

## Families Are Partners in Children's Developmental Screening<sup>i</sup>

As each new program year begins, child care providers learn about the children and families they serve. Screening is a key part of this process and is the best way to get to know a child and to ensure the program provides services to promote his or her health and development. As providers start screening, they engage families in the process. The conversations that child care providers have with families are important. They're about sharing information and making sure that everyone is on the same page.

[Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!](#) is a coordinated federal effort to encourage healthy child development, universal developmental and behavioral screening for children, and support for the families and providers who care for them.

Explore the topics below to discover what each child's family needs to know. The Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care have put together a list of resources to help.

### What Is Screening?

Find out what screening is and what to expect. Resources are provided to help providers connect with parents.

[Learn More about Your Child's Development: Developmental Monitoring and Screening](#) is a two-page handout for families in English and Spanish; it's also available in *Arabic* ( [قبير علا](#) ), *Korean* ( [한국어/조선말](#) ), and *Portuguese* ( [português](#) ).

[It's Better to Know](#) tells the story of a family learning about screening. It is also available in *Spanish* ( [español](#) ).

[Bright Futures™: Resources for Families](#) is a list of tip sheets that show parents what to expect at each well-child visit. It includes many other resources that are helpful for families.

[Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old: By Age](#) helps families know what immunizations their children need.

[Fact Sheets for Families: Vaccine Safety](#) helps families learn more about immunizations and the reasons they are so important to children's health and safety.

[Building Partnerships: Guide to Developing Relationships with Families](#) offers provider tips for connecting with families.

[Learn the Signs. Act Early. Developmental Milestones](#) provides families with a basic checklist of expected skills and abilities for children at different ages.

## Helping Families Make Decisions about Their Children's Health

Learn how providers maintain families' privacy and help them make decisions that promote children's health. Staff members use strategies that respond to families' culture and language.

[\*Caring for Our Children \(CFOC\) Standard 2.1.1.4: Monitoring Children's Development/Obtaining Consent for Screening\*](#) defines the family's role in screening.

[\*CFOC Standard 9.4.1.3: Written Policy on Confidentiality of Records\*](#) describes what program policies should look like [\*Consent for Exchange of Information and Consent for Release of Information and Referral\*](#) are two forms that providers can use to get a family's consent for the exchange of information between specified entities. Providers also can use the second form to refer a child for additional follow-up or treatment.

## Reaching Milestones and Possible Delays

When results show that children are reaching milestones or are having possible delays, these resources can help.

[\*Tips for Talking with Parents\*](#) offers ideas on sharing results with families.

[\*Talking to Families of Infants and Toddlers about Developmental Delays\*](#) focuses on how to share concerns about an infant or toddler with his or her parents in a sensitive way.

[\*Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! Developmental Screening Passport\*](#) is a tool that families can use to track their children's screening results. When families participate in screening and receive supports as needed, they can help their children reach their full potential. Providers who work closely with parents can help encourage them through the screening process.

## Medical Home

Another important partner is the medical home, which comprises the family's primary care doctor and his or her team. Part of screening is finding out whether a child is up to date on well-child health visits and vaccines. Health providers should have good relationships with families and share key health information. The medical home also will likely conduct sensory and developmental screenings. If they have done so, accessing the results can help providers plan services at the program. If the program conducts the screening, providers can partner with families to share results with the medical home. Together, everyone can use this information to make decisions about next steps.

The following resources help child care providers connect with each family's medical home to partner on screening.

[\*The Well-Visit Planner for Families\*](#) is a tool that programs can share with families to prepare for doctor appointments. Families can use it to make sure they share what they know about their children and get their questions answered.

Both of the following provide examples of how programs and health providers can work together as partners.

[\*The Medical Home and Head Start Working Together\*](#)

[\*Strong Connections, Strong Families: Increasing Collaboration Between Head Start and the Medical Home\*](#)

The National Center for Medical Home Implementation offers a [\*For Families and Caregivers\*](#) page with tools and information to help a family prepare to successfully partner with a child's medical home and tips and tools to help programs track health information.

[\*Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! A Primary Care Provider's Guide for Developmental and Behavioral Screening\*](#) can be shared with medical home partners to help them use the same strategies as the program. Teaming up with the family and medical home is key throughout the screening process. They can make the job easier during and after screening, particularly if a child needs follow-up services.

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