

Screening for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

This provider resource handout will equip medical professionals with the tools necessary to screen and initiate appropriate referrals for patients with suspected intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

Developmental Screening vs. Developmental Monitoring:

Children are entitled to a comprehensive developmental and physical health examination at regular intervals under the Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends developmental and behavioral screening with a validated standardized screening tool to occur when a child is 9, 18, 24, and 30 months of age (even when no concerns are present) this is known as developmental screening. Additionally, developmental monitoring should occur and be part of every well-child preventative care visit and this is considered to be less formal than developmental screening. According to the CDC, developmental monitoring should include the following:

- ✓ Asking about parents' concerns
- ✓ Obtaining a developmental history
- ✓ Observing the child
- ✓ Identifying risk and protective factors
- ✓ Documenting the findings

Any concerns identified, should then be further assessed via a validated screening tool to determine next steps.

Adults with suspected intellectual and developmental disabilities are recommended to have formal testing if the suspected disability/symptoms/behaviors is said to be causing significant difficulty for the patient in areas such as activities of daily living, interfering with ability to learn, school, or work functioning. Formal testing can be done by a variety of qualified professionals in a variety of settings such as community mental health centers, rehabilitation services organizations, private/public psychologists, local college/university (if enrolled), and university affiliated hospitals and clinics. Additional resources for health care for adults with disabilities are provided within this handout.

Validated Screening Tools:

The AAP does not endorse any specific screening tools for early screening in children aged 0 to 5 years. However, they provide access to a number of validated screening tools via an interactive [Screening Tool Finder](#) where providers can search by category, topic/condition, number of screening questions, and languages. The Screening Tool Finder also provides cost and a variety of free tools. In addition to the AAP Screening tool Finder, there are a variety of other evidence based screening tool resources available via the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive: [A Compendium of Screening Measures for Young Children](#).

Screening for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Where to Refer a Patient for Further Evaluation:

- ✓ For children 0-3 years of age, referral for early intervention programs can be made to the local early intervention program in the family's community
- ✓ Children 3 years and older can be referred to special education services for assessment and intervention via their local school district
- ✓ Early Childhood Services in your state can be found via the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center website: <http://ectacenter.org/contact/ptccoord.asp>
- ✓ Children with behavior problems and their parents/guardians may also benefit from behavioral health services through a local behavioral health provider. Providers can be found via the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- ✓ Adults can be referred for assessment and evaluation via the above Treatment Services Locator or a private provider for psychological and/or psychiatric evaluation
- ✓ You may also find in network providers via the [Molina Healthcare Provider Portal Search](#)

Provider Resources:

- ✓ [CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early. Developmental Milestones](#)
- ✓ [Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! A Primary Care Provider's Guide for Developmental and Behavioral Screening](#)
- ✓ [AAP's Practice Resources to Implementing Developmental Screening](#)
- ✓ [Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents](#)
- ✓ [Behavioral/Emotional Concerns- Primary Care Provider Checklist for Adults with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities](#)
- ✓ [Health Care for Adults with Disabilities: Tips for Primary care Physicians and Nurses](#)
- ✓ [Vanderbilt Healthcare for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Tips and Resources Fact Sheets](#)

Parent/Patient Resources:

- ✓ [AAP Motor Delay Tool](#): Interactive tool that focuses on a child's physical development. Parents can select an activity or review by age (birth to 5 years old) if a parent believes their child is not hitting developmental milestones (e.g. rolling over, walking, etc.).
- ✓ [Child Find Programs](#): Are provided by each state to evaluate and identify children who need special education services
- ✓ [CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#): Free resources to track milestones and obtain tips and activities
- ✓ [Access Your State's Parent Center](#): These centers help families learn how and where to have their children evaluated and how to find services
- ✓ [Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive- Families](#): Free resources to see milestones, tips on what to do if concerned, developmental screening passport, developmental milestones quiz, and additional simple learning activities and concepts for children