

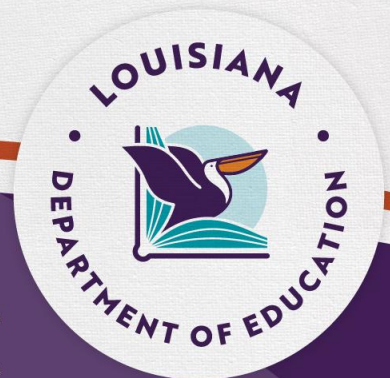
TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT 2025



A *New Story* for LOUISIANA EDUCATION

The Importance of Developmental Screening in Early Childhood for Children Ages Birth to Five

JUNE 10-12, 2025 | ERNEST N. MORIAL
CONVENTION CENTER | NEW ORLEANS, LA

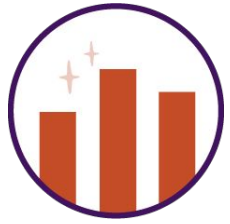


Agenda

- I. Session Overview
- II. Objectives
- III. LDOE Education Priorities and High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle
- IV. The Importance of Early Identification Through Developmental Screening
- V. Benefits of Developmental Screening
- VI. Supporting Children after Screening
- VII. Building Connections to Coordinate Supports
- VIII. Resources
- IX. Closing



Session Overview



- The goal of this session is to help participants gain knowledge about the importance of early and accurate identification for young children ages birth to five.
- This session will help participants better understand the purpose of developmental screening.



Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- explain the importance of developmental screening and describe how screening results can be used to support young children with disabilities;
- describe the steps involved in the developmental screening process for children ages birth to five; and
- identify key resources and materials that support developmental screening.



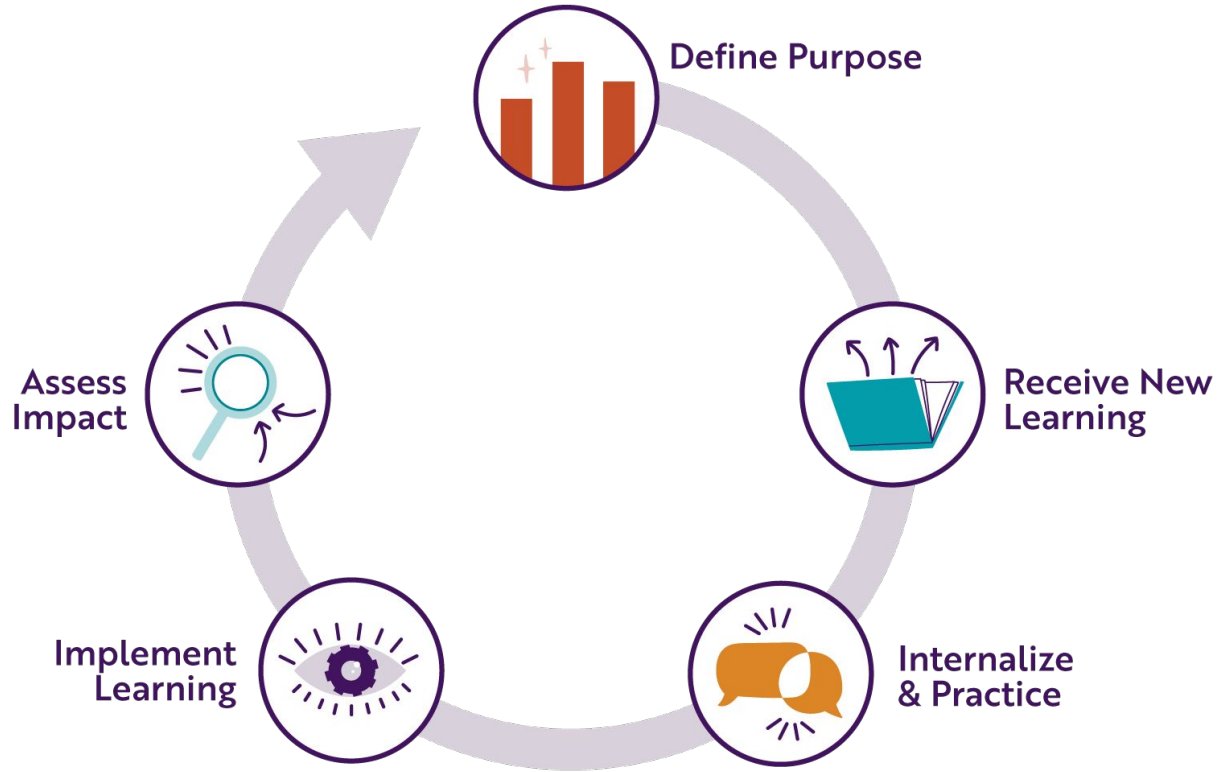


LDOE Education Priorities and High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle

Louisiana's Education Priorities

- ✓ **Early childhood** leading to kindergarten readiness
- ✓ **Literacy** instruction aligned to the Science of Reading
- ✓ **Math** instruction from foundational to advanced skills
- ✓ Opportunities ensuring a **meaningful high school experience**
- ✓ An effective **teacher for every student**
- ✓ Expand **educational choice** for students and families

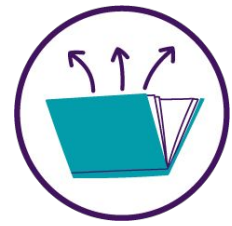
High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle





The Importance of Early Identification Through Developmental Screening

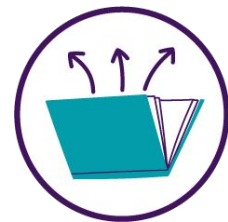
Early and Accurate Identification



- Early and accurate identification allows the IFSP/IEP team to clearly determine the child's present level of academic and functional performance.
- Goals are more meaningful and effective when linked to accurate present levels of academic and functional performance.



Early and Accurate Identification

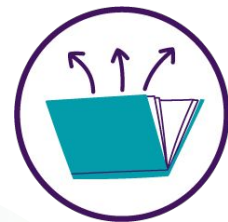


Appropriately identifying young children with disabilities is critical for ensuring that learners receive the supports needed to meet early milestones and succeed in school.

- *According to the CDC, developmental delays, learning disorders, and behavioral problems are estimated to affect 1 in every 6 children.*
- *Fewer than 30% of young children with disabilities are identified as needing help before school begins.*



The Importance of Early Identification



Children who receive early intervention for developmental delays are more likely to graduate from high school, hold jobs, and live independently. To identify students **EARLY**:

- Choose and administer a screening assessment to every child upon entry into the system: in child care, prekindergarten, or kindergarten.
- Schedule regular [diagnostic screenings](#) for every child: cognitive, speech/language, well-being, fine/gross motor and vision/hearing.

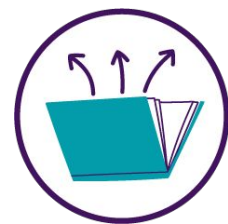


[Early Childhood Developmental Screenings Guidebooks](#)

Receive New Learning



Coordinating Accurate Identification



Early identification leads to more accurate identification by:

- intervening earlier with specialized services that are aligned to the needs and skill gaps
- increasing the opportunities to meet developmental and academic goals

To identify students **ACCURATELY**:

- Educate staff on the administration of screening assessments and how to use them effectively.
- Enact a comprehensive screening and intervention plan.
- Provide professional development for all teachers regarding the screening and intervention process.

Reminder: Interventions are not required for preschool-aged children and cannot delay the referral process to determine eligibility for services.

Educational Impacts of Early and Accurate Identification



The educational impacts of early and accurate identification can change the trajectory of a child's life:

- Early and accurate identification allows the IFSP/IEP team to clearly determine the child's present level of academic and functional performance.
- IFSP/IEP goals that are linked to accurate present levels of academic and functional performance are more meaningful and effective.
- Meaningful goals allow service providers and educators to support the individual needs of the child to close any gaps that are present.



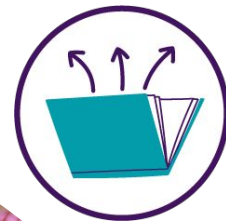


Benefits of Developmental Screening

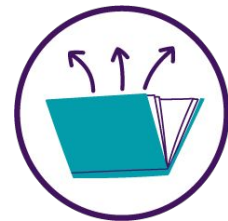
Developmental Screening

Developmental screening helps to identify developmental concerns in children. The ongoing process of screening helps to:

- support early identification
- provide caregivers and educators with information that will help them to target specific gaps in development
- build family engagement and trusting relationships.



