



IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL

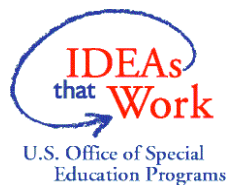
2nd edition – May 2006

Director: Robin McWilliam, Ph.D.

Project Coordinator: Peggy Freund, Ph.D.

www.IndividualizingInclusion.us

**Center for Child Development
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 936-3329**



Contributions

This manual has been through several iterations and several people have contributed significantly to its development. We want to acknowledge and thank all those individuals for their assistance.

*Individualizing Inclusion in Child Care Project
Frank Porter Graham Child Care Program
Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

- Mark Wolery
- Stacy Scott
- Kristen Greene

*National Individualizing Inclusion Project
Center for Child Development
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee*

- Beth Clingenpeel
- Allison Uhl
- Amy Casey

This project is funded by grant #H325N020085 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The opinions expressed in this manual do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education.

We grant permission to reproduce all materials developed by the National Individualizing Preschool Inclusion Project. We cannot give permission to reproduce materials developed by others. When reproducing materials, the appropriate citation should be included.



Routines-Based Assessment for Functional Intervention Planning

Hundreds of programs across the country have successfully implemented routines-based assessment for intervention planning. This method of assessment supports recommended practices as delineated by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) (Sandall, Hemmeter, McLean, & Smith, 2005).

To provide integrated services and embed interventions into classroom routines, first a functional intervention plan has to be developed. By functional, we mean (a) practical, it is feasible for a caregiver to work on the specific skill with the child during daily routines; and (b) the skills addressed are skills the child will be able to use immediately and will help him or her to be more successful and independent in daily routines. Routines-based assessment is the process of identifying a child's abilities and determining educational/therapeutic needs by interviewing the child's primary caregivers about daily routines. Routines-based assessment results in a functional intervention plan because it involves looking at the child's abilities and needs within the context of family and community ecologies.

Preparing for Assessment

The first step is preparing for the routines-based assessment. Routines-based assessment consists of an interview with the family about home routines first and a report from the classroom staff on classroom routines second. (We use the term *interview* carefully: It is not a formal process but rather a focused conversation with a family and their child's teachers or other primary caregivers)



To prepare for the assessment, professionals do three things:

- Divorce eligibility evaluations from assessments for intervention planning,
- Prepare the family for the assessment, and
- Prepare the classroom staff for the assessment.

Divorcing eligibility evaluations from assessments for intervention planning

Before preparing the family and the classroom staff for the RBI, professionals should dissociate the eligibility evaluations from assessments for intervention planning. Programs will mostly likely be required to use traditional evaluation tools such as standardized tests and developmental checklists to determine eligibility for services. Those tools are not, however, appropriate for developing *individualized* intervention plans (Dunst & McWilliam, 1988) and are of little use during the development of the IFSP/IEP. The results from standardized tests do not take into account the child's context (i.e, family and community routines), which is key to individualizing an intervention plan.

Moreover, when professionals present the eligibility results to families at the beginning of a meeting designed to identify goals for intervention, the focus is on professionals' giving expert information as well as the child's weaknesses. This approach emphasizes the professional-client distinction, and caregivers listening to these reports believe the items the child failed during the evaluation are the things the child needs to learn. These items then become goals on the plan and the family and other caregivers are afforded no meaningful role in the intervention planning. In contrast, the routines-based assessment results in a list of priorities that reflect the family's priorities and includes skills that will be immediately useful for the child's participation in naturally occurring routines. To avoid this situation, talk with the family about eligibility results immediately after the evaluation and before assessment for intervention, planning begins.



Using a child's daily routines as means of assessment allows professionals to understand

- What activities/routines a particular child is involved in regularly,
- What that child is able to do in those routines, and
- What skills that child needs to learn to be successful in each routine in terms of independence, engagement, and social relationships.

Preparing the family for assessment

Families have a major role in routines-based assessment. It is important to provide families with information about the process beforehand so they know what to expect. Programs can decide who is best suited for conducting the interview. Programs have chosen the child's teacher, the service coordinator, a therapist, an administrator, or a social worker.

What to expect. The person who is going to interview the family would be the one to prepare the family. The interviewer tells the family that he or she, as well as the other professionals who are involved in service delivery, are interested in learning about their family's priorities for their child and a good way of receiving this information is to hear about what daily life (routines) is like for them. Because "routines" has various meanings, we should emphasize that in this process it means ordinary *daily activities*. *Everyone wakes up, eats, hangs out, and goes places*. By hearing about the family's day from the time they get up until the time they go to bed, professionals can identify the routines that seem satisfying for the family and routines where some intervention could make life easier for the family and child. Although it is not necessary, some families prefer to organize their thoughts on paper and bring it with them for the assessment. Family preparation forms for the routines based assessment can be found in *Family-Centered Intervention Planning* (McWilliam, 1992), available through the project website (www.IndividualizingInclusion.us).

