

Using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires with Parents

1. Let the parent know why and when you will be screening the child.
2. Assemble the appropriate materials to complete the questionnaire (Materials List in your User's Guide)
3. Determine your strategy: parents will read and fill out the form with you, with your assistance, or you read and they do the activity. Be sure they have a copy to refer to also.
4. Sample words to describe the ASQ.
 - "The ASQ is a tool that you can use to check your child's development."
 - "Your child will be able to do some of the items, but not all of the items."
 - "You can help your child practice the skills we do on the ASQ."
 - "Your answers can help show your child's strengths and any areas where your child may need support or more practice."

5. Explain the scoring system.
 - "Yes" indicates your child is performing the skill regularly.
 - "Sometimes" indicates the child is just beginning to perform the behavior or skill." (an emerging skill)
 - "Not Yet" indicates your child is not yet performing the behavior.

6. Introduce each area of development to the parents.

Communication: looks at your child's language skills, both what she understands and what she can say.

Gross Motor: looks at your child's large muscle movement and coordination.

Fine Motor: looks at your child's hand and finger movement and coordination.

Problem Solving: looks at how your child plays with toys and solves problems.

Personal/Social: looks at your child's self help skills and interactions with others.

The Overall Section: asks important questions about your child's overall development and any concerns you may have.

7. Administer and Score the Questionnaire
 - You can score the Questionnaire with the family in their home or in your office.
 - Transfer the area scores to the summary sheet.
8. Discuss the results with the family as soon as possible after the screening.
 - Emphasize strengths.
 - Explain the cut-off points.

- Plan next steps with family. (con't.)

If the child falls below the cut-off in any area...

Explain to the family that this is an area of caution. It will be important to recommend and support the process of a referral to Early Intervention. Reassure them that this is only a small look at their child's skills, and it may be important to have a specialist take a closer look.

If the child falls at or just above (monitoring zone) the cut-offs in any area...

Discuss ways the parent can support and provide opportunities to practice skills in this area of development. Discuss any concerns addressed by the family in the overall section. Offer suggestions or activities, resources, or referrals as appropriate.

If the child falls well above the cut-offs in any area...

Provide activities and continue to monitor (re-screen) the child every 4-6 months or as your programs prescribes. Remember that completing all items in any area of the ASQ indicates the child is developing typically, not beyond their age-range.

ASQ "Sharing Results" Tips

Steps:

- Discuss specific items of strength
- Discuss "concerns"
- Discuss responses to overall section
- Discuss next steps

Approach: Remember the Wicked Witch in the Wizard of OZ? She said, "These things must be done delicately!"

- Always state the strengths of the parent and child and build on small successes.
- Be careful not to label, even the most positive of behaviors.
- Be prepared to inform the parent about what typically developing children can be expected to do at each age.
- Validate the parents concerns and frame it in what you know about that particular family's situation.
- Help parents gain a sense of perspective in terms of the time it takes for a child to become a capable adult.
- Use experts in your community to help you and the parents you serve gain more knowledge in this area.
- If more resources are indicated but not available, give the family confidence that the small steps they take can influence the child and are better than not attending to this concern.