

## Sources of Information About Community-Based Developmental Screening Program Practices

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This *Milemarkers* bibliography includes selected references for conducting community-based screening programs for identifying those infants, toddlers, or preschool children who should receive further evaluations and assessments to determine if they are eligible for early intervention or preschool special education. Community-based screening programs are designed to reach all children of a certain age and occur in various community locations (e.g., community fairs, child-care centers). References to community-based screening practices as well as research on community-based screening practices are included.

Conducting community-based screening programs that identify children who may be eligible for early intervention or preschool special education is one type of child-find activity as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997). Screening programs constitute a procedure whereby young children are identified who need further evaluations and assessments to determine if they are eligible for early intervention or preschool special education programs. Community-based screening programs are often implemented as collaboratives between early intervention or preschool special education program practitioners and other community programs or organizations to identify children at risk for developmental disabilities or delays.

This *Milemarkers* includes selected references on basic screening issues and approaches (Bondurant-Utz, 2002) and specific community-based screening programs and approaches (e.g., Rice, Rider, & Pollard, n.d.). Community screening program practices are one type of child-find activity (Dunst & Trivette, 2004) that constitutes the focus of research and practice at the Tracking, Referral and Assessment Center for Excellence ([www.tracecenter.info](http://www.tracecenter.info)).

### Community-Based Developmental Screening Programs

#### General Developmental Screening Practices

Developmental screening is a process designed to identify children who may have a developmental delay or disability and require further evaluation. Though screenings may vary, depending on the age of the child, developmental screenings generally focus on the assessment of cognition, communication, motor, social and emotion-

al, self-help, and sensory development. These types of screenings can occur in a variety of settings, including, but not limited to, community fairs, child-care centers, and physician offices (Trivette & O'Herin, 2004).

The sources included in this section of the bibliography provide information regarding developmental screening in early childhood settings including information about the rationale for early screening, as well as information on a variety of early developmental screening issues. Other resources specifically address the effectiveness of community screening efforts (Cadman, Chambers, Feldman, & Sackett, 1984) or provide standards for conducting screening programs (Kochanek, 1993; Wolery, 1989). The American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Children with Disabilities (2001) also provides recommendations regarding early screening practices.

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### Child-Development Days

Child-development days are community-based child screening and parent education events that are implemented at specific times and places in the community and are conducted collaboratively with other early childhood agencies including schools, early intervention programs, and human-services agencies (Wright & Ireton, 1995). These types of screening programs focus on developmental and health issues in young children and generally use a variety of strategies to gather screening information: parent questionnaires; developmental screening through observation of child play; hearing, vision, and health screening; and parent-professional discussions of children's development.

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### Child-Care-Based Screening Programs

General developmental screenings are frequently conducted in child-care centers and other early childhood settings. Early Head Start (Early Head Start National Resource Center, 2000), Head Start (O'Brien, 2001), and other programs (Ni Bhrolchain, 2002) are typical places where developmental screenings are conducted. The reader is referred to a number of resources that emphasize standards for quality screening and assessment in these environments (Printz, Borg, & Demaree, 2003) and research regarding the effectiveness of screening practices in child-care settings (Glascoe, Foster, & Wolraich, 1997).

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### Summary

Practitioners responsible for child-find activities have at their disposal a number of options for conducting community-based developmental screening programs to identify infants, toddlers, and preschool children who are potentially eligible for early intervention or preschool special education. This *Milemarkers* includes selected references to practice descriptions and research on the characteristics of community-based developmental screening programs that can be used to identify children who should receive further evaluations and assessments to determine their eligibility for early intervention or preschool special education services.

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