



Child Health NOTES



Promoting early identification and partnerships between families, primary health care providers and the community.

Fall 2013



FREE SCREENINGS

Vision, hearing, motor, language, feeding & behavior

For children birth - 3 years living in Spokane County

Schedule a FREE appointment!
509.324.1651

Developmental Surveillance and Screening in Primary Care: How to 'Wait and See'

Parent Perceptions

- Primary care providers (PCPs) are not listening to parent concerns about their child's development
- Both parents and PCPs tend to 'wait and see'
- Not enough health care providers are screening development
- PCPs need more information on local lead agency contacts for early intervention and community supports
- Parents need information on what to expect from early intervention and/or other community services
- Parents can benefit from peer support from someone who has 'been there'
- Parents may be overwhelmed and find it difficult to connect when referred for further services



From Parent Breakout Session at the May 10, 2013 Medical Home Partnerships and Great MINDS Summit 'Connecting the Circles: Effective Referral and Care Coordination for Families of Children with Developmental Concerns'

What should be done when a parent expresses concerns about their child's development?

- Incorporating regular screening facilitates discussions with parents when concerns arise and is superior to clinical judgment in identifying children with developmental problems. Studies have shown that incorporating a screening test before a well-child care visit does not increase the length of the visit. **A developmental screening result indicating 'typical development' in all areas should be reassuring to you and the parent.**
- 'Wait and See' - Even if a screening result is 'of concern' or showing



Children with Special Health Care Needs
1101 W. College Avenue, Room 240
Spokane, WA 99201-2095
509.324.1651 | srhd.org

Spokane County Resources for Developmental Surveillance

For children under age three, contact the Infant Toddler Network at 509.324.1651

For children age three and older contact your local school district listed below.

Spokane County School Districts

Central Valley School District
509.228.5502

Cheney School District
509.559.4507

Deer Park School District
509.464.5521

East Valley School District
509.927.9511

Freeman School District
509.291.4791

Liberty School District
509.245.3211, ext. 2215

Mead School District
509.465.7616

Medical Lake School District
509.796.2511, ext. 312

Reardan School District
509.796.2511, ext. 312

Spokane Public Schools
509.354.7309

West Valley School District
509.927.1138

How to get special needs info:

1. Go to srhd.org
2. Click on Community & Family Services in the green box on left
3. Click on Children with Special Health Care Needs
4. Click on resources listed



delay, there are some occasions when you might not immediately refer for Early Intervention (EI -IDEA Part C) or preschool special education (IDEA Part B) eligibility evaluation and pursue medical work up. If in your clinical judgment the child is not at true risk, you should develop an explicit, time-limited plan with the parent to stimulate and monitor development. The plan should include the following elements:

- o **'I hear your concern.'** Even if you indicate you are not so concerned about a child's developmental progress, the parents need explicit recognition of their concern and that you will be watching along with them. Ask about other concerns. At times the expressed concern is only the 'tip of the iceberg'.
- o **'I recommend trying these things in the next month or so.'** You are your child's most important teacher and there are things you can do every day to help your child.' Parents should be given activity suggestions to encourage skill acquisition in any area of concern. This will help you determine if this is a persisting developmental delay or deviancy in need of further evaluation. Many of the parent-completed screening questions have activity sheets available. Washington State's Child Profile Health Information mailings (aligned with the AAPs Well Child Visit schedule) include information on development and early warning signs of developmental problems. These mailings are free to parents and are also available on line. The AAP's Healthy Children website, the CDCs Child Development website and Zero to Three are examples of other internet resources that can assist.
- o **'Let's complete another standardized developmental screening tool in (one or two) month(s).'** A specific plan for a next look at development reinforces that you are aware of the parent's concern and will continue to watch with them.
- o **'If you continue to have concerns in the interim, please contact me.'** There may be additional developmental activities that will assist a family with continuing concerns. In some cases other family stressors that were not previously identified may be influencing development and local community resources can be helpful. The WithinReach Family Hotline can assist in this! If these steps are not reassuring for parents or for you as a provider, referral for EI eligibility should be initiated.
- **'If Unsure, Refer!'** Assist the family in connecting with referrals, as needed. Families may be overwhelmed by competing demands. An EI referral form is available. The EI evaluation for eligibility is free to families. Even if children referred for evaluation do not qualify for early intervention/special education or therapy assistance, there are resources - from Head Start programs to parent-child activity groups and more - that can assist parents and their children with borderline range skills. And families with a child determined eligible for services benefit from the interventions, information and other supports provided by the program.