

IOWA GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE THE HEALTHY MENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN

A THREE-TIER SYSTEM OF CARE

The healthy mental development in Iowa's young children, birth through 3 years, will be approached using a three-tier system of care, defined as follows:

- **Level 1**—Preventive developmental services for all children (developmental and mental health surveillance, parental risk screening, anticipatory guidance, information and care coordination)
- **Level 2**—Developmental services for children at risk for developmental, behavioral or social-emotional problems (standardized screening and less intensive interventions, e.g., parent education, problem-focused counseling, child-care or preschool, and case management)
- **Level 3**—Assessment for diagnosis and the development of a treatment plan and the delivery of intensive services for children with a diagnosis such as special education, rehabilitation, individual and family counseling, and other evidenced-based treatment.

GUIDELINES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Iowa's **ABCD II Healthy Mental Development Initiative** recommends the following guidelines to help providers identify developmental, behavioral and social-emotional concerns that may arise in children from birth through 3 years who participate in Medicaid.

Level 1—Surveillance for all children

Guideline: Every regular EPSDT well-child exam for a child 0-3 years will include surveillance of cognitive, motor, language, adaptive, social, and emotional development. Each exam must elicit and address parental concerns about the child's growth and development, and review the following:

- Developmental milestones
- Social, emotional, and behavioral health, including early signs of autism
- Family risk factors, including parental stress and maternal depression

Level 2—Screening for children at risk

Guideline: Every child 0-3 years old who is identified as at risk in any domain during surveillance, as well as children the health care provider feels need additional developmental, social, emotional, or behavioral screening, must receive *Level 2* screening using standardized tools. This screening may be completed in the health provider's office or the health provider may refer the child to another community agency for *Level 2* screening. If indicated, the health provider may also refer a child directly for *Level 3* assessment.

Level 3—Assessment for children with identified developmental or social-emotional concerns

Guideline: Children birth through three who do not pass standardized screening or who, in the opinion of the practitioner, require further evaluation will be referred for a systematic, comprehensive assessment that includes standardized measures of the child and family's functioning. Such an assessment is performed for the purposes of diagnosis and the creation of a treatment plan.