



Assessment Tip Sheet

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

Watch Now!



WHAT IS DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING?

Developmental screening is a brief, formal review of developmental skills intended to identify children with potential delays who should be referred for additional evaluation. A screening does not provide a developmental level or diagnosis nor does it establish eligibility for services.



WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT SCREENING?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C 303.320 describes optional screening procedures:

- (1)** The lead agency may adopt procedures, consistent with the requirements of this section, to screen children under the age of three who have been referred to the part C program to determine whether they are suspected of having a disability under this part. If the lead agency or EIS provider proposes to screen a child, it must **(i)** Provide the parent notice of its intent to screen the child to identify whether the child is suspected of having a disability and include in that notice a description of the parent's right to request an evaluation at any time during the screening process; and **(ii)** Obtain parental consent as required before conducting the screening procedures.
- (2)** If the parent consents to the screening and the screening or other available information indicates that the child is **(i)** Suspected of having a disability, after notice is provided and once parental consent is obtained as required in, an evaluation and assessment of the child must be conducted; or **(ii)** Not suspected of having a disability, the lead agency or EIS provider must ensure that notice of that determination is provided to the parent under and that the notice describes the parent's right to request an evaluation.
- (3)** If the parent of the child requests and consents to an evaluation at any time during the screening process, evaluation of the child must be conducted, even if the lead agency or EIS provider has determined that the child is not suspected of having a disability.

The Wisconsin Administrative Code - Dept. of Health Services, Chapter 90(3)(c) identifies the following in regard to screening and referral for evaluation:

- 1.** A service provider may do informal or formal screening of a child as part of the service provider's routine observations or intake procedures.
- 2.** Following either a formal or informal screening, the primary referral source or the service provider shall inform the parent of the reason, procedures and results of the screening.

Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program Operations Guide
See Ch. 5 on Optional Screening



WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- If the referral source has completed a screening and determined that a child is likely to have a delay, the Birth to 3 Program should not conduct additional screening unless there is clear indication that further developmental screening would benefit the evaluation process.
- Birth to 3 Programs must honor the request of the referral source when there is indication that they are referring the child for screening or evaluation.
- At parent request, the Birth to 3 Program must conduct a comprehensive evaluation even when the results of the developmental screening do not identify the child as likely to have a delay.
- Birth to 3 Programs that choose to complete post-referral developmental screening must ensure that their process of intake and screening is intentional, consistent and administered equitably with all children and families.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING FOR PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- Screening by an informed referral network helps to identify concerns for a child's development as early as possible in order to initiate a referral for evaluation.
- Developmental screening results may assist early intervention teams in planning for evaluation.
- Post-referral screening can efficiently identify which children to evaluate for early intervention services when it is initially unclear whether they may have a delay or disability.

WHAT ARE THE CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCREENING IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

Factors to consider when deciding to conduct a post-referral developmental screening:

- Necessity: Has a screening already been completed? If so, is there value in completing additional screening?
- Timing: How does completion of a screening impact the required 45-day timeline for IFSP development?
- Method: What screening tool will be used and how will it be completed?
- Results: How will the screening results inform next steps in the evaluation process?
- Reporting method: How will information be documented and shared with the family and other team members?
- Family considerations: How will parental notice be given and consent obtained for screening?



In Part C Early Intervention, screening as part of the post-referral process is at local discretion and should never be a barrier to accessing a comprehensive evaluation.