Logistics. A typical routines-based interview takes about 2 hours. Ask the family when it would be most convenient to do the interview (before the IFSP meeting or perhaps in conjunction with it), where they would like the interview to take place (e.g., at the program site, their home, a park) and who they would like to be present (other family members, caregivers, or friends).

The end result. It is important for families to know that their time is valued. When families and professionals invest a couple of hours to create a good intervention plan, the time spent is as valuable as intervention itself. Not only is a functional plan developed, a positive relationship between the family and professionals is established.

Preparing the teacher for assessment

The person who is interviewing the family about their home routines may also interview the teacher about the classroom routines. If the teacher is interviewing the family, he or she may just report on the routines without someone really interviewing him or her. In either case, the teacher needs to be prepared to talk about classroom routines from the time the child arrives until the child leaves at the end of the day. For each routine, the teacher will describe what the child does (i.e., how he or she participates, interacts, and his or her level of engagement) and what the rest of the class does. It is also important for teachers to determine whether or not he or she is satisfied with each routine. A discrepancy between the teacher's expectations for a child in a particular routine and what actually happens might alert the family (i.e., the decision maker) to a need for intervention.

STARE. Before the interview, a teacher might gather information using the Scale for Teachers' Assessment of Routines Engagement (STARE; McWilliam, 2000, pg. 24) to substantiate their report on the child's engagement levels and interactions in classroom routines. The teacher observes the focal child for a minimum of 10 minutes during each

of the classroom routines (e.g., arrival, circle, snack, centers, free play, lunch, outside, departure) rating how much time the child is (a) engaged with adults, peers, and materials, and (b) engaged at various levels (e.g., nonengaged: 2 minutes; average: 5 minutes; sophisticated: 3 minutes). This tool can be extremely useful for intervention planning because it allows the teachers, therapists, and parents to see in which routines, or times of the day, the child is most and least engaged. Team members can discuss the factors that contribute to increased engagement and plan accordingly.

Mario

Caren, Mario's teacher, knows that mornings are a good time for Mario. Since he has been in her class, Mario plays with the other children and explores toys and materials in various areas of the classroom throughout the morning. Everything can be expected to go pretty well for Mario until the class goes outside. This is when Mario's challenging behaviors surface. Caren has learned to plan all of the activities that she wants Mario to participate in for the mornings, because, once outside, there is no way to get Mario involved in anything!

By using the STARE, a teacher is able to assess which routines promote higher levels of engagement for a child with adults, peers, and materials. Teachers may look at the specific variables of "good" routines and incorporate those variables into other routines to promote engagement.

Caren used the STARE to get a clearer picture of Mario's engagement levels in classroom routines. She found that Mario was most engaged during structured activities with his peers in the classroom. During routines that provided less structure, e.g., free play and outside time, Mario had a tendency towards nonengagement, i.e., challenging behaviors surface. Caren shared this information with Andrea and Rubin, Mario's parents, at his IEP meeting. Mario's parents thought it was important for Mario to participate in outside play activities and asked the team if they could work on making that a better time of day for Mario.

Interviewing the Family

The RBI is designed to provide a way for a child's primary caregivers to be involved meaningfully in intervention planning. Ideally all primary caregivers, the child's parents, teachers, and other caregivers, would participate in the interview to obtain a complete picture of the child's daily routines as well as their concerns. It also can be helpful if other team members can be present during the interview so they can hear about the family's daily routines and their concerns. However, having a large group at the interview might be intimidating for the parents. Moreover, with a large group of professionals at the interview, the focus can easily switch from the parent's sharing important information to the professionals providing advice and discussing strategies. This change in focus can inhibit parents and

1. State the purpose of the meeting
2. Ask parent about others living in the home
3. Ask parent about any major concerns

minimize the depth of information obtained. Some programs opt to use some other methods for communicating information from the interview to all team members.

At the beginning of the meeting, the interviewer states the purpose for the meeting: to get to know the family and identify the priorities they have for their child through a discussion of daily routines. Next, the facilitator asks the family about who lives in their home, so that everyone can become aware of all the people who are directly involved with the child.¹ Then, the facilitator asks the family if they have any major concerns. If so, the person taking notes writes them down. It is important that the interviewer acknowledge these concerns up front, to show the family that this meeting is about them. In many cases, these initial concerns resurface during the discussion of daily routines, so the facilitator can assure the family that these concerns will be explored further, during either the interview or immediately following.

To begin the interview, the interviewer asks the family to describe what a typical day is like for their family. A good question to start with is "How does your day start?" Or, "Who is the first person to wake up in your home?" During each routine, the facilitator asks the family questions to find out

- **What each person does during the routine,**
- **What the child does during the routine,**
- **How the child participates (engagement),**
- **What the child can do on his or her own (independence),**
- **How the child communicates and gets along with others (social relationships), and**
- **How satisfied the parent is with the routine.**

*Throughout the interview, the person taking notes should mark (we use stars☆) areas that sound like a concern of the family.

