



Jeffrey D. Shahidullah¹, Susan G. Forman², Amy M. Norton³; Jill F. Harris^{3*}; Mohammed Palejwala⁴; Anindita Chaudhuri²

¹University of Texas at Austin, ²Rutgers University-New Brunswick; ³Children's Specialized Hospital; ⁴Michigan State University

Introduction

- Early identification of children at risk for developmental delays is a preventive practice that can improve their developmental trajectory while reducing the negative effects of a disability
- Effective screening is the first step to diagnosis and provision of early intervention services
- Public policy initiatives at the federal and state levels have focused on the role of childcare providers in implementing developmental screening
- This study investigates the extent to which childcare providers implement developmental screening and subsequent referral when needed
- Perceived barriers and facilitators to implementation were examined in addition to the relative influence of individual and organizational factors that facilitate or hinder implementation

Methods

- Surveys were completed by childcare center directors/staff who attended a state-recommended 3-hr training session on using the ASQ-3 for developmental screening
- Survey was 30 items and contained 27 multiple-choice or Likert-type items and three open-response items.
- Survey's assessed characteristics of Childcare Providers/Centers, Attitudes about developmental screening, attitudes and practices about the ASQ-3 and future needs
- The response rate to this survey was 51.7% (n = 134/259) potential respondents
- Quantitative data analyses included descriptive statistics and correlational analyses to explore relationships between variables
- Qualitative data were examined through classical content analysis

Results - I

- Most respondents strongly agreed on the value of all children receiving developmental screening in their childcare centers, on discussing developmental concerns with parents, on the importance of linking children with developmental concerns to resources, and strongly agreed on the supported use of the ASQ-3 by center directors
- Findings indicate that after brief training, childcare providers report feeling competent to administer a developmental screening instrument, while 39% of respondents indicated having screened the children in their childcare centers with the ASQ-3, majority of the respondents indicated an intention for future use
- Respondents indicated concern about the time and financial requirements of screening and on working with parents to complete the screening instrument, receiving feedback, and follow-up on referrals for further services
- Findings indicate that several individual attitudes and organizational issues may need further attention in planning for successful implementation of screening measures by childcare providers
- Follow-up assistance and other technical assistance may result in fuller, more effective implementation (see Table 1)

Results - II

Table 1: Thoughts on Future Needs

Characteristic	N	n (%)
I would like to have additional information on	118	
Doing developmental screening	36 (30.5)	
Discussing developmental screening with parents	69 (58.9)	
Linking families to services	84 (71.2)	
I would like to have additional information on these issues through the following method(s)	118	
Workshops	73 (61.9)	
Printed materials	69 (58.5)	
In-person consultation and problem-solving	84 (71.2)	
Telephone consultation	5 (4.2)	
Web-based consultation	41 (34.7)	

Conclusions

Administration of developmental screening measures in childcare settings has the potential to increase early identification of children at risk for developmental delays

Brief training can yield positive results with childcare providers' competence to administer screening measures