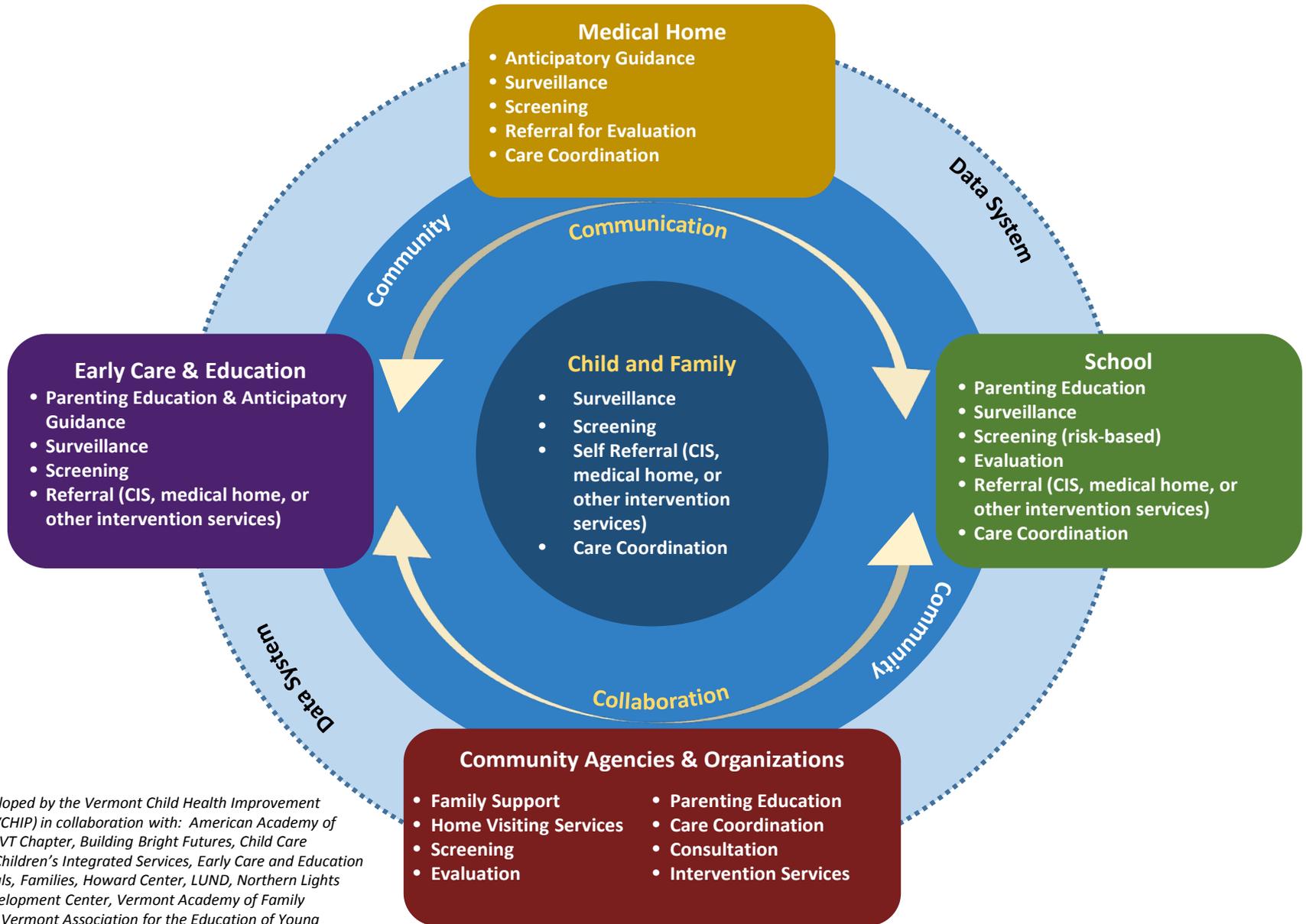


VERMONT'S SYSTEM FOR UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING (BIRTH – 8 YEARS)

Vermont's system for universal developmental screening is a collaborative process to understand every child's developmental progression and respond appropriately to meet each child's developmental needs