Some families will describe routines in detail without needing a lot of follow up questions from the interviewer. Other families are less forthcoming and may need specific questions for the interviewer to get sufficient detail. And still other families will provide so much detail that the interviewer will need to move them along (e.g., asking, "What happens next?"). Bottom line: Be flexible. The interview should look like a friendly conversation more than a structured interview, but it is important to stay on task.

¹ Family systems theory, part of the theoretical base for the model, recognizes that experiences of one member of the child's family or household affect other members of the family.

At the end of each routine, it is important to ask the family whether or not they are satisfied with the routine, or, if they could change anything about the routine what would it be? A mother could describe bath time for her 2-year-old daughter in such a way that it sounds as if everything is fine with that routine, when, in actuality, her back is killing her from leaning over the tub and her 5-year-old son is screaming and pounding on the door the whole time.

If the family member repeatedly expresses satisfaction with routines and implies that the child's engagement, independence, and social relationships are acceptable, the interviewer can ask what the parent would like the child to do next. Not all situations involve a discrepancy between reported and desired behavior, so this allows the parent to indicate what a potential intervention priority might be—in the absence of any concerns.

During the interview, the facilitator or the specialists may ask other questions that deal with implications of the child's disability (e.g., the positioning of a child with cerebral palsy during each routine, or the repetitive behaviors of a child with autism). These probe questions may help clarify a problem or concern. Although it might be appropriate for other professionals to ask follow-up questions, it is not appropriate for professionals to make suggestions or offer advice during this process. Giving advice puts the parent in a passive role, where the family is listening to what professionals have to say about their child, instead of in an active role, where the family is providing the information about their child.



RBI is not for giving advice

Giving advice puts parents in a passive role, where the family is listening to what professionals have to say about their child, instead of an active role, where the family is providing the information about the child.

Once all the daily home routines have been discussed, community routines may be discussed (e.g., grocery shopping, visiting with friends and family, religious services).

Reporting on Classroom Routines

As mentioned earlier, the teacher may choose to be interviewed by the facilitator on classroom routines or he or she may simply provide a report. During each routine, the teacher should provide information about:

- **What the class as a whole does during this time,**
- **What the child does during this time,**
- **How the child participates (engagement),**
- **What the child can do on his or her own (independence), and**
- **How the child communicates and gets along with others (social relationships).**

*Again, the person taking notes should mark (we use stars☆) areas that sound like areas of concern.

The interviewer may ask follow-up questions to the teacher for clarification. Once each routine has been discussed (i.e., from arrival through departure), the interviewer or note taker will review both the home and classroom concerns. This also is the time to ask the parent if there are any other major concerns that haven't been addressed.

Prioritizing Concerns

After the home and classroom concerns have been reviewed, the parents decide on their intervention priorities. Since the family has just participated in a process that has enabled them to really think about their concerns, they are usually able to say exactly what they want included. It might be helpful for them to review the notes (i.e., marked concerns) from the interview. Be sure to tell the family that not every concern that was mentioned during the interview needs to be included on the plan, only those things they see as being a real priority.

After the family has decided which goals will be on the plan, the next step is to ask the family to put the goals in priority order. This is important because it is difficult to give equal attention to all goals, and having the family's priority order can guide team members about how to allocate their time and attention.

Taking Notes

The interviewer should take notes during the interview to record areas of strength and concern. The RBI Report form (pg. 29) can help the interviewer organize the process ensuring that questions about engagement, independence, social relationships, and family satisfaction are asked for each routine and record important information. As mentioned above, potential priorities should be noted in some way to assist parents in remembering their concerns. The interviewer also might choose to use blank sheets to record information, but it is important to identify clearly potential priorities.

When taking notes, it also is important, whenever possible, to keep the notes flat on the table so parents can view what you are writing (no secrets). It also is suggested that the interviewer hand the notes over to the parent when they are identifying their priorities. This symbolic action can support the parents' position as the primary decision makers.

Timing of the RBI

Deciding when to do the RBI must be an individual program decision. Given the fact that the routines-based interview can take 1 ½ to 2 hours to complete, some programs choose to do the routines-based interview before the actual IFSP/IEP meeting. The RBI essentially becomes a pre-planning meeting and the time needed for goals setting at the IFSP/IEP is significantly reduced. The challenge with doing the RBI before the IFSP/IEP meeting can be relaying the information from the interview to other team members, and some team members might object to goals being decided upon before the team meets. It is vital that a professional working with the parent explain clearly to other team members the rationale and process of the routines-based interview. It will be important to explain that the process gave the family the opportunity to select priorities (avoid calling them "goals," if it would help) in a more family-friendly manner than would be possible in the IFSP/IEP meeting.

Other programs decide to complete the RBI as part of the IFSP/IEP meeting. The primary disadvantage with this of course is the length of the meeting. But, some programs find it very difficult to work one more meeting into busy schedules and tight timelines during the initial eligibility process. The RBI can then be just as useful for intervention planning at 6-month and annual reviews.

