

Support Needs and Intellectual Disability

Project Goals

- ★ To investigate a new environmentally and culturally sensitive method for diagnosing Intellectual Disability in children ages 5 to 16.
- ★ To help families and professionals identify appropriate supports and services needed for the child with Intellectual Disability to fully participate in a variety of activities at home, school, and in the community.
- ★ To replace outdated measurements with ones that reflect empirical work completed over the past 10 years.
- ★ To adopt practices based on reliable interpretations of a child's skills and abilities.

Who Can Participate in This Project?

The Child Assessed (i.e. the child who is being evaluated) must be *between the ages 4 and 16 years*. The child must also be diagnosed as having an *intellectual or developmental disability* (i.e. mental retardation). The child will not need to come in contact with any project personnel unless they have been identified as a secondary respondent.

The Respondent(s) providing the information and participating in the interviews should be adults selected from family members, friends, teachers, therapeutic professionals, direct care staff, or others who know the child well. Respondents are people who have had the opportunity to observe the child frequently across a variety of settings on a daily or weekly basis.

We will need 2 respondents for each child assessed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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How Will the Project Work?

The instruments will be administered by trained interviewers to willing family members and professionals who have returned a signed consent.

Two respondents will be interviewed either separately or together based on respondent schedules. The interview will take place at predetermined site decided upon by the respondent(s) and project personnel.

The semi-structured interview will last approximately two hours.

The respondents' information will be placed in a database with no identifying information and will be analyzed as part of a larger group.

What are the Benefits of Participating?

Families and professionals will have the opportunity to engage in the development and validation of instruments that will be used nationally and potentially internationally.

Families and professionals will be able to take the knowledge gained from participating in the project and apply it to future individualized support plans for their child with intellectual disability.

Families and professionals will be supporting School Districts and the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services in exploring new methods for serving children with intellectual disabilities.



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Instruments

What is the *Children's Supports Intensity Scale*? Based upon the great success of AAIDD's *Supports Intensity Scale* and requests for a children's version, AAIDD recently finalized the *Children's Supports Intensity Scale*. The scale was founded upon four assumptions regarding children with Intellectual Disability (ID): A) an ecological approach toward disability is essential in examining support needs, B) children with ID need individualized supports over and above those without disabilities in order to participate in school and community life, C) support needs will vary from child to child, both quantitatively and qualitatively, D) support needs measurement will be confounded by the age of the child, E) the *Children's SIS* needs to assess support needs fairly (reliably and validly) using a uniform procedure and F) through measurement comes knowledge. The *Children's SIS* is broken down by subscale (home life activities; community and neighborhood activities; school participation activities; school learning activities; health and safety

What is the *Diagnostic Adaptive Behavior Scale (DABS)*? The DABS is a norm referenced Instrument that assesses adaptive behavior of individuals to facilitate the diagnosis of intellectual disability. Based upon theoretical and empirical work on adaptive behavior in the past decade, the DABS examines three primary areas of adaptive behavior: A) conceptual, B) practical, and C) social. Unlike current instruments of adaptive behavior, the DABS incorporates items related to naiveté, gullibility, and technology-based skills. The instrument also reflects expectations and typical expressions of behavior according to age, cultural groups, and demands of particular situations and environments.

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