Purpose of Developmental Screening

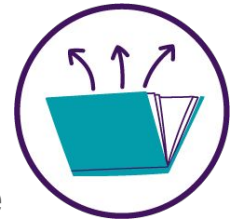


Screening provides a quick snapshot of a child's developmental status. Screening also indicates whether further evaluation is needed to identify potential difficulties that require interventions or special education services.

It is important to know that developmental screenings should

- be brief
- focus on developmental skills
- indicate the possible presence of a developmental delay
- be followed by more comprehensive and formal evaluations to confirm findings

What is a Developmental Screener?

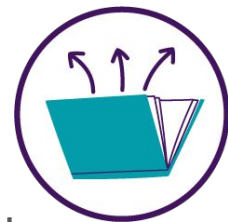


A developmental screening is a parent-facing screening that is done by the parent with the help of a healthcare provider, early childhood teacher, or other professionals to look for developmental milestones from birth through age 5.

Developmental screening tools are

- assessments that are done to identify gaps in development;
- brief, focusing on developmental skills, and indicating the possible presence of a developmental delay
- used to inform the need for further screening based on specific domains and engage families in sharing how the child is developing
- administered at various age intervals
 - ASQ-3 screenings can be used to track child development at any stage of development.

Benefits of Developmental Screening

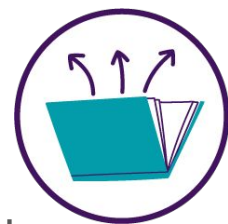


Developmental screening benefits children by providing them with a better understanding of the gaps in development to better support individual needs.

Benefits to **children**:

- Screening can provide a comprehensive assessment of a child's strengths and areas of needed support when it works in conjunction with formative assessments.
- Screening is a reliable way to distinguish children who may benefit from additional assessments and ensure the right supports are implemented early and accurately.

Benefits of Developmental Screening

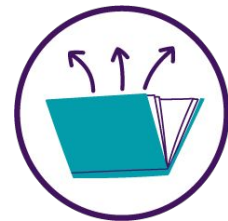


Developmental screening benefits families by providing them with a better understanding of the gaps in development to better support individual needs.

Benefits to *families*:

- Screening provides an opportunity to address family concerns.
- Screening educates families on child development.
- Screening provides a pathway to connect families to community resources that support their child's individual needs.

Developmental Screening: ASQ-3



Tools and resources that educators can use to monitor child development include the following:

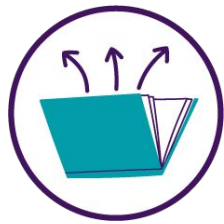
The [Ages & Stages Questionnaires®](#), Third Edition (ASQ®-3), used by pediatricians and early educators.

- The questionnaires are family-friendly, are easy to use, and help create the snapshot needed to celebrate milestones and identify delays in development.

EarlySteps, Louisiana's program for infants and toddlers with disabilities, also uses the Ages & Stages Questionnaire in their screening process.



Benefits of Parent Reporting Screening Tools

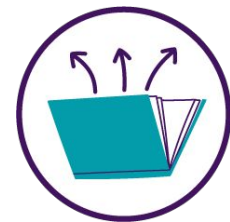


Parent reporting screening tools provide the parents' perspective on their child's development. These screening tools are:

- typically highly accurate
- deliberately brief and easy for parents to complete
- very flexible and can be sent home to be completed independently, taken on home visits, completed in child care or preschool settings, or filled out in waiting rooms
- make use of parents' unique perspective on their child's behavior and activities in various natural settings
- can become effective parent education instruments

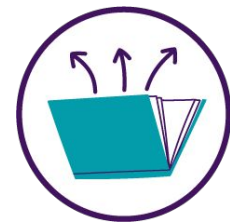


Who Supports Developmental Screening?



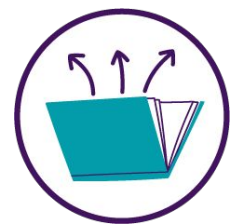
Who Supports Developmental Screening	How Do They Support Developmental Screening?
Families	Provide key information about their child that may assist in identifying areas where additional support might be needed.
Teachers	Establish and build ongoing relationships with families so that conversations regarding development are happening consistently and concerns are addressed consistently.
Pediatricians	Screen children at well-visits and can assist in providing information when formal referrals are suggested.

