

Screening and Assessment

Approximately
1 in every **7**
children in the
United States
faces a
developmental
disability or
disabling behavior problem before
the age of 18.



Less than **50%**
of these
children are
identified.
As a result,
they may enter
school with an
increased risk for significant academic,
social, and emotional challenges.



Why are screening and assessment important to support children's well-being?

- Children from low-income families are at a greater risk of having reported developmental delays or problems.²
- Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with unaddressed developmental, vision, hearing, or lead poisoning concerns are least likely to read proficiently by the end of third grade.³
- Children's developmental screenings can identify challenges with cognition, communication, motor skills, social and emotional behavior, and problem solving. As a result, children can be referred for in-depth evaluation and appropriate intervention to improve their developmental outcomes.¹

Screening Versus Assessment¹

Screening: The process of identifying children who may have a developmental delay or problem or who are at risk of developmental problems in the future.

Assessment: An in-depth process that evaluates a child's development in order to identify a specific developmental problem and determine whether the child could benefit from intervention.

¹ Moodie, S., Daneri, P., Goldhagen, S., Halle, T., Green, K., & LaMonte, L. (2014). Early childhood developmental screening: A compendium of measures for children ages birth to five (OPRE Report 201411). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

² Nelson, F. (2012). Achieving the promise of a bright future: developmental screening of infants and toddlers. Washington, DC: Zero to Three.

³ The Campaign for Grade-Level Learning. (2016). Ensuring early and appropriate screenings and intervention resource guide.



Project LAUNCH grantees implement a number of activities within this strategy:

- Promoting the use of valid screening tools and incorporating a social-emotional component to basic developmental screening protocols (e.g., in primary care and home visiting programs).
- Providing parent education on developmental milestones and on the importance of screening.
- Ensuring appropriate referral and follow-up after screening.
- Supporting training for providers (beginning in medical schools or medical residencies) on screening and assessment that includes the administration of valid tools as well as the follow-up required.
- Implementing systemic efforts toward a universal system that uses consistent and shared screening information across early childhood providers and systems (e.g., Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children [WIC], early intervention, child welfare, preschool, Children’s Health Insurance Program [CHIP]).

How are Project LAUNCH grantees promoting screening and assessment?

- Several Project LAUNCH grantees, such as Louisiana and Indiana, have partnered with state and local early intervention programs level to expand and enhance screening and assessment efforts.
- State- and local-level teams worked together in Wisconsin to develop a screening toolkit that includes promotional materials such as the Well-Child Screening and Immunization Record, a portable record of immunizations and screenings.
- In El Paso, Texas, health care providers receive training and protocols to help them talk effectively with parents about screening results.
- Tribal communities in Montana are integrating the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) screening into their communities.
- New Mexico Project LAUNCH partnered with Envision New Mexico and Parents Reaching Out to print and distribute developmental screening record booklets in English and Spanish.