RBI to IEP Development

As mentioned before, one of the primary purposes of the RBI is to collect information for functional intervention planning and to help ensure that IEPs are meaningful and relevant to all those involved in the care and education of the child. There can be challenges, however, in getting the information collected during an RBI into a functional Individual Education Plan (IEP). If the RBI is done at a separate meeting, it can be difficult to communicate all relevant information to all team members. Moreover, as other team members become involved in the planning process, the priorities of the family can become less significant or end up looking very different. To guard against this happening, it is suggested that the IEP meeting begin with a review of the RBI including the rationale for using this method to collect information from parents and other caregivers. Ideally, the parents can then review their priorities, or if the parent is uncomfortable in this role, the RBI interviewer can present the list.

In the next step, the team can work together to translate the priorities from the RBI into functional goals (the next section of this manual details a couple different

processes that can be used to develop functional goals) and discuss strategies for accomplishing those goals. The goals should then drive services and service levels. By reviewing each goal, the team can determine which services (e.g., speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, special education) and what level of service (e.g. weekly or monthly direct or consultation services) are needed to support the educational staff and family. The team would want to consider the experience of the classroom staff and their perceived needs for assistance in accomplishing the goals.

Routines-Based Interview Questions and Answers

1. How do we handle the routines-based interview with families who have trouble verbalizing? For families who do not have a routine?

- Ask more questions.
- Expect a shorter interview.
- The process otherwise is essentially the same; do not avoid the interview with these families. They might be the families that benefit from this approach the most.
- What kind of trouble verbalizing? If reticence, don't expect much. If language problems, speak at their level.
- "Routine" is just a word for activities: getting up, eating, bathing, watching TV, going to the store, hanging out on the porch—things any family might do.

The *Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines* (pg. 44) provides a list of guiding questions potentially useful when interviewing families about routines. Do be careful, however, not to totally rely on these questions. The most effective interview is individualized and responsive to the family's responses.

2. How do you adjust the routines-based interview for children less than 6 months of age? Sample questions for very young babies?

- Fewer routines.
- "Tell me about feeding times? About how many times a day do you feed her? When are these? Tell me about the nighttime ones. Where do you feed her? How long does each feeding last? Do you feel she has fed enough after each feeding?" [If breastfeeding, ask questions specific to that. If bottle-feeding, ask questions specific to that.]
- Ask about the parents' activities. Within those, ask about feeding, diaper changing, and playing. There are also countless other questions about the little activities occurring throughout the busy day of a parent and child that you might ask.

1. "How's diaper changing going? Has he developed a rash? Does he have fun? Where do you usually change him? Is there anything you wish would be easier about it? Do you feel confident you're doing it OK?"
2. "How do you bathe her? Do you and the baby have fun at bath time? Is there anything you wish were easier?"
3. "When you need to put the baby down so you can do something, what do you do? How does that work out? How long will he stay like that? What does he do? Is there anything you wish he would do differently?"

3. If the family indicates they want information during the IFSP or evaluation, to what extent can we provide it? (giving advice)

Use your judgment, of course, but try to avoid it by saying, "That's important. Let me write it down so I'll be sure to remember to get back with you about that." If necessary, provide a little information, very briefly, and promise to tell them more later. If they ask you, "What do you recommend we work on?," look over your notes and say, "You mentioned that X was a problem, that Y was something you wanted to know more about, and that Z was fun. Any of those would be good. Are you interested in putting one or more of them down?"

4. What if the family is satisfied with the way their routines are going and no real concerns are reported?

Just because a family does not express a concern about daily routines, it does not mean that there is nothing to work on with the child. If the family is satisfied with their child's engagement, independence, and social relationships in a routine, ask them what they think their child might be able to do next. For example, Carol, Emily's mother, says that meal times are going well. Emily uses a spoon independently, lets her know when she needs something, eats a variety of foods, and generally enjoys mealtimes. The routine is going quite well for their family, but when Carol is asked what she would like to see Emily be able to do next, Carol says, "make less of a mess when eating, or drink from a cup."

These 2 additional questions also can provide important information. They should be asked at the end of the interview.

- When you go to bed at night, what do you lie awake worrying about?
- If you could change anything in your life right now, what would you change?

Many times, those questions bring up concerns that can be addressed on the IFSP/IEP.

5. What happens when the RBI does not yield enough classroom priorities? We are being pushed to include on the IEP more and more to do with academic standards. How do we deal with this?

First, the IEP is not about addressing standards. The process is supposed to be individualized to meet the needs of the child and the priorities of the family. If the teacher feels strongly that a particular standard needs to be included in the IEP, because it is a priority for the child, the teacher needs to make her case during the RBI about why it is important to include the item as a priority. If the family still does not identify the concern as a priority, the teacher may need to state specifically that it will be important to include that it as a goal. It can be helpful when starting the teacher part of the interview also to ask about her major concerns. This can provide the teacher the opportunity to mention those specific issues. The interviewer can then help guide the process toward including those important classroom priorities. She should elicit those domain specific goals and help to explain to parents why it might be important to include them. It also is possible that after listening to the parent's concerns and prioritizes that the teacher's prioritizes will become much less important when she understands the full context of the child's life.

