

# Frequently Asked Questions EDUCATORS

## ESI-R Developmental Screening for UPK

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### New York City Department of Education

The New York State Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require all school districts to establish a process for assessing the developmental baseline and progress monitoring of all children. To comply with this regulation, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) - Office of Early Childhood Education is screening all children enrolled in the Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) program using the Early Screening Inventory – Revised (ESI-R<sup>®</sup>) Screening tool or one of the other approved screening tools.

The ESI-R<sup>®</sup> Screening tool encompasses:

- The Screening Materials
- The Score Sheets
- The Parent Questionnaire to help supplement each child's profile
- The Examiner's Manual which provides the directions for administering and scoring the ESI-R<sup>®</sup>

The following questions and answers are provided to guide schools through the screening process.

#### **1. What is the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> Screen?**

The ESI-R<sup>®</sup> is a standardized, valid and reliable screening tool that is approved by the OECE. It will help you learn more about various aspects of a child's development such as language, cognition, perception and motor development. It will also let you know if a child needs further evaluation.

The ESI-R<sup>®</sup> is not a test of *IQ, Gifted & Talented, and School Readiness*.

#### **2. Is administering the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> required?**

NY State UPK regulations require the screening of every child in the UPK program using a valid and reliable instrument. Please note that programs that are unable to conduct the screening must inform their Early Childhood Borough Office. UPK Program funding would not be affected if a school is unable to complete the screening process.

#### **3. Is the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> the only screen that can be used?**

The NYCDOE has provided a list of approved alternative screening tools as some programs may already have invested in other instruments. These are:

- Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test (BDIST)
- Brigance Early Childhood Screen II (3 – 5 years)
- Brigance Head Start Screen
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)
- Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-3)

**4. Who should be screened with the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> tool?**

All UPK students enrolled in the current school year in Public Schools as well as contracted Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are to be screened.

**5. Are there any exceptions?**

If a student is identified as a child with special needs, has an IEP and is receiving Special Education services, then the child is not to be screened. If a student speaks a language other than English or Spanish, then the child is not to be screened.

**6. Who should administer the screening?**

Staff trained in the administration of the ESI-R<sup>®</sup>

**7. Can teachers that we trained train those that were not able to attend the OECE Borough Training Sessions?**

No. Teachers that have not been trained nor are schedule to be trained must contact their Early Childhood Borough Office as soon as possible.

**8. Is there a time frame to complete screening?**

Screening must be completed by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**9. Are we required to use the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> if our UPK site is already using one of the mandated tools?**

You will not be required to use ESI-R<sup>®</sup> if your site is using one of the tools approved by the OECE. The OECE has developed a reporting mechanism for all sites that do not use the ESI-R<sup>®</sup>. You will be required to complete and submit the required documentation to your respective NYCDOE Early Childhood Borough Office. If you are using a mandated tool that is not on the approved screening instruments list, please contact your NYCDOE Early Childhood Borough Office.

**10. Is the screening information available in multiple languages?**

The Manual, Scoring Sheet and the Parent Questionnaire is available in English and Spanish only.

**11. How do I determine the child's language?**

Please refer to the Pre-Kindergarten Language Needs Survey Form that was completed for each student. If the child's dominant language is English, then the child is to be screened in English. If the child's dominant Language is Spanish, then the child is to be screened Spanish. If the Language Survey form clearly shows that the student's dominant language is neither English nor Spanish, then the child is not to be screened.

**12. Can the screen be translated into other languages if the primary language of the student is neither English nor Spanish?**

The creators of ESI-R<sup>®</sup> have normalized the test and standardized the language for English and Spanish only. Translation of the screening will render the results invalid. At this time, this screening can only be administered in either English or Spanish.

**13. What happens if the child speaks Spanish and the teacher does not, who administers the screen?**

If a student's primary language is Spanish and the teacher does not speak Spanish, he/she can have another instructional staff member conduct the screening, as long

as that individual has had prior training in administering the screening instrument. If there is not a Spanish speaker on staff, the screening cannot be administered to that student.

**14. If a Student was screened with ESI-R® prior to entering a UPK Program, do they need to be screened again?**

If a child was previously using the ESI-R® screening and the score was in the “OK” Category, then the results are still valid. If the child was screened but there is no evidence or documentation that substantiates the result, then the child will need to be screened.

If there is evidence that the student did not score in the “OK” Category per the screening/re-screening done previously, they should be re-screened unless there is evidence that the student is undergoing further evaluation.

