

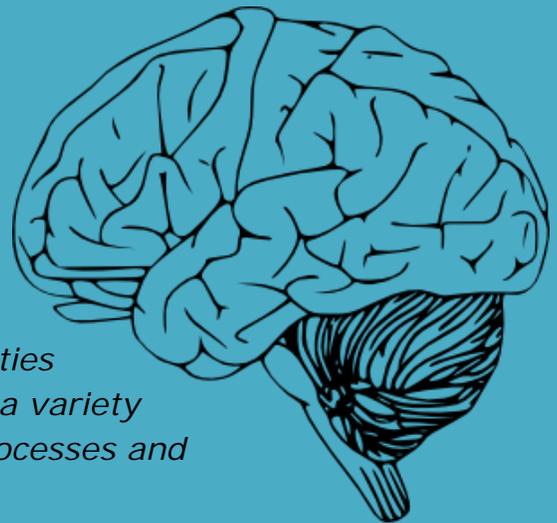
# Cognitive Processes

Cognitive development and processes are a major focus of Specialized Skills Training. As stated in the SST document, EISs are credentialed specialists in:

- Infant and toddler development, both typical and atypical patterns
- Early childhood cognition, motivation and how infants and toddlers learn
- Typical infant and toddler behavior and challenging behaviors (biting, tantrums, picky eating, sleep issues)
- Infant and toddler social interactions
- Understanding how developmental areas are interconnected

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) includes the following information in the definition of Special Instruction, called SST in Texas:

*the design of learning environments and activities that promote the child's acquisition of skills in a variety of developmental areas, including cognitive processes and social interaction.*



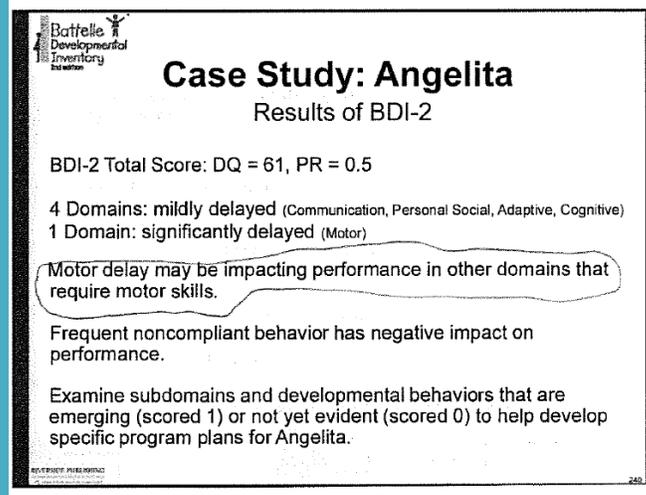
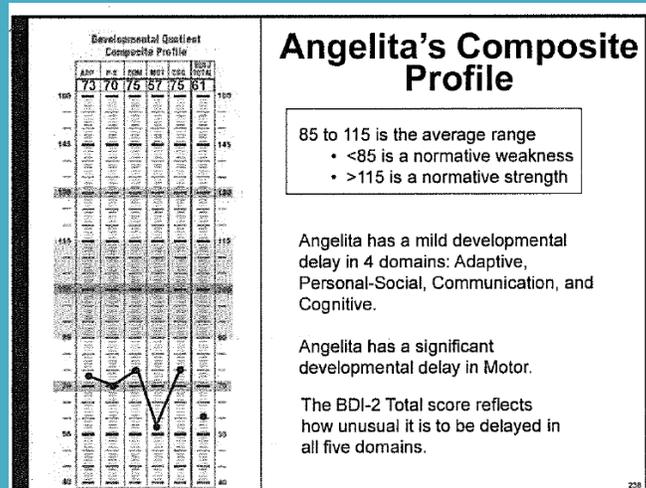
The cognitive developmental domain includes four components describing how young children develop and demonstrate abilities:

- exploring the world around them,
- solving problems,
- remembering and retaining information, and
- pretending and using their imagination.

Cognitive development is growth in children's thinking, reasoning, and understanding. Positive early experiences supporting cognitive development contribute to lifelong traits, such as curiosity and persistence.

EISs are the child development experts on the IFSP team. As such, it is important to identify how the intervention provided to address cognitive and/or social-emotional

delays will impact the development of a child in the other developmental domains. The BDI-2 Summary Sheet example below demonstrates this connection for a child with a motor delay. In this example, we can see that Angelita's motor delay might be impacting her performance in other domains that require motor skills.



The same concept will hold true for children with cognitive or social-emotional delays. Young children's development is interconnected. A delay in one area will more than likely affect the other developmental areas.

You will need to be able to talk about SST as a service to families and in the community as part of your program's public awareness activities. Neuroscientific research on the early brain is a critical part of the evidence base for early childhood. Yet it can be difficult to understand and convey this information. ReadyNation, in collaboration with the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, has

developed and compiled an array of tools enabling individuals without a science background to understand and present this evidence to diverse audiences. The following are a few tools available on the [Center on the Developing Child Harvard University](#) website.

- Heavily annotated PowerPoint presentation that can be delivered in 12-15 minutes.
- Four short (3 to 9 minute) videos from the Center on the Developing Child or Invest in US, a project of the First Five Years Fund.
- Talking points to accompany any of these videos. They can be used on their own, or embedded in a larger presentation.
- Briefs from the Center on the Developing Child which detail the foundations of lifelong health, the science of early childhood development, the impact of early adversity on children's development, and early childhood program effectiveness.



### **Activity**

After reviewing the Center on the Developing Child Harvard University website, what are a few tools you have gathered to comfortably talk to families about SST? Select 1 and practice it at your next home visit.