



# Accessibility Features of the DRDP (2015) for Children with IFSPs and IEPs

The DRDP (2015) is an assessment instrument used with all children from early infancy up to kindergarten entry in California Department of Education early education, early intervention, and preschool special education programs. The DRDP (2015) aligns with the California Department of Education's Early Learning and Development Foundations and is based on observations of a child in daily routines, activities, and settings. The accessibility of the DRDP (2015) for children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) is assured in three ways:

- Research activities
- Universal design
- The use of adaptations

## Research Activities

### Sensitivity Study

Studies of the DRDP (2015) determined that the instrument is sensitive enough to measure the progress of children with IFSPs and IEPs.

### Differential Item Functioning (DIF) Analysis

A DIF analysis of the individual measures of the DRDP (2015) is an important step in assuring that the instrument works for children with IFSPs and IEPs. A DIF analysis will identify whether the instrument exhibits a measurement bias for children with a particular type of disability and should be revised.



## Universal Design

"Universal Design" refers to the development of assessments that are appropriate for all children to the greatest extent possible. Universal Design enables children the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. All young children are entitled access to, and meaningful participation in age-appropriate, individually-appropriate, and culturally-appropriate early childhood curricula and assessments.

Universal design was incorporated into the DRDP (2015) in a many ways, including these components of the measures:

- The language of each measure was written to include any communication modes and means of expression used
- The measure definitions were written to include any communication mode or means of expression, e.g., "LLD 2: Responsiveness to Language: Child **communicates or acts** in response to language and responds to increasingly complex language"
- The measure descriptors illustrate a variety of behaviors that could be observed, e.g., "LLD 5: participates, from beginning to end, in listening to stories..."
- The measure examples include a variety of ways that a child might demonstrate a descriptor, e.g., "SED 2: Points to 'angry' picture on emotion chart while looking at a peer" and the examples listed are not the only ways a child might demonstrate mastery of a skill
- The earliest levels of each measure were designed to capture the progress of the greatest number of children

Teachers and service providers support children's access, participation, and engagement in the curriculum by providing learning opportunities, materials, and teaching strategies in flexible and individualized ways and through a variety of learning modalities. They support the universal design of the DRDP (2015) as they consider the various ways young children can demonstrate knowledge or skills that reflect mastery of a developmental level.

## The Use of Adaptations

Adaptations are changes in the environment or differences in observed behavior that allow children with IFSPs or IEPs to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in typical environments.

The adaptations used with the DRDP (2015) have been developed so that the assessment will more accurately measure a child's abilities rather than the impact of a child's disability.

## The Seven Categories of Adaptations

Seven broad categories of adaptations have been identified for children with IFSPs and IEPs to include when the DRDP (2015) is conducted.

1. **Augmentative or Alternative Communication System:** Methods of communication other than speech that allow a child who is unable to use spoken language to communicate with others.
2. **Alternative Mode for Written Language:** Methods of reading or writing used by a child who cannot see well enough to read or write or cannot hold and manipulate a writing utensil (e.g., pencil, pen) well enough to produce written symbols.
3. **Visual Support:** Adjustments to the environment that provide additional information to a child who has limited or reduced visual input.
4. **Assistive Equipment or Device:** Tools that make it possible or easier for a child to perform a task.
5. **Functional Positioning:** Strategic positioning and postural support that allow a child to have increased control of his body.
6. **Sensory Support:** Increasing or decreasing sensory input to facilitate a child's attention and interaction in the environment.
7. **Alternative Response Mode:** The form of a child's behavior may differ from typical development (such as avoiding looking at people while speaking to them) but still be rated as demonstrating mastery. This adaptation allows for differences in the child's behavior rather than modifications to the environment.

Adaptations are included in a number of the examples used in the DRDP (2015), such as:

- a. Races to the fence and back several times, while **using a mobility device** (e.g., walker, crutches, wheelchair).
- b. Lies prone on a **scooter board** and uses hands to push self around the room.
- c. Uses a **communication device** to express, "I feel sleepy when it gets dark."

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