**15. Can Parents choose not to have their child screened?**

New York State Regulations state that all Districts “establish a process for assessing the developmental baseline and progress of all children participating in the (UPK) Program<sup>1</sup>.” However, Parents who do not want their child screened must discuss this with their child’s teacher and make a written request to the school.

**16. Do parents need to be present during the screening?**

Parents/Legal Guardians do not need to be present.

**17. Can Parents review the screening tool (i.e. materials, questions etc.) prior to their child being screened?**

No. Parents/Guardians should not review the screening tool materials, questions etc. prior to their child being screened.

**18. When should the Parents Questionnaire be completed?**

Parents/Guardians should complete the questionnaire prior to the student being screened. This Questionnaire will provide supplemental information into the student’s history and overall development. The Parent Questionnaire is available in English and Spanish only.

**19. Can the screening be administered before the Parent Questionnaire is returned?**

The Parent Questionnaire should be completed prior to the screening. However, the screening can take place if the Questionnaire is not yet returned but if and only if the Screening Introduction Letter has been sent to parents before the screening date.

**20. What is the process to inform parents whose child will not be screened?**

You will receive a Parent Letter that you can share with parents whose children are not being screened.

**21. How long will it take to screen a child?**

The screening takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes per child.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Amendment of the Regulations of the Commission of Education – 3rd January, 2008

**22. Can there be a break/pause during the screening?**

No. There should be no breaks/pauses during the screening process. It must be administered in one session.

**23. What are the next steps when a child has multiple refusals and the scoring sheet cannot be completed?**

This student falls into the "Re-Screen" Category and must be re-screened within an 8-10 week window with a new scoring sheet. The teacher conducting the re-screen must start from the beginning of the screen. The teacher cannot continue from the last activity completed during the initial screening.

**24. If a student does falls into what the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> Manual categorizes as the "Refer" Category, what are the next steps?**

If the student falls into this category, the Pre-Kindergarten Social Worker should be contacted to facilitate discussions with the child's parents, family or legal guardians about the results of the screen and to schedule a time to observe the child in action. There should be no referrals to Special Education based purely on the results of the screen by the teacher and/or the social worker. We must adhere to the standard procedure to evaluate and refer children.

**25. What information should be collected for each Student?**

All information on the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> Scoring Sheet and the Parent Questionnaire must be captured for those children who were screened with the ESI-R<sup>®</sup>. For students who were not screened with the ESI-R<sup>®</sup> sites are required to complete and submit the appropriate information to the Early Childhood Borough Office.

**26. How should the outcome from the Screening be communicated to the Parents?**

The OECE provides the Parent Letters that you are to use to communicate the results to the parents. There are three different letters depending on the outcome of the results: "OK", "Re-screen" or "Refer". Please complete any information in the appropriate letter prior to sending it to the parent/guardian.

**27. What happens to the results gathered from the Screening?**

All captured results from the screening and information on children who were not screened should be turned in to your respective NYCDOE Early Childhood Borough Office by the 1<sup>st</sup> of December of the current school year. Information on the screening will be made available to New York State to satisfy the requirement for UPK student screening. Please note that these results will not be included in the child's cumulative school record. Please use the Summary of Screening Results spreadsheet to capture results at this time. Please refer to the instructions on completing the Summary spreadsheet as your guide.

**28. How do I access additional Spanish Scoring Sheets?**

To obtain additional Spanish Scoring Sheets, please contact your NYCDOE Early Childhood Borough Office as soon as possible. Please provide information on the number and types (*K- or P-versions*) of the Spanish Scoring Sheets you would need. If delivery dates for the additional Scoring Sheets are beyond your scheduled screening deadline, please use copies of the blank sheets that you already have in your possession.

**29. What should I do if I am missing materials from my Screening Kit or I need additional scoring sheets?**

Please contact your Early Childhood Borough Office to inform them of your situation. Please communicate to the office what was missing from your kit and they will assist you in getting them replaced. If you need additional scoring sheets please specify if you need the K or P sheets and in which language.

Please visit the OECE Website at:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/ParentResources/default.htm>

Please email the OECE at:

[earlychildhood@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@schools.nyc.gov)

NYCDOE Office of Early Childhood Education UPK Pre-Approved  
Diagnostic Screening Tools

- Early Screening Inventory – Revised (ESI-R®)
- Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test (BDIST)
- Brigance Early Childhood Screen II (3 – 5 years)
- Brigance Head Start Screen
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