6. What is the ideal timing of the RBI?

It is best as a separate meeting before the IEP. If you combine the RBI with the actual IEP meeting, it can get prohibitively long. In addition, it is usually necessary to have several representatives at the IEP meeting and families may be less apt to talk freely about their daily lives with many people listening.

7. Our district will not allow us to write family goals. How do we address the concerns of the family?

We would encourage everyone to read IDEA and carefully consider what it means to be family-centered. It is important to remember that the children in these programs are whole kids who are a part of a whole family. If no family outcomes can be included on the IEP, the teachers can possibly address the family concerns by including on the family page that you will provide information, help them connect with resources, or discuss options. It also is possible to write classroom goals that relate to a family priority. For instance, if the child is being mean to the family dog, a goal might address pretend play with animals or the importance of touching nicely.

Helpful Tools – Routines-Based Interview

Below are several tools to assist professionals implement the routines-based interview.

Scale for Teachers' Assessment of Routines Engagement – STARE (pg. 26)

The STARE is a rating scale for measuring child engagement levels and interactions within the context of classroom routines. The STARE can be used to gather information to support their report of the child's engagement and interactions in classroom routines.

RBI Report Form (combined with SAFER) (pg. 31)

The RBI Report form can be used to record notes during the interview and can help organize the interview to ensure that all critical questions are asked. On this form, the interviewer can mark potential priorities (we use ☆). This version of the form also includes information from the SAFER, which provides examples of questions that can be asked during different routines.

Routines-Based Assessment and Intervention Planning Checklist (pg. 43)

The checklist delineates each step of the routines-based assessment process from scheduling the interview through goal identification. Reviewing this tool before an RBI can be helpful in remembering the components of the interview. In addition, the checklist is a good tool for professionals to use to give feedback to their colleagues when implementing routines-based assessment.

Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines - SAFER (pg. 46)

This instrument includes a list of guiding questions for professionals interviewing families about home routines. A rating scale measuring parent satisfaction is included in order to monitor progress on outcomes or goals over time.

Scale for Teachers' Assessment of Routines Engagement
R. A. McWilliam
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 © 2000

Directions: Observe the child for a minimum of 10 minutes in each of the following routines. First, rate the amount of time the child is engaged with adults, peers, and materials. Second, estimate the number of minutes spent in each level of engagement. For example, a child could spend approximately 3 minutes nonengaged, 1 minute in unsophisticated, 4 minutes in average, and 2 minutes in sophisticated. *Be sure that the total number of minutes adds up to 10* (i.e., the number of minutes you observed the child).

Arrival	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

Circle Time	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

Centers/Free Play	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

Teacher-Directed Activity	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

Snack/Lunch (Circle One)	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

Outside	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

	None of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	All of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Engagement*	Nonengaged	Unsophisticated	Average	Advanced	Sophisticated

RBI Report Form

Routines-Based Interview

R. A. McWilliam, 2003

Revised January 2006

Vanderbilt Center for Child Development

*Including the RBI-
SAFER Combo*

Directions:

This form is designed to be used to report the findings from the McWilliam model of conducting a routines-based interview. A second person (e.g., someone assisting the lead interviewer) can use the form to summarize the discussion during the interview, or it can be filled out at the end of the interview. Two versions of the routines pages exist: (1) an “open” form that does not specify the routine being discussed is written nor specific questions to ask about; and (2) a “structured” form, on which home routines and specific questions are specified. This structured form is a combination of the Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines (SAFER; Scott & McWilliam, 2000).

1. Complete the information below.
2. For each routine, write a short phrase defining the routine (e.g., *waking up, breakfast, hanging out, circle, snack, centers*).
3. Write brief descriptions about the child’s engagement in the Engagement box (e.g., *Participates with breakfast routine, banging spoon on the high chair or Pays attention to the teacher; names songs when asked; often leaves circle before it has ended*).
4. If the interview revealed no information about one of the three domains, circle *No information* in that domain for that routine..
5. Write brief descriptions about the child’s independence in the Independence box (e.g., *Feeds herself with a spoon; drinks from a cup but spills a lot or Sings all the songs with the group, but needs prompting to speak loudly enough*).
6. Write brief descriptions about the child’s communication and social competence in the Social Relationships box (e.g., *Looks parent in the eye when pointing to things in the kitchen or Pays attention to the teacher at circle but can’t stand touching other children*).

Child’s Name	
Date of birth	
Who is being interviewed	
Interviewer	
Date of interview	
“What are your main concerns?”	

Make extra copies of page 2!

