Child Health Notes

Promoting early identification and partnerships between families, primary health care providers & the community.

Distributed by Public Health-Seattle & King County–Children with Special Health Care Needs Program. This newsletter provides physicians, nurse practitioners, primary health care providers, public health centers and community partners with current information regarding identification and management of special health issues for children. Contributing agencies and programs include: Washington State Department of Health and UW – Center on Human Development & Disability.

**Decision Tree: Child with Special Needs Referral Process**

Early detection of children with developmental, behavioral, and emotional delays or disabilities is an important responsibility of primary health care providers. About 16-18% of children have disabilities such as speech-language impairments, mental retardation, learning disabilities, and emotional/behavioral disturbance. Many disabilities are subtle and are not easy to detect early. When there are concerns about possible developmental or emotional/behavioral disability it may be helpful to obtain further assessment(s) from specialists such as an occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychologist, or speech and language pathologist.

The Washington State Department of Health - Children with Special Health Care Needs Program, in partnership with the Department of Social and Health Services - Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program and local public health nurses, developed the Decision Tree: Child with Special Needs Referral Process. The purpose of the Decision Tree is to help primary care providers connect families with resources for further developmental assessment, intervention services, and Care Coordination services. The King County Decision Tree is included in this health note.

Use the Decision Tree to help you immediately identify the point of contact for:
- Developmental assessment
- Referral for intervention services for a child and/or family
- Care Coordination services for a child with special medical and/or developmental issues

**Things to Consider For Your Practice:**
1. Post the Decision Tree in your office or clinic for easy reference
2. Make sure all primary care providers in your practice have a copy of the Decision Tree
3. Make sure the nurses and office staff in your practice have a copy of the Decision Tree

**IF UNSURE, REFER. Avoid the "Don't worry, (s)he'll grow out of it" trap!**

**Information and Resources: Developmental Screening Tools for Office Practices**

- WA State Medical Home Website: [www.medicalhome.org/physicians/dev_surveillance.cfm](http://www.medicalhome.org/physicians/dev_surveillance.cfm)
- AAP Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics Online: [www.dbpeds.org/screening](http://www.dbpeds.org/screening)
King County Decision Tree
Child with Special Needs Referral Process

Presentation of Health and/or Developmental Concern
(Parent Concern or Provider Assessment)

Child Birth to 3 years?
- Child with known or suspected developmental delay
  Call: 800-756-5437
  Community Health Access Program-Early Intervention
  Family Resources Coordinator

Child typically-developing with medical issues that require Care Coordination or local resources and referrals

Child with developmental delay OR Child with developmental delay with medical issues that require Care Coordination or local resources and referrals

Child with developmental delay but no accompanying medical issues

Child 3-18 years

Call: 206-296-4610
Children with Special Health Care Needs Program Coordinator

Call: Child’s Local School District Special Education Department

WASHINGTON STATE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

WithinReach (Family Health Hotline & ASK Line) 1-800-322-2588, 1-800-833-6388 TTD
www.withinreachwa.org

Parent to Parent Support Programs of Washington (800) 821-5927
www.arcwa.org/parent_to_parent.htm

Parent to Parent Support Program King County 206-829-7039

Washington State Fathers Network 425-747-4004 ext. 4286
www.fathersnetwork.org

Washington State Medical Home Website  www.medicalhome.org

Children with Special Health Care Needs Program
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www.kingcounty.gov/health/cshcn