

Research...

More than 20 years of research have proven that early intervention produces immediate and long-term benefits for young children with disabilities, their families and society. The estimated saving to society is between \$30,000 and \$100,000 per child.

Identification...

Identifying children with developmental delays as early as possible is important in the primary health care setting. About 16% of children have disabilities including speech and language delays, mental retardation, learning, and emotional/behavioral problems. In many cases, early identification and intervention could occur prior to school entry (even during the infant and toddler years), with the help of appropriate developmental screening and surveillance. A child's primary care provider is generally the best-informed professional with whom families have regular contact over the first five years of the child's life.

Questions...

For more information on how to get started in your community contact:

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The Colorado Health Foundation™



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Colorado's ABCD Project:

Assuring Better Child Health and Development



An
**Introduction to
Developmental Services
for Colorado Health
Care Providers**



Measuring...

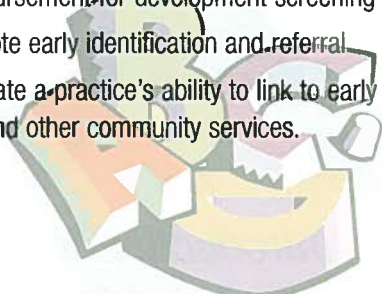
Child development, a dynamic process, is often difficult to measure. Using only clinical impressions rather than formal screenings leads to under-detection and reduces the possibility of early intervention.

Recommendation...

The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Children with Disabilities recommends the use of standardized screening tools at well child visits. Types of screens include parent questionnaires, history/interviews, and direct elicitation. Despite the recommendation to use a standardized tool, there are perceived barriers to screening in practice, including time, staff needed, and inadequate reimbursement. The Colorado Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Project began in 2004, with a pilot in several primary care sites in Arapahoe, Douglas and Denver counties, to address these barriers.

Goals of the ABCD Project...

- Assist practices in implementing an office process for screening that is efficient and practical
- Help practices learn about opportunities to obtain reimbursement for development screening
- Promote early identification and referral
- Facilitate a practice's ability to link to early intervention and other community services.



Screening...

While there are several valid and standardized developmental screening tools available, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) was selected by all of the practices participating in the Colorado pilot, based on its diagnostic elements and practical application. The practices identified several advantages of using the tool and integrating developmental screening into their practice.

Providers' Perspectives: Advantages to using a standardized developmental screening tool

- *Time efficient*—completed by parent in waiting room or exam room
- *Supports anticipatory guidance*—Serves as a talking guide with parents, identifying a child's strengths as well as things the child is not doing yet.
- *Practical*—Scoring takes 2–3 minutes and can be done by paraprofessionals.
- *Cost-efficient*—The tool is affordable and the parent questionnaires may be photocopied for on-going use; practices can bill for reimbursement
- *Valid and reliable*—helps to accurately identify when further diagnostic assessment is recommended

Referral Evaluation...

If a child, birth through two years of age, is identified by score or concern as needing an evaluation, discuss early intervention with the parent. Issue a referral and explain that someone from a local agency involved with early intervention will contact them to schedule the evaluation. The evaluation is at no cost to the family.

Support...

Both the ASQ and the PEDS screening tools are available to Colorado providers at a discounted price. In order to receive the discount, please download the order form for Colorado providers from www.earlychildhoodconnections.org. Through the ABCD Project, health care providers can also receive onsite technical assistance to get started with standardized developmental screening in their practices.

