easily from one hand to the other, tries to stack blocks (repetitively) and is able to point to explore the eyes on dolls, but not to communicate.

Social-Emotional Development: This portion of the assessment included observing and learning about Katy's emotional responses, sense of self as an individual, attachment to, and inter-relationship with others. Katy's parents and day care provider report that she frequently appears to be "in her own world" and it is difficult to establish or maintain eye contact. She rarely fusses, doesn't express needs, and is disinterested in being held, cuddled, or socializing with anyone. She does not change her expression when her parents leave or return, but moves to play closer to them when other people are in the same room. Her mom expressed concern that although Katy rarely gets upset, she also never seems excited or happy. She reportedly seems to understand "no" but needs an adult to physically help her stop the "no" behavior. She could not be engaged in any reciprocal games such as "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake".

Katy's parents and caregivers provide predictable daily routines, encourage her to express her emotions, and have many interactive games that they try actively to engage her in, e.g., "So big" during dressing, "Where's Katy?" during play. They are having difficulty "reading" and interpreting Katy's needs, likes and dislikes and are anxious for support to help them "engage" Katy in interactive play. They want to be able to "connect" with Katy and have her look at them socially and to communicate.

Self-Help: This portion of the assessment included observing and gathering information about how Katy is learning to feed and dress herself. Katy displays many self-help skills that are typical for toddlers her age. She chews efficiently, hold her own bottle, is learning to drink from a 'sippy' cup independently, and finger feeds well. She is learning to feed herself applesauce and yogurt using a spoon. Katy appears disinterested in learning to dress herself. She also does not extend her arm or leg to 'help' when caregivers are dressing her.

Katy has a predictable mealtime routine and a safe highchair. Her parents name and describe the foods she is eating, and encourage her to try new tastes and textures. They describe her as disinterested in mealtime, and not noticing when she is given new foods.

Katy's parents are very interested in Katy learning to let them know when she is hungry and to be part of the family at mealtime.

Summary

Katy is a beautiful 13 month old little girl who displayed many developmental skills expected at her age in the areas of Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Self Help, and Problem Solving.

She did *not* display skills or behaviors expected for her age in the areas of communication, social-emotional, or symbolic play. She displayed a pattern of atypical and under-reactive regulatory/sensory responses that appear to be interfering with her development and relationships.

Katy's parents are anxious to receive supports to help them and other care providers to communicate and play with Katy, and, to help Katy learn how to communicate and socialize with others. They are also hoping that she can learn to play with her toys like other children her age.

Reviewed by:

Carmen Martinez and John Harless,
Katy's parents, Date:

Sharon Jones, M.A., Ed.,
Developmental Specialist, Date:

Robin Daniels, M.S., OTR/L.
Occupational Therapist, Date:

c.c. The family would like copies of this report to be sent to:
Dr. Abbot, Pediatrician