

Validated Screening Tools for Developmental and Behavioral Health Conditions:  
Resources for Primary Care Providers Serving Children and Youth

As part of the Healthy Children and Youth (HCY)/ Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) program, the MO HealthNet Division (MHD) recommends the universal use of age appropriate, validated screening tools in primary care settings to assist in early identification of developmental delays and behavioral health conditions. Validated screening tools have been evaluated to ensure reliability, validity, sensitivity, and specificity, and their use is considered best practice.

The links below are provided as a resource to providers. Some of the screening tools are freely available whereas others are proprietary.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Screening Technical Assistance and Resource (STAR) Center provides a list of validated screening tools at <https://screeningtime.org/star-center/#/screening-tools>. The STAR Center has organized the tools into the following categories: development, autism, social-emotional development, maternal depression, social determinants of health, and early childhood development.

Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! is a joint effort between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. This is another good resource for providers that includes a list of validated developmental and behavioral screening tools at this website: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/child-health-development/watch-me-thrive#Compendium>. A companion guide specifically for primary care providers may be accessed here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/child-health-development/watch-me-thrive>. Additionally, companion guides are available for other audiences, including families, early care and education providers, and communities.

As a reminder, the MHD requires that providers follow the Bright Futures/ AAP Periodicity Schedule, which is available at <https://www.aap.org/en-us/professional-resources/practice-transformation/managing-patients/Pages/Periodicity-Schedule.aspx>. The AAP also maintains a list of commonly used screening tools at this website: [https://toolkits.solutions.aap.org/selfserve/ssPage.aspx?SelfServeContentId=screening\\_tools](https://toolkits.solutions.aap.org/selfserve/ssPage.aspx?SelfServeContentId=screening_tools)

The AAP also has published a policy statement with additional recommendations for the healthcare needs of children and adolescents in foster care. This statement is available here: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/4/e1131>. A related technical report is available here: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/4/e1142>. The MHD recognizes that additional primary care monitoring visits, beyond the general Bright Futures/AAP periodicity schedule, may be required for children and adolescents in foster care.

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