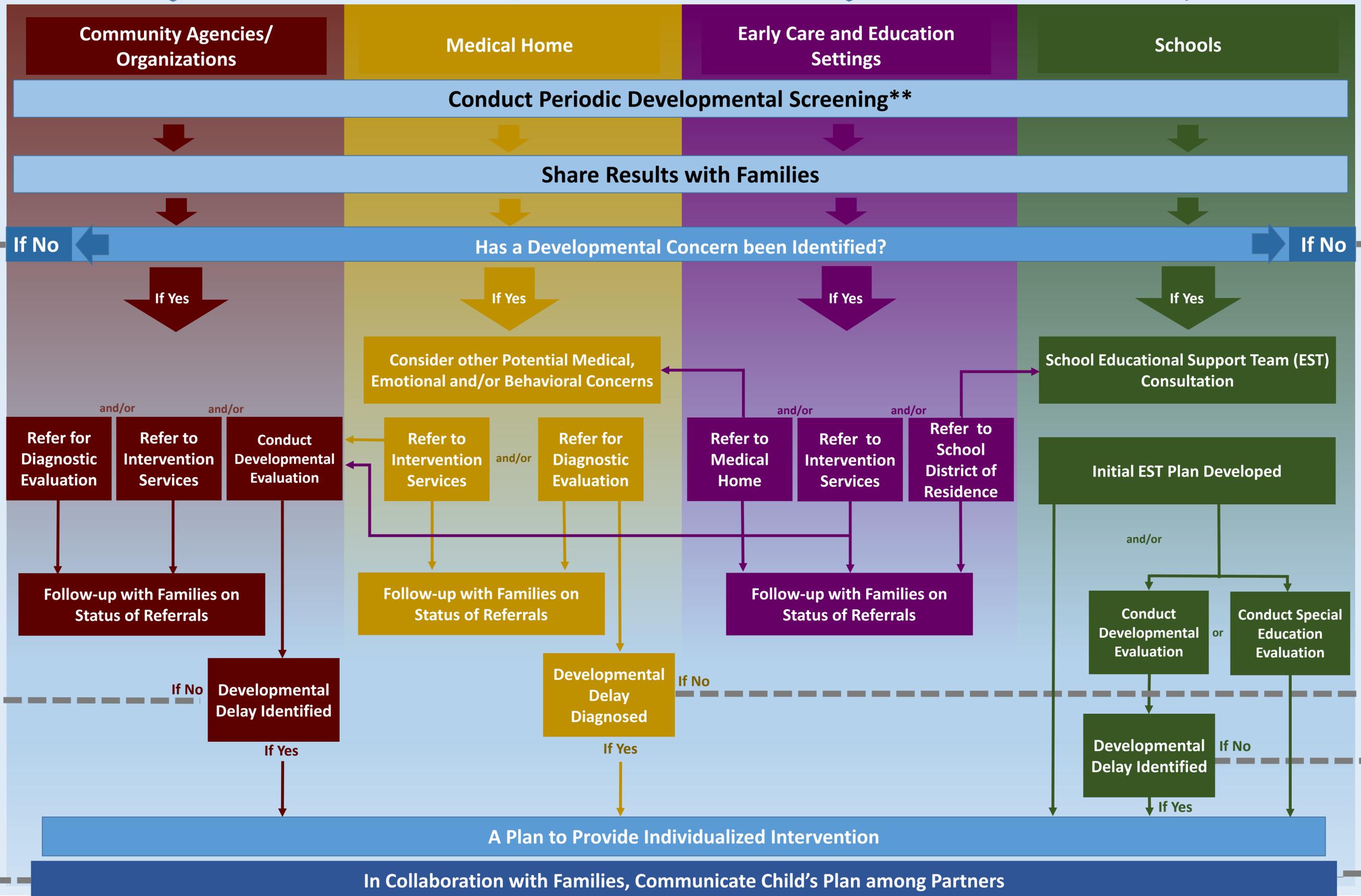


2013, Developed by the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) in collaboration with: American Academy of Pediatrics- VT Chapter, Building Bright Futures, Child Care Resource, Children's Integrated Services, Early Care and Education Professionals, Families, Howard Center, LUND, Northern Lights Career Development Center, Vermont Academy of Family Physicians, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, Vermont Agency of Human Services, Vermont Family Network, and Visiting Nurses Association

