

Cognitive and IEP Assessment Tools 101

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There are few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or ever hope, by a limit imposed from without, but falsely identified as lying within.

(Gould, 1981)





Objectives

- Discuss the goals of a developmental assessment
- Review standardized assessment measures that are often used in the evaluation of children with Rett syndrome
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using these assessment tools
- Discuss other ways to evaluate the strengths and needs of children with Rett Syndrome



What is the purpose of an assessment?

- Documentation of children's progress
- Informing classroom practices
- Meeting children's individual needs
- Improving programs
- Assessing therapeutic interventions





Strength Based Assessment

- Assessment is viewed as a process
- Children are given many opportunities to demonstrate their abilities in various ways
- Collect information from a variety of sources
- Collect information over time
- Assessment data should bring about benefits for the child being assessed



Clinical Assessment-Best Practices

- Strength-based process
- Consideration of a child's cultural background, medical history, emotional condition, distractibility, cooperation, physical limitations, and any special needs
- Consideration of length of testing session, familiarity of setting, familiarity of administrator
- Families are included as key partners
- Assessment should be reliable, normed and validated for the population of children to be assessed
- Test scores are not taken in isolation

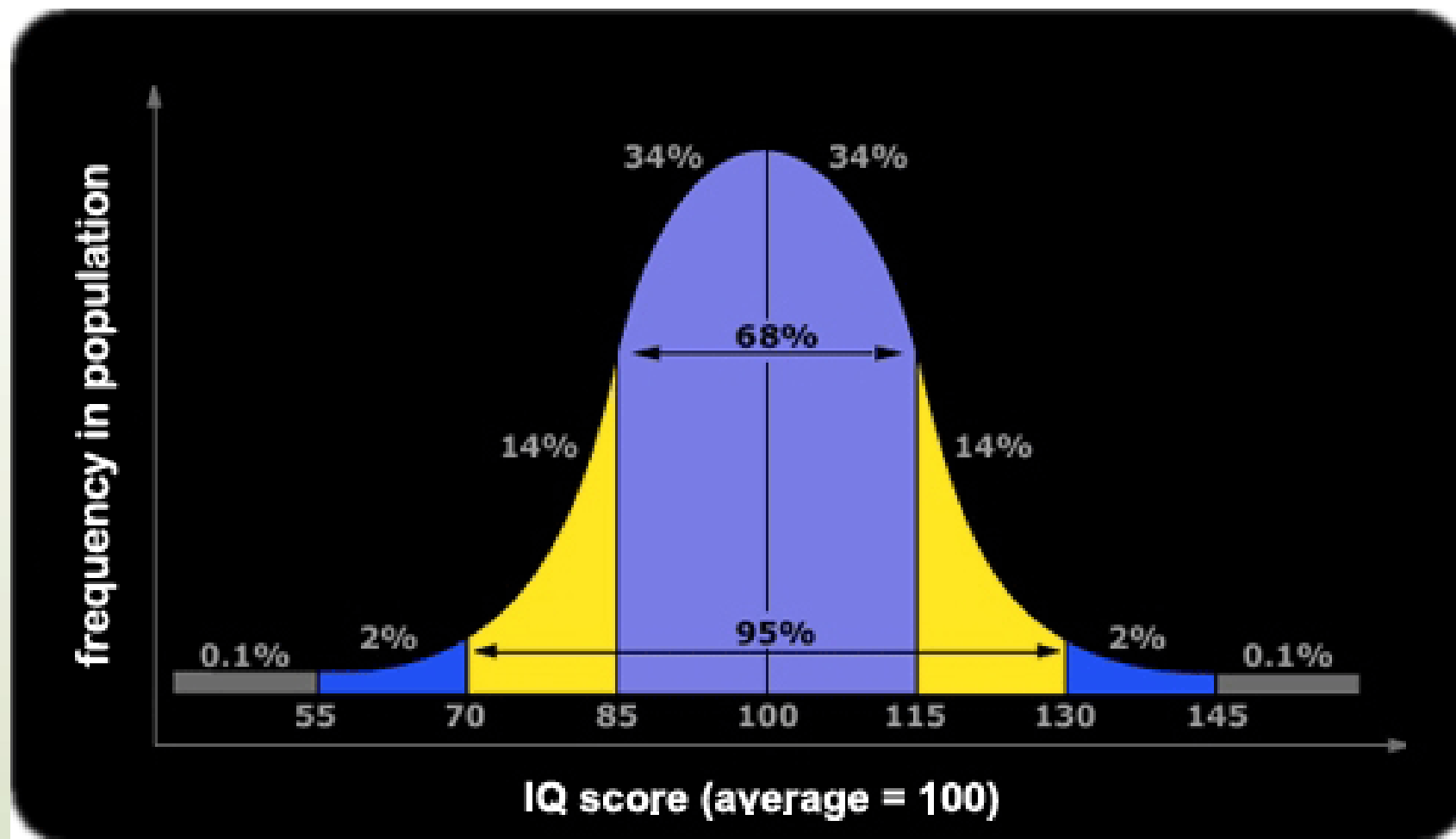


What is a standardized assessment?