Star ★ concerns and likely intervention targets

Routine				
Engagement	No information			
Independence	No information			
Social Relationships	No information			
<i>Home:</i> Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE)		<i>Classroom:</i> Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE)		
1. Not at all satisfied		1. Poor goodness of fit		
2.		2.		
3. Satisfied		3. Average goodness of fit		
4.		4.		
5. Very satisfied		5. Excellent goodness of fit		
<i>Domains addressed</i> (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):				
Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive				
Routine				
Engagement	No information			
Independence	No information			
Social Relationships	No information			
<i>Home:</i> Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE)		<i>Classroom:</i> Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE)		
1. Not at all satisfied		1. Poor goodness of fit		
2.		2.		
3. Satisfied		3. Average goodness of fit		
4.		4.		
5. Very satisfied		5. Excellent goodness of fit		
<i>Domains addressed</i> (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):				
Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive				

A. Outcomes

Before asking the family to select “things to work on,” review the concerns identified (i.e., starred) on the previous pages.

Outcome (short, informal version)	Priority Number

RBI-SAFER Combo

Combination of the Routines-Based Interview Report Form (McWilliam, 2003) and the Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines (Scott & McWilliam, 2000)
R. A. McWilliam (2006)

Routine:	Waking up	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you describe what wake up time is like? • Who usually wakes up first? • Where does your child sleep? • How does your child let you know she is awake? • Does she want to be picked up right away? If so, is she happy when picked up? • Or is she content by herself for a few minutes? What does she do? • What is the rest of the family doing at this time? • Is this a good time of day? If not, what would you like to be different? 	
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
<i>Home:</i> Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE)	<i>Classroom:</i> Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE)	
1. Poor goodness of fit	1. Poor goodness of fit	
2.	2.	
3. Average goodness of fit	3. Average goodness of fit	
4.	4.	
5. Excellent goodness of fit	5. Excellent goodness of fit	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):		
Physical	Cognitive	Communication
		Social or emotional
		Adaptive

Routine:	Diapering/Dressing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about dressing? How does that go? • Who helps your child dress? • Does he help with dressing? How? What can he do on his own? • What is his mood like? • What is communication like? • Does your child wear diapers? • Are there any problems with diapering? • What does your child do while you are changing him? • Does your child use the toilet? How independently? • How does he let you know when he needs to use the toilet? • How satisfied are you with this routine? Is there anything you would like to be different? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routine:	Feeding/Meals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are feedings/mealtimes like? • Does anyone help feed your child? Who? • How often does she eat? • How much can she do on her own? • How involved is she with meals? • Where does your child usually eat? • What are other family members doing at this time? • How does your child let you know what she wants or whether she is finished? • Does she like mealtimes? How do you know? • What would make mealtimes more enjoyable for you? • What are mealtimes like for your child when under the care of others? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; padding: 10px;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routine:	Getting ready to go/Traveling	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do things go when you are getting ready to go somewhere with your child? • Who usually helps your child get ready? • How much can he do on his own? • How involved is he in the whole process of getting ready to go? • What is communication like at this time? • Does your child like outings? How do you know? • Is this a stressful activity? What would make this time easier for you? • What are drop-off and pick-up times like for your child? Do you or other caregivers have any concerns? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; padding: 10px 0;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routine:	Hanging out/Watching TV	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does your family do when relaxing at home? • How is your child involved in this activity? • How does your child interact with other family members? • Does your family watch V? Will your child watch TV? • What does he like to watch? How long will he watch TV? • Do you have a favorite show? • Is there anything you would like to do in the evening but can't? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
<i>Home:</i> Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	<i>Classroom:</i> Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):		
Physical	Cognitive	Communication
Social or emotional		Adaptive

Routine:	Bath time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is bath time like? • Who usually helps your child bathe? • How is she positioned in the bathtub? • Does she like the water? How do you know? • How involved is your child in bathing herself or playing in the water? • Does she kick or splash in the water? • What toys does she like to play with in the tub? • How does she communicate with you? What do you talk about? • Is bath time usually a good time? If not, what would make it better? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive		

Routine:	<h2>Nap/Bed time</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does bed time go? • Who usually puts your child to bed? • Do you read books or have some type of ritual at this time? • How does he fall asleep? • How does your child calm himself? • Does he sleep through the night? What happens if he wakes up? Who gets up with him? • Is bedtime an easy or stressful time for your family? • Does he take naps for other caregivers? How does that go? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routine:	<h2>Grocery Store</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are trips to the grocery? Do you bring your child with you? • Does she sit in a shopping cart? • Does she like being at the store? • How is she involved in shopping? Do you have to occupy her or is she pretty content? • How does she react to other people in the store? • How is she involved in shopping? Do you have to occupy her or is she pretty content? • How does she react to other people in the store? • How does she communicate with you and others at this time? • Is there anything that would make shopping with your child easier? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
<i>Home:</i> Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	<i>Classroom:</i> Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; padding: 5px;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routine:	<h1>Outdoors</h1>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your family spend much time outdoors? What do you do? • What does your child do? • Does your child like (the activity)? • How does he get around? • How does he interact with others? • Are there any toys or games he engages with/in? • How does your child let you know when he wants to do something different? • What things does your child like or notice outside? • Is this usually an enjoyable time? Would anything help make this time easier? • What kinds of outdoor activities does she participate in? How much assistance does he need? How does he interact with his peers? 		
Notes		
Engagement	No information	
Independence	No information	
Social Relationships	No information	
Home: Satisfaction with routine (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	Classroom: Fit of routine and child (CIRCLE ONE) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor goodness of fit 2. 3. Average goodness of fit 4. 5. Excellent goodness of fit 	
Domains addressed (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> Physical Cognitive Communication Social or emotional Adaptive </div>		

