

The Infant Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (IBSE) is a rating scale adapted from the Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (BSE) and specifically related to the assessment of behaviors of young children having autistic disorders. Content validity and reliability studies described in the paper were made from behavior ratings of videotapes for 89 children aged from 6 to 48 months. Results show a significant group of 19 items including some characteristic early autistic behaviors (communicative and social abnormalities) and some that are less commonly described in the syndrome (attentional, perceptive, and adaptive disorders). The value of the use of this scale for clinicians and professionals involved in behavioral evaluations and treatment of young children with developmental disorders and the necessity for further psychometric investigations are discussed.

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A number of scales and systems have been developed for the behavioral and diagnostic assessment of autistic children (Rutter & Schopler, 1987). Most of these clinical assessment tools were reviewed by Parks (1983) and adapted and published in French; the Rimland E2 (Leddet et al., 1986), the Behavior Observation Scale for autism of Freeman (Adrien, Ornitz, Barthélémy, Sauvage, & Lelord, 1987), the Childhood Autism Rating Scale of Schopler (Rogé, 1985) and the Autistic Diagnostic Interview (Leboyer, 1985; Le Couteur, et al., 1989).

An original French scale, the Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (B.S.E.) was developed by Lelord and his colleagues (Barthélémy, 1986; Laffont, Jesseame, Bruneau, Dubost, & Lelord, 1975; Lelord et al., 1987; Lelord, Muh, Barthélémy, Martineau, & Garreau, 1981) and recently validated (Barthélémy, Adrien et al., 1992; Barthélémy et al., 1990).

Recently clinicians have been interested in finding symptoms of autism occurring during the first years of life. A few prospective and retrospective studies of the early signs in autism syndrome were conducted (Gillberg, 1989) and led to the description of some unspecific and specific symptoms at a young age. However, it has been suggested by Leslie and Frith (1990) that autistic-like social behaviors that occur in infancy are not reliably predictive of a later diagnosis of autism.

The need for objective assessment of very young autistic children was expressed as well as requests for early diagnosis and therapeutic programs. Therefore, in our psychiatric department we simultaneously developed an experimental scale, adapted from the Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (BSE), and particularly appropriate to identify early behavioral abnormalities or autistic symptoms in young children (Sauvage, 1984; Sauvage, Hameury, Adrien, Beaugerie, et al., 1987; Sauvage, Hameury, Adrien, Larmande, et al., 1987; Sauvage et al., 1989). The purpose of this study was not to devise a diagnostic rating scale but to extract from the first clinical and experimental version of Infant Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (IBSE) scale a new scale providing reliability, content validity, sensitivity, and specificity criteria, and allowing the assessment of autistic behaviors in young children with developmental disorders. This was done with three diagnostic groups of subjects: autistic, mentally retarded, plus a control group with no developmental disorders.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE SCALE AND METHOD**

*Experimental Version of the Infant Behavioral Summarized Evaluation (IBSE)*

The experimental version of the scale was developed from BSE scale (Barthélémy et al., 1990) and completed with items more appropriate to