VERMONT'S PROCESS FOR UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING (BIRTH – 8 YEARS)

Ongoing Monitoring of Each Child's Developmental Progress*

Collaborate with Families in Preparation for Their Child's Developmental Screening



*Monitoring includes observation of developmental milestones, discussions with family/caregivers & surveillance of developmental progress. Monitoring takes place in medical homes, early care and education settings, community organizations, schools and wherever children are located.
 **Developmental screening for all children can be initiated across settings utilizing a brief, standardized tool. In medical homes, community agencies/organizations, schools, and early care and education settings developmental screening occurs at periodic intervals and any time a concern is identified.
 Barry, SE, Paul, K, and Smith L. (2014). *Vermont's Process for Universal Developmental Screening (Birth-8Years)*. Vermont Child Health Improvement Program [VCHIP]. University of Vermont, College of Medicine. Available from: www.vchip.org.

Common Definitions in Support of Universal Developmental Screening

Anticipatory Guidance – A proactive educational approach to support families with information, tools, and resources to support their understanding of what to expect as their child grows and develops.

Surveillance – An ongoing, longitudinal, cumulative process of recognizing children who may be at risk of developmental delays. Surveillance may occur in primary care practices, early care and education settings or other environments applying population-based strategies for early detection of risk or problems.

Screening – The use of brief and objective standardized tools to identify children at risk of developmental delay and the need for referral for evaluation. It is a formal process that occurs at defined intervals and points of entry into services and any time a child is identified at risk through surveillance. Screening may occur at a primary care practice, a mental health agency, or other early childhood or provider settings. Interpretation of screening should take into consideration other child and family contextual factors in the determination of whether one or more referrals are needed.

Evaluation – A process aimed at identifying and refining the specific nature of a particular client problem and related complex or confounding factors. When considered together, this information forms the foundation for specific recommendations and, if appropriate, leads to a plan to provide individualized intervention(s). An evaluation consists of gathering key information, exploring problem areas, formulating diagnosis(es), identifying strengths and challenges, and assessing the client's readiness for change. In best practice, the child's individualized plan integrates all organizations that provide services for the child/family.

Referral – A process of directing or redirecting a child and family to an appropriate specialist or agency for further evaluation and/or treatment.

Intervention Services – The direct (developmental) services provided by qualified professionals to address challenges and enhance the child's development. These can include but are not limited to occupational/physical therapy, counseling, audiology services, speech-language pathology services, and technology services.

Care Coordination – The deliberate organization of a child's care between two or more individuals involved in the child's care (including the family) to facilitate the appropriate delivery of services. Often this process includes the exchange of information among providers responsible for different aspects of care.

Early Care and Education Settings- A comprehensive term to include: regulated child care centers, family child care programs, and afterschool programs serving children 0-8; public & private preschool programs; Head Start; and program-based services for children with disabilities (public school Essential Early Education for children ages 3-6, and the 0-3 Children's Integrated Services Early Intervention Program).

Parenting Education- An educational or training approach to develop skills and/or increase knowledge on a particular topic targeted towards families and children.

Home Visiting Services – The family-focused, evidence-informed services, delivered primarily in the home, to address urgent or newly identified issues for the child and/or family. These services may include skilled nursing, occupational/physical therapy, Early Intervention, and/or Early and Essential Education. While home visiting services are specific, episodic and delivered in the home, **home visiting programs** are evidence-based services that work with families on a long-term basis (months or years) to strengthen families and improve outcomes by addressing issues such as maternal and child health, positive parenting practices, safe home environments, and access to services.

Family Support Services – Services focused on increasing social supports, parenting knowledge and skills, and child and family access to high quality child developmental services, medical and dental care, and safe environments.

Medical Home – The patient-centered medical home is a team-based health care delivery model that provides comprehensive primary care services to children and adults that is accessible, holistic, comprehensive, coordinated, family-centered, compassionate and culturally effective continuous care to patients.

Community Agencies and Organizations – An inclusive term for community-based settings/programs that provide services to children birth to 8 years and their families. The services may take place in the family’s home, a school or early care and education setting, at the agency, or in other locations that best meet the needs of the child/family.