Routines-Based Assessment and Intervention Planning Checklist

Did the service coordinator	✓	✓/ -	-	Comments	
Scheduling					
1. Determine when the routines-based interview is going to happen (i.e., before or at the intervention planning meeting).					
2. Determine who will interview the family on home routines (e.g., teacher, service coordinator, or specialist).					
3. Provide the interviewer with information or other support on the interview process, if needed.					
4. Determine who will be present at the interview.					
5. At least a day before the interview, prepare the family for the interview by telling them (a) that they will be asked to describe all their daily routines (the use of family preparation forms is optional), (b) then can choose the location, and (c) they can choose who participates (including whether it's one or both parents)					
6. Prepare the classroom teacher to talk about classroom routines.					
Interview					
7. At the interview, greet the family then tell them the purpose for the meeting (e.g., to get to know the family and to determine how best to provide support to their child and family).					
8. Ask the parents if they have any major questions or concerns before starting the interview.					
9. Ask the parents to describe their daily routines beginning with who in the home wakes up first.					
10. Listen carefully to what the parents is saying and make sure someone is taking notes.					

Did the service coordinator	✓	✓/ -	-	Comments
11. Ask the parents follow-up questions to learn about the child's engagement, independence, and social competence, and what other family members are doing in each routine (refer to the SAFER).				
12. At the end of each routine, ask the family what would make the routine better or if they are satisfied with the way things work.				
13. Put a star next to the notes where a family has indicated a desire for a change in routine or an outcome they would like for their child or family to be able to do.				
14. Avoid giving advice.				
15. After all of the routines have been discussed, review the concerns (starred) mentioned by the family.				
16. Ask the family if there is anything else that should be added to their list of concerns.				
17. Ask the teacher to describe each of the classroom routines from the time of the child's arrival through departure.				
18. Listen carefully to what the teacher is saying and make sure someone is taking notes.				
19. Ask the teacher follow-up questions to learn about the child's engagement, independence, and social competence, and what other children are doing in each routine.				
20. At the end of each routine, ask the teacher what, if anything, would make the child more successful in the routine?				
21. Put a star next to the notes where the teacher has indicated a desire for a change in routine or has said something that she would like the child to be able to do.				
22. Avoid giving advice.				
23. After all of the routines have been discussed, review the concerns (starred) mentioned by the teacher.				

Did the service coordinator	✓	✓/ -	-	Comments
24. Ask the teacher if there is anything else that should be added to the list of classroom concerns.				
Intervention Planning 25. Review all home and classroom concerns (starred) with the parents.				
26. Ask the family to list the things they would like the team to work on. Prompt the family as necessary.				
27. Ask the family what goal they would most like to have help with (i.e., first priority goal or outcome). Ask the family what their next priority is and continue prioritizing goals until all of the concerns the family wants on the plan are included.				
28. Ask the parents to review the list and add anything else.				
29. Once all of the goals are chosen by the parent, specialists share information about how goals might be addressed (i.e., strategy planning). This could happen at another meeting.				
30. Discuss with the team when services will be decided upon—this meeting or a subsequent one.				
31. Thank everyone for their time.				

Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines

(SAFER)

Stacy Scott & R. A. McWilliam (2000)

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

This routines-based interview is an assessment tool designed for professionals working with families to develop functional intervention plans. By gathering information from the family about home and community routines, professionals can identify the independence, engagement, and social competence of the child, and the concerns and priorities of the family. The goals and outcomes generated from this assessment are (a) functional (i.e., identify immediately useful skills the child needs to get through the day), and (b) transdisciplinary (i.e., do not have to be addressed by a professional of a specific discipline). The general questions included in this instrument are intended to *guide* professionals through the assessment process. Professionals are encouraged to develop their own questions to follow up with each family's unique experiences. Questions for community care (e.g., child care center) are included for those families whose children participate in caregiving environments outside of their home.

Directions: Ask appropriate questions under each routine, making notes of the families responses to the right. After all routines have been discussed, the interviewer reviews the concerns that were mentioned for each routine with the family. The interviewer asks the family to rate the routine on the following scale. Be sure to record a number for each routine.

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all satisfied

Satisfied

Very satisfied

The family chooses which concerns they would like to have addressed as outcomes or goals. Progress on outcomes or goals may be measured over time by asking the family to rate their satisfaction of routines addressed in interventions again.

Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines (SAFER)

Waking up

- Could you describe what wake up time is like?
- Who usually wakes up first?
- Where does your child sleep?
- How does your child let you know she is awake?
- Does she want to be picked up right away? If so, is she happy when picked up?
- Or is she content by herself for a few minutes? What does she do?
- What is the rest of the family doing at this time?
- Is this a good time of day? If not, what would you like to be different?