Who Supports Developmental Screening?



Who Supports Developmental Screening	How Do They Support Developmental Screening?
Early Childhood Programs	Regularly work with children and families to build a culture of developmental monitoring. Early Childhood Programs champion screening and offer support when needed.
Community Entities	Educate the community in an effort to normalize the process of screening for all children and enlist the community's support in advertising pertinent resources.

Developmental Screening Guidance



The Louisiana Department of Education Developmental Screening Guidance contains

- Developmental screening background information
- Recommendations on screening tools and periodicity
- Recommended developmental screening tools
- Framework for screening implementation
- Developmental screening framework self-assessment



Early Childhood Developmental Screening Guidance

Louisiana must ensure that young children and their families receive individualized services and resources, so that all children enter the K-12 system with the competencies and support they need to access and participate in the general curriculum and in all aspects of the school.

Why is developmental screening so critical?
Developmental disabilities and delays can often go undetected. Universal screening and surveillance of all children for early identification leads to long-term achievement. When supported by early childhood educators and professionals, as well as health care professionals, problems can be identified early and accurately and support a child's trajectory for success.

Developmental Screening Background Information

Children grow and develop at different rates and it is important to know when additional support and interventions may be necessary. Early identification leads to early intervention, which improves student achievement and reduces gaps in learning. Children who receive early and appropriate support are less likely to experience persistent academic difficulties.

The CDC outlines the following benefits of early intervention:

- Early intervention is likely to be more effective when it is provided earlier in life rather than later.
- Early intervention services can change a child's developmental path and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities.
- Families benefit from early intervention by being able to better meet their children's needs from an early age and throughout their lives.

How do developmental screenings differ from developmental monitoring?
Developmental screening is a process to quickly identify a child's progress in meeting early childhood developmental milestones. The results of the screening do not confirm a developmental delay or allow for diagnosis, but may indicate a deviation from the expected norms of typical development. An observation based assessment, like *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*, is an ongoing process to determine if a child or groups of children are meeting specified outcomes and goals, which is also known as developmental monitoring. Both a developmental screener and an observation based assessment can work together to ensure appropriate support and interventions are in place and all necessary stakeholders, including family members, are collaborating to better understand the needs of the child.

Recommendations on Screening Tools and Periodicity

Recommended Developmental Screening Periodicity
It's important for educators and program staff to reinforce appropriate developmental screenings at critical stages of development. The following chart outlines ages when screening is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (dark orange boxes) and the Louisiana Department of Health's Developmental Screening Initiative (light orange boxes). The domains outlined within the chart are recommendations in order to meet the specific needs of Louisiana's children and families.

March 2021

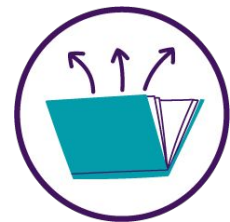
Kindergarten
On or Above Level on All Literacy Assessments Combined (Fall 2020)



Asian	50%
Black	24%
Hispanic	26%
White	48%
Economically Disadvantaged (ED)	26%
English Learners (EL)	24%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	24%



Developmental Screening Guidance



The Louisiana Department of Education Developmental Screening Guidebook helps users do the following:

- Understand how children develop
- Encourage development through daily routines and activities
- Establish a developmental screening and referral process
- Support families in children's developmental progress