- A test that is administered and scored in a consistent, or "standard", manner.
- Any test in which the same test is given in the same manner to all test takers is a standardized test.

What information does a standardized assessment produce?

- Standardized Scores
- Percentile Ranks
- Descriptive Categories
- Age Equivalents
- Qualitative Observations





Common Measures

- Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Third Edition (birth through 42 months of age)
- Mullen Scales of Early Learning (birth through 68 months of age)
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (ages 2 ½ to adult)
- Raven's Progressive Matrices (ages 6 to adult)
- Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised (ages 2 to adult)
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition (birth to adult)

Professional Guidelines for Discussion of Developmental Measures

- Ensure test security
- Test materials and record forms may not be distributed
- Materials are not allowed to be video-taped or otherwise copied for the general public



Assessments for Infants and Preschool Children

- Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development
- Mullen Scales of Early Learning



Mullen Scales of Early Learning





What do the authors of these measures tell us about the assessment of severely physically impaired children?



- The author of the Bayley-III specifically states that it is inappropriate to use this measure to obtain a norm-referenced score for a severely physically impaired child
- The author of the Bayley also discusses:
 - Proper positioning and support
 - Provision of alternate response modes
 - Optimal positioning of materials
 - Use of stabilizing materials
 - Acknowledgment of alternative methods of response including body stiffening, facial brightening, eye gaze, smiling or frowning
 - Consideration of environmental factors
 - Length of time for each evaluation session

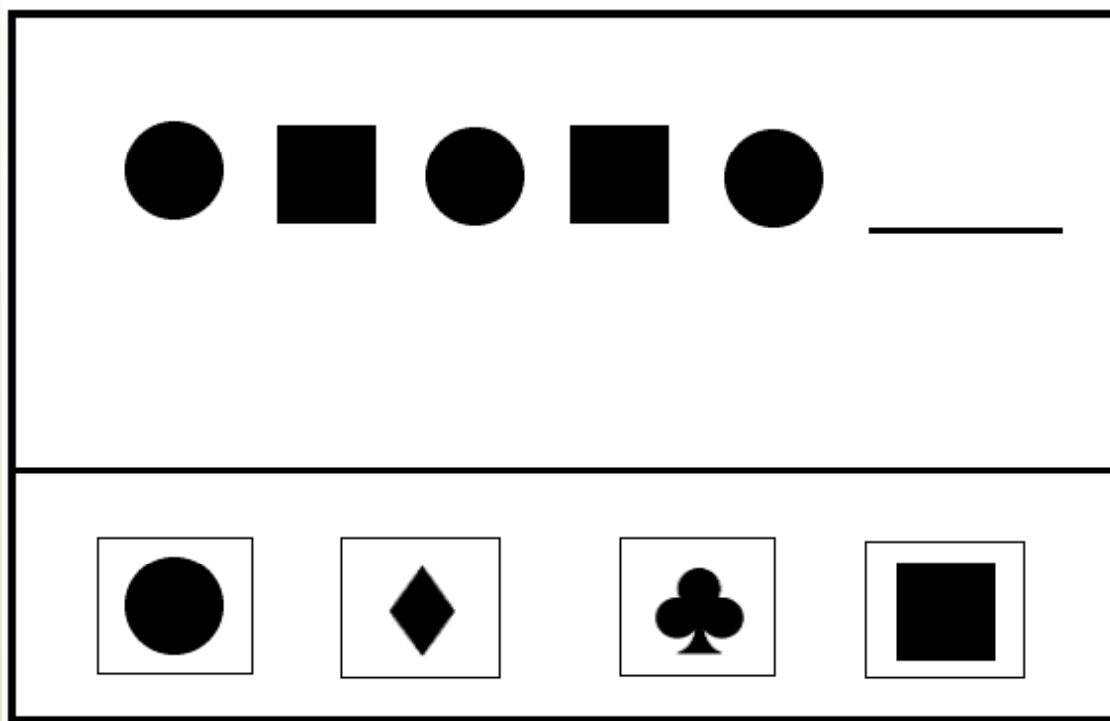


Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test





Raven's Progressive Matrices





Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised





Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition

- Caregiver report
- Authors state that it is “applicable whenever an assessment of an individual's daily functioning is required”
- Examines communication, daily living skills, socialization, and motor skills
- Provides scaled scores, standard scores, and percentile ranks

Testing Adaptations for Children with Significant Motor and Communication Disabilities



- Be creative
- Learn as much as you can about the child before standardized testing begins
- Learn how the child communicates
- Consider who should be present during testing
- Learn what techniques have been used successfully in the past
- Consider how to best structure the environment and testing time
- Use reinforcers



Specific ideas for testing accommodations

- Touch scan
- Use of a stop sign
- Glance for “yes” and “no”
- Cards for “yes” and “no”
- Smiling and frowning
- Eye gaze
- Positioning of items





How to interpret test results

- Should children with Rett syndrome ever take standardized tests?





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