The definitions listed above are intended to promote a common language and understanding of Vermont’s System for Universal Developmental Screening across service providers and organizations. We deliberately omitted the term “developmental assessment” as it is used differently across organizations serving children and families and depending on the setting it may encompass activities we define above as developmental surveillance, screening, and/or evaluation.

Vermont's System for Universal Developmental Screening

VERMONT DATA HIGHLIGHTS

7 out of every 10 children have one or more factors that put them at risk for a developmental delay³

35% of parents had one or more concerns about their child's learning, development, or behavior³

26% of children in 2012 received all three recommended developmental screens by their 3rd birthday⁵

Project LAUNCH focuses on improving the systems that serve young children with the goal of helping all children reach physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral milestones



A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS TO UNDERSTAND EVERY CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO MEET EACH CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS

What happens early in a child's life can have a lasting impact

Research indicates that early identification and intervention.³ However, in 2012, only 26% of children received all three recommended developmental screens by their 3rd birthday.⁵ While Vermont has made significant progress, there remains ample room for improvement to ensure every child receives recommended screening.

The Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) at the University of Vermont, with funding through Project LAUNCH, facilitated an interdisciplinary, collaborative process with 37 stakeholders to cultivate a shared vision, common definitions, a framework and a process map to describe Vermont's *System for Universal Developmental Screening (Birth—8 Years)* and a resulting set of policy recommendations to advance this work in Vermont (access www.vchip.org for full versions of these resources).

Nationally, there has been increased attention on the importance of developmental surveillance and screening for young children to promote early identification of developmental delays and timely entrance into intervention services. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends developmental screening within the medical home at 9, 18, and 24/30 months, and Autism screening at 18 and 24 months.⁴ Given this compelling evidence, adopting universal developmental screening is a public health imperative.

In Vermont, considerable work has occurred over the past decade to advance developmental screening in medical home settings. Between 2009 and 2011, the number of children receiving one age-appropriate developmental screening more than doubled from 21% to 51% following a quality improvement

PARTNERS

- American Academy of Pediatrics-Vermont Chapter
- Building Bright Futures
- Burlington School District
- Champlain Valley Head Start
- Child Care Resource- Chittenden County
- Children's Integrated Services- Chittenden County
- Families
- Howard Center
- Imagination Island Child Care
- LUND
- Northern Lights Career Development Center
- Robin's Nest Children's Center
- Vermont Academy of Family Physicians
- Vermont Agency of Human Services- Departments of Children & Families and Health
- Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
- Vermont Family Network
- Visiting Nurses Association
- Williston Enrichment Center

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- ¹Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2008). *Overcoming Obstacles to Health*. Princeton, NJ: Braveman P & Egeter S.
- ²NICHD Early Child Care Research Network. (2000). The relation of child care to cognitive and language development. *Child Development*, 71, 958-978.
- ³Barry, SE, et al. (2012). *Final Report: Developmental and Autism Screening in Primary Care*. Vermont Child Health Improvement Program [VCHIP]. University of Vermont, College of Medicine.
- ⁴Council on Children With Disabilities, et al. (2006). Identifying Infants and Young Children with Developmental Disorders in the Medical Home: An Algorithm for Developmental Surveillance and Screening. *Pediatrics*, 118(1), 405-420.
- ⁵Barry, SE, et al. (2013). *CHAMP Network Data Summary Report: 2012 Findings*. Vermont Child Health Improvement Program [VCHIP]. University of Vermont, College of Medicine.

Promoting Early Childhood Development, 2006-2017

2006
National Guidelines for Developmental Screening Published

2007
Regional CIS Structure established

2008
Community meetings promoted local collaboration across service agencies

2008/09
VT adopted the *Bright Futures Guidelines*, endorsing national guidelines for developmental and autism screening

2009/11
VCHIP worked with 40 VT primary care practices to improve developmental and autism screening and referrals

2011
Children's Integrated Services expands to include Specialized Child Care

2012/13
Development of VT's Early Childhood Framework & Governor's Early Childhood Summit

2012/17
VT awarded 5-year funding through Project LAUNCH to promote wellness of children (0-8)

What Is Vermont's Framework and Process for Universal Developmental Screening?

