

Minnesota Interagency Developmental Screening Task Force FAQs

What is the Interagency Developmental Screening Task Force?

The Minnesota Interagency Developmental Screening Task Force is a partnership that reviews and recommends developmental and social-emotional screening instruments for use in Minnesota's public screening programs for children ages birth to 5 years. Representation from the Minnesota Departments of Human Services (DHS), Education (MDE), and Health (MDH) allow for statewide coordination of screening efforts and consistent standards for approved instruments. Our vision is for all children in Minnesota to be at their optimal health and development and ready to learn.

What is the mission of the Task Force?

All children in Minnesota birth through age 5 will receive equitable, high quality, family-centered, culturally and linguistically sensitive, routine and periodic developmental and social-emotional screening in a coordinated, non-duplicative system that ensures linkage to services and resources that support healthy child development and family well-being.

What strategies does the Task Force use to achieve its mission?

- Coordinate to ensure statewide alignment of screening instrument recommendations, training, and outreach.
- Reviews tools to ensure they meet the Task Force's criteria for Minnesota's public screening programs. Refer to [Developmental and Social-emotional Screening Instrument review process and criteria \(state.mn.us\)](#)
- Recommend instruments that meet the criteria for accuracy and reliability and lists them on the [recommended screening instruments \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](#) web page.
- Support the development of culturally and linguistically appropriate tools and processes to ensure an equitable and accurate screening system.
- Promote and assure access to training and consultation for screening programs.
- Serve as an advisory group to screening and referral related projects and initiatives.
- Identify and support policy changes to increase effectiveness and decrease gaps in Minnesota's early childhood system of screening, referral, and linkage to services.
- Measure progress toward statewide screening and coordination.

What is screening and why is it important?

Screening is a process using a standardized tool and performed on a population with the intention of identifying concerns in those without noticeable problems. Screening does not provide a diagnosis; it is a first step in an evaluation. Screening is important because identifying concerns before they become obvious results in better outcomes for treatment and intervention.

What are public screening programs?

Minnesota public screening program's purpose is to provide screenings. These include District or Charter Early Childhood Screening. The Follow Along Program, and well child health visits for Medicaid eligible children, also known as Child and Teen Checkups. Other public programs include screening as part of the services they offer, such as Family Home Visiting, Head Start and Early Head Start, or Child Welfare (Child Protection). More information is available online about [screening programs in Minnesota \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us).

Are there recommended tools that are available in other languages or with culturally appropriate adaptations?"?

This information is listed in the comparison grids for each recommended tool for developmental [parent report \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us) or [observational \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us) instruments or [social-emotional instruments \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us).

How does my program choose an instrument?

Refer to [Choosing an instrument: Points to consider \(state.mn.us\)](http://state.mn.us).

What if I am interested in other tools?

A list of rationale for tools that are not currently recommended is posted at the bottom of the [recommended screening instruments \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us) webpage. Contact health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us for questions or information about other tools.

What tools screen for trauma or autism?

The tools recommended by the task force are intended to screen for developmental and social emotional concerns. Some recommended screening tools can screen for symptoms typical of children experiencing trauma or autism spectrum disorder. For autism screening recommendations, refer to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [recommendations and guidelines \(www.cdc.gov\)](http://www.cdc.gov).

What about maternal depression?

Recommendations for postpartum depression screening are not included in the Task Force scope of work, but more information is available on the MDH [Perinatal Mental Health – Information for Providers \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](#) webpage.

What if I want to screen older children?

For information on screening older children, refer to the [Child and Teen Checkups Mental Health Screening Fact Sheet \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](#).

Who may I contact if I have questions about the tools?

For questions, more information, or to obtain this information in a different format, call the Minnesota Department of Health Maternal Child Health Section at 651-201-3650 or email health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us.

Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Developmental Screening Task Force
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