



DECA Screening Procedures During Virtual Service Model

1302.33 Child screenings and assessments

(a) *Screening.* (1) In collaboration with each child’s parent and with parental consent, a program must complete or obtain a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child’s developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program or, for the home-based program option, receives a home visit. A program that operates for 90 days or less must complete or obtain a current developmental screening within 30 calendar days of when the child first attends the program.

(2) A program must use one or more research-based developmental standardized screening tools to complete the screening. A program must use as part of the screening additional information from family members, teachers, and relevant staff familiar with the child’s typical behavior.

The purpose of completing a social-emotional screening tool is to identify if a child needs specific behavior supports and what specific behavior support should be provided to address these specific needs. A behavior screening must be completed for all children within 45 days of a child entering into the classroom.

COVID-19 has put tremendous stress on children and families, making it especially important to understand the impact on children’s social and emotional health. OESD 114 Early Learning Department will look to families as the primary raters and request that families do the ratings on all children enrolled. One of the most important things to remember during these challenging times is that children and families need to be supported in the promotion of healthy attachments, relationships, initiative, and self-regulation using all the resources at our disposal.

Screening	Next Steps
Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) as our Social Emotional Screening Tool	<p>The DECA identifies a child’s strengths related to protective factors in initiative, self-regulation and attachment, and measures behavior concerns. Teachers complete this form in e-DECA, an online screening and assessment system that we use in our program. The DECA program is complete with strategies to support individual child protective factors.</p> <p>STEP 1 – COLLECT INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the inability of staff to know children well enough to answer all of the questions on the tool (recommended guidance is a <i>minimum</i> of four weeks 2-3 hours per day for 2-3 days per week), teachers will not complete a pre-DECA rating for the 2020-2021 school year. Though virtual observations are valuable in supporting



	<p>families and children, they are not sufficient for teachers to complete DECA ratings on children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our program will focus on supporting parents/family members as DECA raters and collecting DECA ratings from families during our virtual services program model due to COVID-19. Parents/guardians will always be the child’s most important teacher and teachers can use this time to strengthen families’ understanding and skills around promoting their child’s protective factors.• Explain to parents what the DECA is and why we use it at Initial Contact. Educate families about the critical role they play in building their children’s protective factors. Let parents know they will be asked to complete it 3x per year to help inform our program planning and individualization practices.<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Part Day Preschool Programs will administer by these dates:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ October 9th○ February 19th○ May 14th✓ Full-year Programs will administer by these dates:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Within 45 FDS (yearly October 31st)○ March 15○ June 30th• As children enroll or transition into the preschool classrooms, staff continue doing DECA as you would for any screening (after 30 days, but within 45 days), continue to update your DECA Classroom Profile, Outcomes Tool, and place downloaded copies into your classroom’s DST folder on Olympus. Make sure if support is needed that you are notifying your supervisor and coach and necessary supports are identified.<p>STEP 2 – ASSESS EACH CHILD</p><p>During this step, staff will complete the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) with families using their ratings to DECA items. The DECA is also scored during this step.</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• A parent pre-DECA is to be completed on each child no later than 45 days after a child’s first date of service.• Staff complete parent/guardian e DECA ratings by reading the items to them over the phone or via Zoom and entering responses directly into their computer’s e-DECA platform for a parent rating.• Teachers should be prepared to thoughtfully explain the DECA Program and assessment process to families over the phone or via Zoom, before executing the rating process with a parent/guardian.
--	---



- It is important to not influence the parent/guardian rating. The items should be read in an even, calm tone and explanations of the items or examples should not be offered. Staff emphasize that it is the parent/guardian interpretation of the item.

STEP 3 – SUMMARIZE RESULTS

During this step, staff review e-DECA reports, review or complete the Classroom/Group profile, prepare for group planning and prepare for individual child planning.

- Staff share DECA results with families over the phone or via Zoom during the next parent conference that follows the DECA unless an area of need was identified. Staff will provide families with a copy of Promoting Resilience For Now and Forever to be sent home in monthly supply bags.
- Parent DECA results and strategies will be shared with parents/guardians via email or other preferred methods of delivery. **Results must first be communicated to parents via telephone or Zoom meeting.**
- DECA screening to be entered as a social-emotional screening event under the Education tab in ChildPlus. Follow ChildPlus procedures.
- Preschool Classroom staff will download the Classroom Profile from e-DECA and place a copy in their classroom's DST folder on Olympus. The Coach will review the Classroom Profile with classroom staff and share strategies that can be used to help build children's protective factors in the classroom.

