

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Overview

What is the DECA?

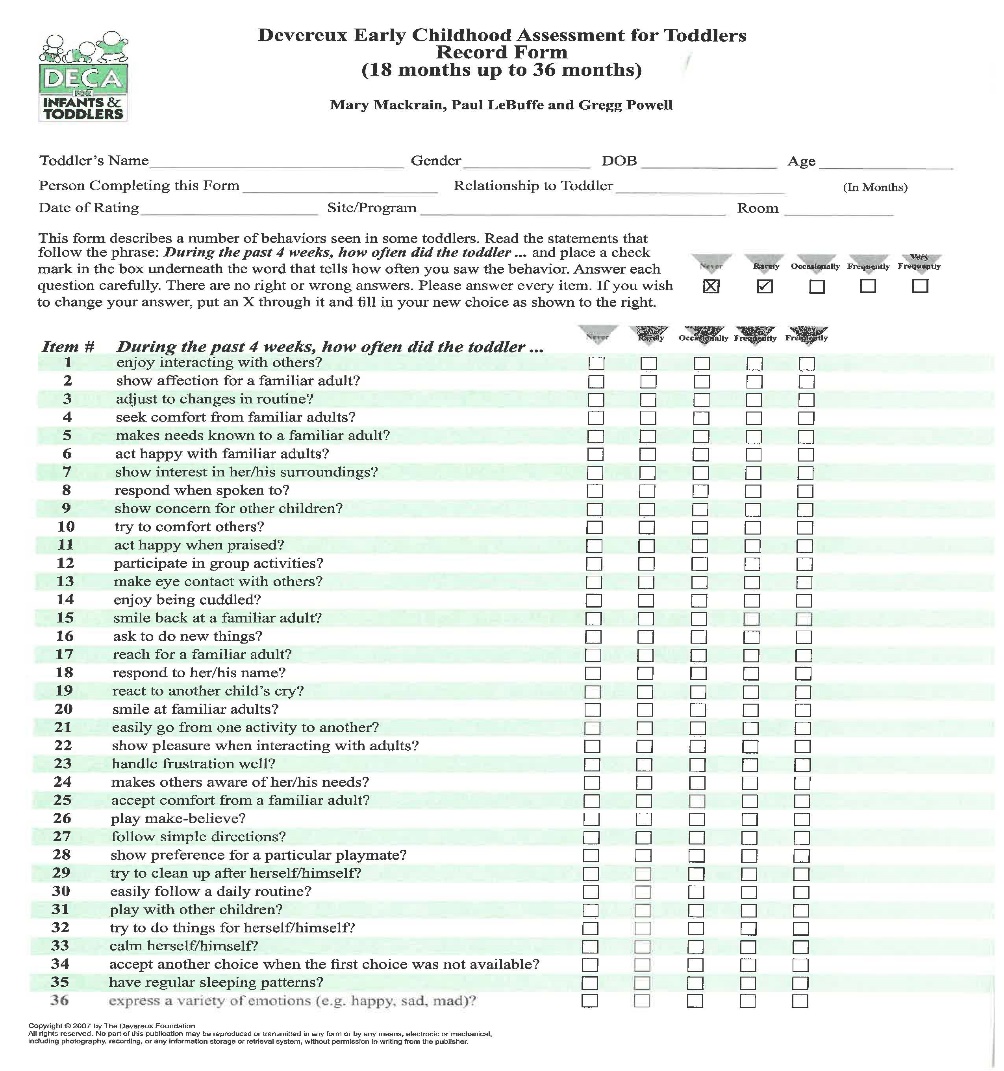
Targeted Support For more information:  
Handout 6: DECA Overview https://centerforresilientchildren.org/infants/

The DECA is a 1-page early childhood assessment that provides information about a child’s social-emotional strengths and needs.

What scores does the DECA provide?

For infants and toddlers, the DECA provides scores for: 1) **Attachment**, or the mutual, strong, long lasting relationship between the child and significant adults; 2) **Initiative**, or the child’s ability to use independent thought and actions to meet her or his needs; and 3) a **Total Protective Factors** scale, which provides an overall indication of the strength of a child’s protective factors. For toddlers only, the DECA also provides a score for **Self-Regulation**, or the child’s ability to gain control of and manage emotions, and sustain focus and attention.

What do DECA Questions look like?

When filling out the DECA, you will answer how often a child exhibited a specific behavior in the past four weeks. You will rate the child on a 5-point scale, ranging from Never to Very Frequently.

Sample Questions:  
During the past 4 weeks, how often did the toddler…  
try to do new things?  
enjoy interacting with others?  
easily follow a daily routine?

How do I score the DECA?

When finished filling out the DECA, pull off the perforated section of the form and gently separate the pages of the form. You will find instructions for scoring the DECA on the back page of the form. Video instructions are available at <https://youtu.be/L97e8ZO_788>.

Is there anything else I should know before filling out a DECA?

You should know a child for at least 4 weeks before completing a DECA on the child.

There are two DECA forms, a Yellow Infant Form for ages 0-17 months; and a Green Toddler Form for ages 18-36 months.

Use behaviors observed over the most recent 4-week period to answer the questions.

Do not consult with other adults in the classroom when filling out the DECA.

Do not compare children to each other when filling out the DECA.