Please have an NNNS manual available to use during the training sessions.

The following will help you prepare for our training sessions towards the goal of becoming facile in the administration and scoring of complete assessments with a variety of newborns during the training. Practicing assessments on your own prior to training is essential, so that we can address initial questions early and help you refine your handling, smooth out the administration procedures and review and resolve key scoring questions and points.

Although these first experiences with the NNNS may seem daunting at the start, your competency and confidence with each of these aspects will develop over the course of practicing. In addition, the NNNS processes become more meaningful after you have had experience with a range of newborns who will give you more opportunities to observe the full range of handling needs and exam responses that will help you complete the reliability certification process.

We believe the schedule is realistic given our current knowledge of your interests and goals; that if you complete the review and practice, the more subtle points of the administration and scoring processes will be able to be incorporated early in our work together. We understand that your schedule is very busy, but please keep in mind that the pre- and post-visit practices are essential to prepare you for training in order to achieve certification. Make lists of all your questions and feel free to email them as you practice. Our goal is that reliable administration and scoring will be accomplished through training.

How to prepare for the training sessions:

- Review the manual and training videos thoroughly to become familiar with the purpose, constructs assessed, procedures, and terms used. Note: pre-visit “cramming” is good and will promote recall during our visit
- Review the training videos (this may include the NNNS JOVE video) and record any questions you might have. Open the PowerPoint presentation and a video clip of each item can be played by clicking on the picture on each item screen. Please call if you need help using the videos. It is imperative that you see how each NNNS item is administered so that you can practice administering each item before the training.
- Practice administering the items with a doll first, to become familiar with the handling and the sequence, and then with healthy, stable babies. Pay particular attention to items that are comparable to those included in the measures that you currently use, but involve slightly different handling
- Depending on your level of expertise and comfort as well as hospital guidelines, as a group (if more than one is getting trained from your site, or on your own, practice administering the exam with at least 2 each of the following types of babies: (1) healthy full-term, (2) healthy, stable preterm (greater than 34
weeks) and (3) substance-exposed full-term. After each exam, go through the score sheet and write down just your observations of the baby’s behavioral responses. Do this with the manual open so that you see the key observable criteria for each item and can describe the response relative to the specific indicators. After notes, discuss what you observed, what score you think most appropriate and why. Keep track of your questions, such as “what if the baby does…?” and “why would ___ be scored ___?” Also, write down where you may disagree; those discussions in the visit will be very helpful for clarifying.

These practice exams are **very important to complete on your own prior to our visit** for 2 reasons: (a) to get exposure to the full range of babies’ potential responses along each item/scales’ continuum and (b) to become familiar with the administration and recording process. Again, this practice is to help reach your goal of completing certification training in a single visit.

- Reliable administration and, scoring are most readily accomplished when examiners bring the following mindset to the assessment process:
  1) Be an empiricist! Let the baby show you who s/he is. Bring your keenest observation skills and be able to articulate what you see. Hold what you know about the baby clinically in the far back of your mind and save what you think it all “means” or necessitates for later
  2) Use your most gentle handling for item administration. Unlike physical exams, treatment maneuvers, exercises, or routine care handling, the NNNS is an assessment tool that involves consistently gentle handling that is responsive to the baby. Eliciting the most information about the baby’s characteristic behavior depends on maintaining this gentleness consistently across babies and examiners.

Please let me know what we can do to be helpful to you at each step along the way.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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