STEP 4 – PLAN AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES

During this step, staff will use the information they have collected along with their DECA results to create plans for the group and the individual child. Universal planning involves making social and emotional quality enhancements that benefit ALL children. This is done by using the Classroom/Group Profile, the DECA Outcomes Reflection Tool, and the DECA Program Strategies Guide.

- Staff will complete the DECA Outcomes Reflection Tool with their coach after each DECA rating period (3x/ year- pre, mid, post). When completed, a copy of the tool will be uploaded by coaches into the classroom's DST folder on Olympus.
- Staff will list 1 targeted strategy per month per child on the lesson plan from the DECA Program Strategies Guide.
- At the DST, results will be shared, and if necessary decisions concerning coach observations and possible referrals will be made, with parent approval.



	<p>STEP 5 – REVIEW PROGRESS AND ADJUST</p> <p>During this step, you will monitor the effectiveness of group and individual child plans and adjust plans as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Halfway through the rating period, reflect on the progress made towards goals. Are there adjustments to practice that need to be made to support goals for both the class/group and for individual children? Complete DECA Outcomes Reflection Tool and make any needed shifts.
	<p>Entering screenings into e-DECA:</p> <p>Staff enter their ratings and parent ratings into www.edeca2.org within the first 45 days of the child’s first day of service. Returning children should already be on the classroom roster. New children will need to be entered by classroom teachers into the system at the beginning of the year with Coach support if needed. Please ask your coach to make any necessary changes and archive children from the classroom roster.</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Log in to www.edeca2.org2. Click on the tab e-DECA Management3. Click on create a new child record.4. Enter the child’s name, date of birth, gender5. Click submit6. Assign site and save7. Assign group and save8. To add parent information, click Add Contact and enter parent information. Make sure that you save your work.9. Make sure to ask for help if needed. <p>To Administer and Enter e-DECA Ratings online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Log in and click on Input Ratings2. In the drop-down menu choose By Child3. Select the child from your list of children4. Select a record (Preschool)5. Click Submit.6. Choose rater from the pull-down menu7. Enter the rating date8. Choose the rater period (Pre= fall; Mid= winter, Post=spring)9. Answer the questions for each child as the teacher; or, enter the parent information10. Make sure to save each child’s rating.



	11. Make sure to ask for help if needed.
--	--

COVID 19 DECA Frequently Asked Questions:

Why is the classroom profile necessary if we are not currently in the classroom?

The classroom profile is a tool – it helps us understand the current needs of the group as a whole. This information is as valuable during COVID-19 as it was before and will be when the pandemic is over. Teachers need practical tools and that guide us to solutions to support children’s social and emotional skill development. The fact that children’s behaviors are heavily influenced by COVID-19 is not surprising. Teachers should not assume that the social and emotional strategies that worked last year are the same ones that will work today. We should use data, like the classroom profile, to help guide us in our planning efforts and ensuring that our efforts are properly matched to the needs of the group.

What is the guidance on how to answer DECA questions related to child-child interactions in the past four weeks, considering many children have not had many interactions with peers due to COVID-19 restrictions?

The guidance on how to answer the DECA questions does not change and means that families and teachers should reflect on the past four weeks and answer the questions based on their observations. Several DECA items indeed ask about interactions with children, and due to social distancing, children may have fewer opportunities to engage in these behaviors. The child’s score on the DECA may be lower than it would have been in more typical times when they had more opportunities to interact with their peers every day. When a child’s score on the DECA is in an area of need, it brings into our awareness that the child is experiencing a risk factor – in this case a lack of opportunity to play with peers. This information should spur us to action to address this risk. Maybe we arrange more virtual play opportunities or encourage playtime with siblings when possible. Even during COVID-19, we need to find ways to support a child’s good relationship skills. Also, we need to reflect on how we will prioritize “catch up” strategies when things return to the “new normal.”

What do you say if a parent/guardian asks you, “How am I supposed to answer these questions because my child has not been interacting with peers?”

Devereux suggests that staff acknowledge the parent’s question and that the world has changed drastically. Remind the parent/guardian that the instructions remain the same, which are to reflect on the past four weeks, and respond based on observations and experiences. It is okay to share that the disruptions caused by COVID-19 may be reflected by answers to certain questions on the DECA. Explain that this is important information to gather and that when discussion about the results takes place, an emphasis on understanding the child’s results and the impact of social distancing will be discussed.