VERMONT'S SYSTEM FOR UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING (BIRTH – 8 YEARS)
 Vermont's system for universal developmental screening is a collaborative process to understand every child's developmental progression and respond appropriately to meet each child's developmental needs.



During Fall 2013, a working group began the process by developing a common vision for universal developmental screening - a collaborative process to understand every child's developmental progression and respond appropriately to meet each child's developmental needs.

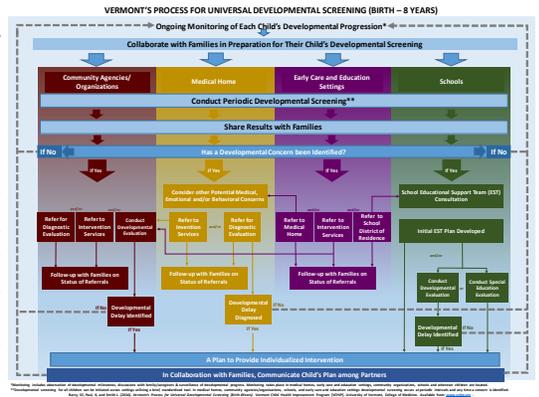
Through the visioning process, the need for a common set of definitions was identified in order to ensure clear communication across service providers, agencies, and families engaged in universal developmental screening.

Using this shared language, the next task was to describe the context in which universal developmental screening will take place. The framework (above) is a child and family-centered, community-based, ecological system describing the settings in which developmental surveillance and screening and associated services occur. It promotes close communication and collaboration throughout the community and is supported by a robust data system. This framework provides the foundation on which the process map was created (right). This map documents the process a child and family will encounter

across settings (i.e. home, early care and education, medical home, community agencies, and schools) as they participate in:

- ◆ ongoing monitoring of developmental progression,
- ◆ periodic developmental screening,
- ◆ referral to appropriate services, and
- ◆ creation and follow-through on a customized plan to promote each child's optimal development.

In Vermont, the system for universal developmental screening will be initiated across multiple settings, by a trained workforce, utilizing a brief, standardized tool at periodic intervals and any time a concern is identified. This system sets a precedent for continuous developmental surveillance of all children in order to improve early identification of risks and/or delays to ensure that children and families are linked to appropriate services and to support their ongoing learning and development.



Policy Recommendations

- **Expand promotion and prevention strategies to support optimal development for all children and families**
 Realign existing system components to increase access to services which strengthen families and decrease environmental stressors to build resiliency and protective factors. Engage professionals that care for children birth to age eight to promote increased attention to prevention and promotion strategies that support positive child developmental and family outcomes.
- **Eliminate barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration and communication in support of universal developmental screening**
 Build relationships across organizations and settings that serve children and families, establish clear expectations for communication and follow-up, and coordinate services that are family-centered and strengths-based. Provide training and technical assistance to professionals caring for children birth to age eight by providing a common vision, language, and framework to support implementation of *Vermont's System for Universal Developmental Screening*.
- **Create an accessible data system which houses developmental screening results in real time and makes them available to collaborating service providers and families**
 Ensure professionals caring for children birth to age eight have access to a data system that captures every child's developmental screening results over time. The data system will increase efficiency across service providers by allowing easy access to screening results, providing more timely interpretation, and facilitating follow-up for children with a developmental concern. Explore linkages with other data systems related to child outcomes, particularly the Building Bright Futures Early Childhood data reporting system.
- **Ensure all children receive culturally responsive and appropriate developmental care**
 Provide professionals caring for children birth to age eight with access to culturally competent resources and training to support ongoing developmental surveillance, screening, and intervention services, when appropriate.
- **Increase the knowledge, skills, and capacity of professionals caring for children birth to age eight to assess each child's developmental progression through *Vermont's System for Universal Developmental Screening***
 Provide training and support to programs/staff to develop and/or enhance systems to monitor every child's developmental progression, engage families in ongoing communication about their child's development, conduct structured developmental screening, and make appropriate linkages to support services.
- **Increase community readiness and the capacity of families with children birth to age eight to understand their child's developmental progress and participate in *Vermont's System for Universal Developmental Screening***
 Provide tools, resources, and training to strengthen family and caregivers' awareness of the importance of supporting early childhood development and families' participation in *Vermont's System for Universal Developmental Screening*.