

*Introduction to:
Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status*

PEDS



What

is Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS)?

The PEDS is a methodology for detecting developmental and behavioural problems in children from birth to eight years of age. This methodology involves asking parents to complete a ten-item questionnaire, which takes only a few minutes.

The PEDS can be used in two ways.

1. As a developmental screening test, when the parental responses to the ten-item questionnaire are transferred to the score sheet and interpreted according to the guidelines provided.
2. As an informal means to elicit and respond to parental concerns. The ten-item questionnaire is a non-threatening way to begin a dialogue with parents, and gives them the opportunity to bring up any concerns they may have about their child.

How

was it developed?

The PEDS was developed in the USA by Frances Page Glascoe PhD, a respected researcher who has published widely in the area of developmental screening and the early detection of developmental and behavioural problems. The ten-items on the questionnaire were chosen following extensive research, and the language used in the questions was selected carefully.

The Centre for Community Child Health at The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne has used the PEDS with hundreds of children and families across a variety of community-based settings. The language of the PEDS was changed to conform to Australian language usage. Parents and professionals found the PEDS to be useful and had no difficulty with the process.

Why

is a parent questionnaire administered rather than a screening test?

One of the limitations of traditional developmental screening tests is that they are performed in isolation without taking into account the socio-cultural context in which a child grows up, and without having systematic input from parents, who know the child best. Apart from the time, cost and special training needed to administer developmental screening tests, there have been concerns that not involving parents actively in the process diminishes their accuracy and makes it less likely that recommendations will be followed. Research has shown that involving parents in the process increases accuracy because they are good observers of their child's development and behaviour. The PEDS has been developed to ask parents the right questions in the right way.



How do you use PEDS?

The "Brief Administration and Scoring Guide" provides an outline on how to use the three forms that make up the PEDS. There are simple steps to follow.

Step 1: Parents complete the "PEDS Response Form".

This is a one page document that can be purchased in pad format.

The PEDS Response Form is a questionnaire for parents. It includes fields for the child's name, parent's name, child's birthday, child's age, and today's date. The form contains 10 numbered questions, each with a 'Circle one: No Yes A little' scale and a 'COMMENTS:' section. The questions are:

- Please list any concerns about your child's learning, development, and behaviour.
- Do you have any concerns about how your child talks and makes speech sounds?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child understands what you say?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child uses his or her hands and fingers to do things?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child uses his or her arms and legs?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child behaves?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child gets along with others?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child is learning to do things for himself/herself?
- Do you have any concerns about how your child is learning preschool or school skills?
- Please list any other concerns.

Step 2: Transfer the parents' responses on to the "PEDS Score Form".

This process is outlined in more detail in the "Brief Administration and Scoring Guide".

The "PEDS Score Form" is a one page document printed back to back with the "PEDS Interpretation Form" (see below). These forms can be purchased in a pad format.

The PEDS Score Form is a grid for recording scores. It includes fields for the child's name and age. The grid has 11 rows for different categories: Global/Cognitive, Expressive Language and Articulation, Receptive Language, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, Behavior, Social-emotional, Self Help, School, and Other. Each row has 10 columns representing scores from 0 to 9. Below the grid are instructions for counting the number of shaded boxes and calculating the total score.

Step 3: Determine the appropriate path to follow using the "PEDS Interpretation Form".

This process is outlined in more detail in the "Brief Administration and Scoring Guide".

The PEDS Interpretation Form provides decision-making paths based on the score. It includes a 'Specific Decisions' column with a scale from 0-3 mos to 7-8 yrs. The paths are:

- Path A: Two or more significant concerns?** If 2 or more concerns about self-help, social skills, or receptive language skills: Refer for audiological and speech-language testing. Use professional judgment to decide if further action is needed for social work, occupational/physical therapy, mental health services, etc. Refer for individualized and educational assessments. Use professional judgment to decide if speech/language, audiological, or other evaluations are also needed.
- Path B: One significant concern?** If concern is parental concern or minor curiosity: Screen or refer for screening. If concern is related, refer for testing in area of difficulty.
- Path C: Non-significant concerns?** If concerned about difficulty and listed up in several areas: Refer for individualized screening for attentional/behavioral problems and refer as indicated. Otherwise refer for screening/training/behavioral intervention, etc.
- Path D: Parental difficulties communicating?** Offer a second screen that directly assesses children's skills or refer for screening elsewhere. Send PEDS home in preparation for a second look, seek an interpreter, or refer for screening elsewhere.
- Path E: No concerns?** List any concerns at future time point. Use PEDS at future time point.

Who

can use the PEDS?

The PEDS can be used in virtually any setting – its use is not confined to health professionals such as doctors and nurses. In Australia the PEDS has been used in childcare centres, preschools and kindergartens, maternal and child health centres, general practices, paediatricians' offices, and schools.

When

can I use PEDS?

The PEDS can be used in a number of different ways. Some professionals may use the PEDS on a regular basis, for example each year on the child's birthday. Others may administer the PEDS when the child is first enrolled in a particular community setting, such as preschool and school. Some professionals may use it as a formal developmental screening test, while others may use it informally to elicit and respond to parental concerns. The flexibility of the PEDS means that it can be used in a variety of different ways, and developmental concerns and progress can be monitored over time.

How

reliable and valid is the PEDS?

The PEDS has been validated on close to a thousand children and families in North America, and has psychometric properties in keeping with standards for other developmental screening tests (sensitivity and specificity between 70-80%). However, it has the advantage of being brief, simple to use, and actively involves parents.

Ordering and Questions

- All the PEDS materials are available for purchase from the Centre for Community Child Health.
- Professional staff at the Centre for Community Child Health have had experience at using the PEDS and are available for consultation. Contact details are listed below.



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