Satisfied?

Diapering/Dressing

Home

- What about dressing? How does that go?
- Who helps your child dress?
- Does he help with dressing? How? What can he do on his own?
- What is his mood like?
- What is communication like?
- Does your child wear diapers?
- Are there any problems with diapering?
- What does your child do while you are changing him?
- Does your child use the toilet? How independently?
- How does he let you know when he needs to use the toilet?
- How satisfied are you with this routine? Is there anything you would like to be different?

Satisfied?

Community Care

- Does diapering/dressing go pretty much the same for other caregivers? If not, how is it different?

Satisfied?

Satisfaction Scale: 1 2 3 4 5
 Not at all satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

Feeding/Meals**Home**

- What are feedings/mealtimes like?
- Does anyone help feed your child? Who?
- How often does she eat?
- How much can she do on her own?
- How involved is she with meals?
- Where does your child usually eat?
- What are other family members doing at this time?
- How does your child let you know what she wants or whether she is finished?
- Does she like mealtimes? How do you know?
- What would make mealtimes more enjoyable for you?

Satisfied?

Community care

- What are mealtimes like for your child when under the care of others?

Satisfied?

Getting ready to go/Traveling**Home**

- How do things go when you are getting ready to go somewhere with your child?
- Who usually helps your child get ready?
- How much can he do on his own?
- How involved is he in the whole process of getting ready to go?
- What is communication like at this time?
- Does your child like outings? How do you know?
- Is this a stressful activity? What would make this time easier for you?

Satisfied?

Community care

- What are drop off and pick up times like for your child? Do you or other caregivers have any concerns?

Satisfied?

Satisfaction Scale:

1
Not at all satisfied

2

3
Satisfied

4

5
Very satisfied

Playtime**Home**

- What does your child like to play with?
- How much does she play on her own? Are you able to do other things while she plays?
- How does she handle playthings?
- How does she position herself?
- How does she retrieve something she wants?
- What is communication like during this time? How does she let you know if she wants something?
- Does she engage in games with family members? Initiate?
- What about playmates?
- How is your child with books?
- Is playtime usually an enjoyable time? What would make it better?

Satisfied?

Community care

- What kinds of group activities does she participate in? Does she need any assistance? How does she do with her peers?

Satisfied?

Dinner preparation

- How do you handle dinner preparation? What usually goes on during this time?
- What does your child do while you are preparing dinner?
- What can he play with independently while you are in the kitchen?
- Who else is around during this time?
- How does your child communicate with you or other family members?
- Is this a stressful time for you or does it go all right?

Satisfied?

Satisfaction Scale: 1 2 3 4 5
 Not at all satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

Hanging out/ Watching TV

- What does your family do when relaxing at home?
- How is your child involved in this activity?
- How does your child interact with other family members?
- Does your family watch TV? Will your child watch TV?
- What does he like to watch? How long will he watch TV?
- Do you have a favorite show?
- Is there anything you would like to do in the evening but can't?

Satisfied?

Bath time

- What is bath time like?
- Who usually helps your child bathe?
- How is she positioned in the bathtub?
- Does she like the water? How do you know?
- How involved is your child in bathing herself or playing in the water?
- Does she kick or splash in the water?
- What toys does she like to play with in the tub?
- How does she communicate with you? What do you talk about?
- Is bath time usually a good time? If not, what would make it better?

Satisfied?

Nap/Bed time**Home**

- How does bed time go?
- Who usually puts your child to bed?
- Do you read books or have some type of ritual at this time?
- How does he fall asleep?
- How does your child calm himself?
- Does he sleep through the night? What happens if he wakes up? Who gets up with him?
- Is bedtime an easy or stressful time for your family?

Satisfied?

Satisfaction Scale: 1 2 3 4 5
 Not at all satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

Nap/Bed time, cont.

Community Care

- Does he take naps for other caregivers? How does that go?

Satisfied?

Grocery store

- How are trips to the grocery? Do you bring your child with you?
- Does she sit in a shopping cart?
- Does she like being at the store?
- How is she involved in shopping? Do you have to occupy her or is she pretty content?
- How does she react to other people in the store?
- How does she communicate with you and others at this time?
- Is there anything that would make shopping with your child easier?

Satisfied?

Outdoors

- Does your family spend much time outdoors? What do you do?
- What does your child do?
- Does your child like (the activity)?
- How does he get around?
- How does he interact with others?
- Are there any toys or games he engages with/in?
- How does your child let you know when he wants to do something different?
- What things does your child like or notice outside?
- Is this usually an enjoyable time? Would anything help make this time easier?

Satisfied?

Community Care

What kinds of outdoor activities does he participate in? How much assistance does he need? How does he interact with his peers?

Satisfied?

Satisfaction Scale: 1 2 3 4 5
 Not at all satisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

