Provider Tip Sheet: Developmental Screening

Early childhood mental health refers to the child's ability, from birth to 5 years of age, to form close relationships, manage and express emotions, explore the environment, and learn. It is important to be aware of a child's development as early as possible. This will allow children to get the help they need to succeed in social and educational settings.

Recognizing Potential Developmental Delays

- Use developmental and milestone checklists in your classroom to help track progress and identify any concerns. See link below for a developmental checklist.
  - http://doe.sd.gov/Birthto3/devchecklist.aspx Developmental Checklist
  - https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/parents/index.html Milestone checklists and resources

Talking with Families about Developmental Concerns

- Be aware of your center's policies regarding communication and referrals.
- Talk about development regularly- not only when there is a concern.
- Start by highlighting the child's strengths. Talk about developmental milestones the child has mastered. Use a checklist as a basis for your conversation and to confirm your concerns to the parents.
- Be clear, honest, and respectful.
- It should be a two-way discussion. Allow time for the parent to respond, ask questions, and share concerns.
- Encourage parents to share their concerns with the child's doctor or healthcare provider.
- Remind the parent you want what is best for the child.
- Follow-up with the family in a few weeks.
- Remember to be mindful of cultural differences. Some cultures do not place emphasis on certain milestones and children may develop at different rates.

What is Developmental Screening?

- Research-based instruments that asks questions regarding a child's language, motor, cognitive, social and emotional development.
- It is not a diagnosis. Instead it indicates if a child is on track developmentally and if further help is needed.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children to be screened for general development at 9, 18, and 24 months of age or whenever there may be a concern.

Referring Parents for Developmental Screening

- Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT)/ South Dakota Well-Child Care
  - Preventative check-ups that provide developmental, mental health, dental, and other healthcare services to children under the age of 21 who are enrolled in South Dakota Medicaid.
  - Included is periodic developmental and behavioral screening.

- o Parents can call their primary care provider to schedule a well-child check-up.
- o https://dss.sd.gov/medicaid/providers/programinfo/epsdt/
- o https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/MEDSRVCS/WellChildCareBro.pdf
- Birth to Three Program
  - o Provides developmental screening and evaluations for children birth to age three
  - o Eligibility and referral process is located on the website.
  - o https://www.usd.edu/medicine/center-for-disabilities/birth-to-three
- Sioux Falls School District
  - o Developmental screening and evaluations available for children, birth through age 5, who reside in the Sioux Falls School District.
  - o http://www.sf.k12.sd.us/parents/school-registration-enrollment-bussing/early-childhood-screening-and-evaluation
- South Dakota Parent Connection
  - o Provides a variety of services at no cost to families including:
    - ▪ Individualized assistance
    - ▪ Information and resources
    - ▪ Referrals
    - ▪ Workshops for parents and professionals
  - o http://www.sdparent.org/web/index.php?siteid=2825&pageid=22965
  - o http://www.sdparent.org/web/site_2825_files/files/1471533188_Child_Development_Brief.pdf