Sharing Screening Results with Families

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Learning Objectives
- Understand how to share screening results with families sensitively
- Understand the difference between screening results and diagnostic evaluation
- Consider specific language to use when sharing concerning results
- Understand next steps to offer families after concerning screening results are shared

What Is Developmental Screening?

Developmental screening is the administration of a brief standardized tool that aids the identification of children at risk of a developmental disorder

Developmental screening does not result in either a diagnosis or treatment plan but rather identifies areas in which a child's development differs from same-age norms

Why Screen
- Provide reassurance, or discuss concerns
- Screen to Intervene
- Screens should always OPEN doors for children and families

Talking with Families: Presenting news in a thoughtful and caring manner

- Why is it important?
- Why is it difficult?
- How do we do it?

Why Is It Important?
- Children develop in the context of relationships
- Parents are the child's most important caregivers
- Early relationships matter
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Why Is It So Difficult?
• Emotions
• Stigma
• Denial

Do’s and Don’ts
• Don’t Shame……..Do Validate
• Don’t Blame……….Do Reassure
• Don’t Proclaim……..Do Provide Referral

How Do We Do It?
• Ask parents whether they prefer to have their child present for the conversation
• Share the results of the screening
  o “Reassuring,” “Borderline,” or “Concerning”
  o Describe observations (“I’ve noticed…”)
• Choose your language carefully
  o Point out strengths
  o Be clear about concerns

How Do We Do It?
• Check in with parents to learn if their perceptions & experiences match results
• Be supportive and non-judgmental
  o I hear what you’re saying..
  o I noticed that, too….
• Inquire if parents have other questions or concerns

How Do We Do It?
• Remind parents that screenings are not diagnostic
• Reassure parents that screening results will only be used to support the child and their family
• Be ready to help families take next steps

Tips to Keep in Mind
• Listen actively
  o Stop
  o Look
  o Listen
  o Respond
• Empathize
• Have a plan
Next Steps For a Concerning Screening Result

- Early Intervention (ages 0-3)
- Early Childhood Education Services (ages 3-6)
- Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (MCH)
- Medical specialists / Interdisciplinary teams
- Primary care providers
- Child care providers

For more information

Early Identification of Developmental Concerns Website
www.collaboratingpartners.com/EarlyID/development.htm

AAP site on Early Identification and Developmental Screening
www.aap.org/healthtopics/early.cfm

Ask a Question

Viewing online?
  - Click on the envelope above
  - Question emailed to Training Team
  - Questions answered by expert on topic
  - Response within 2-3 weeks

Viewing at a live training?
  - Organizer shares questions with Training Team

Acknowledgements