

# Developmental and Social-Emotional Screening in Early Childhood

## CHILD AND TEEN CHECKUPS (C&TC) FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

Developmental and social-emotional screening is strongly recommended at intervals listed below. Developmental and social-emotional surveillance is required at every C&TC visit.

### C&TC Requirements

#### General

Developmental surveillance is required at all C&TC visits. Routine and periodic screening using a recommended standardized instrument is strongly recommended.

- **Developmental screening** at 9, 18, and 30 months of age and once between 3 and 5 years of age.
- **Social-emotional screening** at 6 months of age, continuing every 6 months through 2 years of age, then yearly.
- Refer to the [C&TC Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening Fact Sheet](#).

#### Personnel

A licensed health care provider must perform surveillance: physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or a registered or public health nurse (RN or PHN) who has completed the C&TC Comprehensive Screening training through the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

Screening personnel qualifications are instrument-specific; refer to each instrument's instruction manual for more information.

### Documentation

Document developmental surveillance in the C&TC visit record. Documentation must include the name of the screening instrument(s) used, score(s), and screening result-specific anticipatory guidance provided to the parent or caregiver. Documentation of atypical screening results must include a plan of care and appropriate referrals.

For documentation examples or for use as a template with your electronic medical record, refer to the [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms](#).

### Procedure

#### Surveillance

Surveillance includes obtaining parent or caregiver concerns about development, a history of the child's developmental, social-emotional, and current functioning, making accurate observations of the child's development, identifying risk and protective factors, and accurately documenting findings.

## Screening Instruments

Separate instruments are needed for developmental and social-emotional screening. Refer to [Instruments at a Glance for C&TC Clinic Settings](#).

## Referral and Management

Review the screening results with the child's parent or caregiver. When concerns are identified, prompt referral, evaluation, and treatment can improve a child's long-term outcomes and developmental path.

## Comprehensive Medical Evaluation

A comprehensive medical evaluation, performed by the primary care provider, determines further developmental evaluation, treatment, eligibility, and necessity for early intervention services.

## Educational Evaluation

Refer either directly to the local school district or through [Help Me Grow](#) *as soon as concerns are identified*.

## Mental Health Evaluation

Refer to the [map of Early Childhood Mental Health services by county](#) to find local providers.

## Follow-Up

Establish a follow-up process with the family after referral to ensure access to services. With the parent's permission, coordinate with educational and other professionals. Refer to [Sharing Child Information to Coordinate Early Childhood Special Education \(ECSE\) Referrals](#). Close the loop by documenting referral results.

Consider sharing additional resources with the family that are found on [Help Me Connect](#), such as parenting support and early childhood and community education programs.

## Professional Recommendations

### American Academy of Pediatrics

Provide developmental surveillance at every well visit and developmental screening with a standardized instrument at specific ages and whenever surveillance demonstrates risk (Lipkin, Macias, & Council on Children with Disabilities, 2020).

## Resources

### Minnesota Department of Human Services

- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards](#)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) Provider Manual - C&TC Section](#)

### Minnesota Department of Health

- [Child and Teen Checkups \(C&TC\)](#)
- [C&TC Developmental and Social-Emotional Screening in the Clinic Setting](#)
- [The Follow Along Program](#)

### Minnesota Department of Education

- [Early Childhood Screening](#)

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#)

## References

Lipkin, P., Macias, M., & Council on Children with Disabilities, S. o. (2020). Promoting Optimal Development: Identifying Infants and Young Children With Developmental Disorders Through Developmental Surveillance and Screening. *Pediatrics*, 145(1). doi:10.1542/peds.2019-3449

## For More Information

The Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is administered through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

For questions about this fact sheet or to obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-3650 or email [health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us](mailto:health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us).

Revised 03/2024

## Resource Links

- [C&TC Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening Fact Sheet](#)  
([www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreynouth/ctc/autismscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreynouth/ctc/autismscreen.pdf))
- [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms](#)  
(<https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/policies-procedures/minnesota-health-care-programs/provider/types/ctc-resources>)
- [Instruments at a Glance for C&TC Clinic Settings](#)  
([www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/childreynouth/ctc/devscreenctc.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/childreynouth/ctc/devscreenctc.pdf))
- [Help Me Grow](#) ([www.HelpMeGrowMN.org](http://www.HelpMeGrowMN.org))
- [Map of Early Childhood Mental Health services by county](#)  
(<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5448D-ENG>)

- [Sharing Child Information to Coordinate Early Childhood Special Education \(ECSE\) Referrals](#)  
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/childreynouth/ctc/devscreen/ecserrefer.pdf>)
- [Help Me Connect](#)  
(<https://helpmeconnect.web.health.state.mn.us/HelpMeConnect>)
- [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#)  
([https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Factearly%2Findex.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Factearly%2Findex.html))
- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards](#)  
(<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3379-ENG>)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) Provider Manual - C&TC Section](#)  
([www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET\\_DYNAMIC\\_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16\\_150092](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_150092))
- [Child and Teen Checkups \(C&TC\)](#)  
([www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/ctc/index.cfm](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/ctc/index.cfm))
- [C&TC Developmental and Social-Emotional Screening in the Clinic Setting](#)  
([www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreynouth/ctc/devscreenctc.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreynouth/ctc/devscreenctc.html))
- [Follow Along Program](#)  
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreynouth/fap/index.html>)[Follow Along Program](#)
- [Early Childhood Screening](#)  
(<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/elsprog/screen/>)