Early Childhood Developmental Screening Guidance

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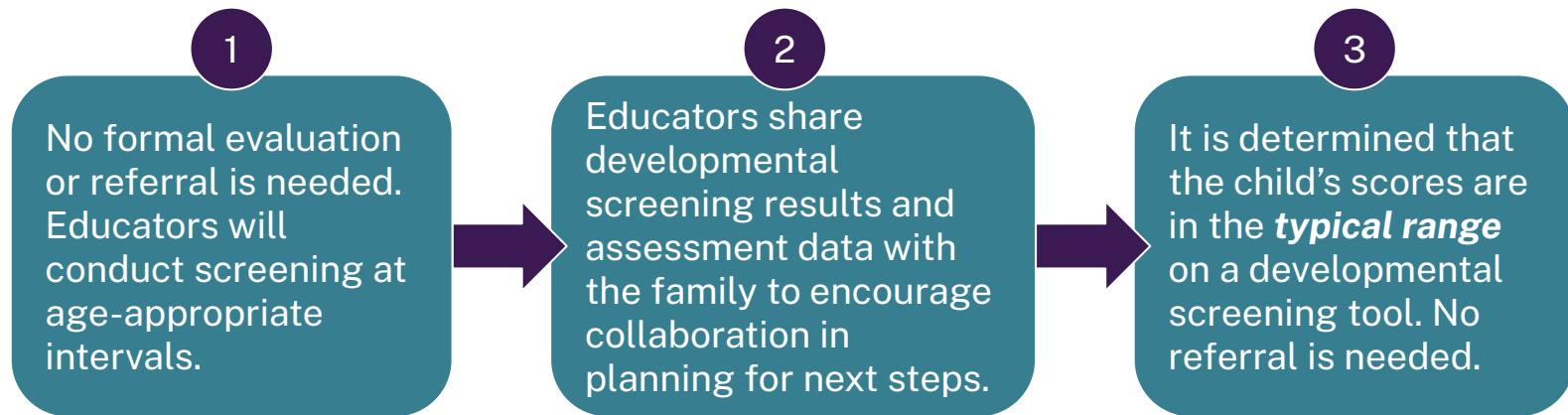


Supporting Children after Screening

Screening and Referral Flowchart for Early Childhood



Once a child is screened, educators and families work collaboratively and use the screening results to make decisions that inform next steps. The flowchart below shows the next steps for a child who scores in the range of typical development after developmental screening on a developmental screening tool:

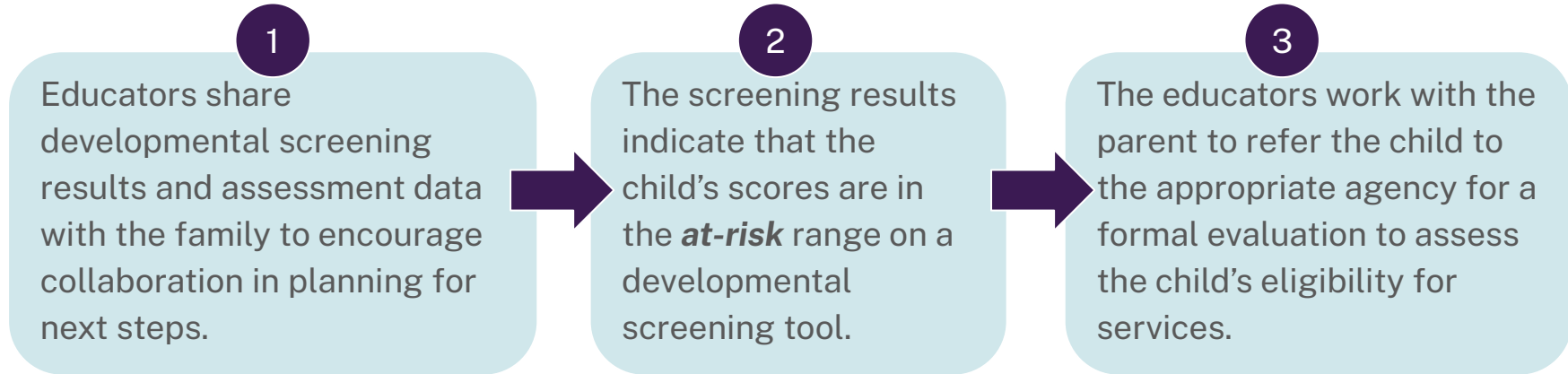


For additional information and guidance, refer to page 10 in the [LDOE Developmental Screening Guidebook](#).

Early Childhood Screening and Referral Flowchart



Once a child is screened, educators and families work collaboratively and use the screening results to make decisions that inform next steps. The flowchart below shows the next steps for a child who is in the **at-risk** range after developmental screening on a developmental screening tool:



For additional information and guidance, refer to page 10 in the LDOE [Developmental Screening Guidebook](#).

Guiding and Supporting Families Through the Referral Process (Ages Birth - 3)



Once educators and families have worked together to determine the individual needs for the child, educators should guide families through the referral process and examine supports that are available. Children **ages birth to three** who score in the **at-risk** range should be referred to EarlySteps. The flowchart below indicates the steps that should be taken to maximize support for children B-3 and their families.

Step 1: Refer to EarlySteps

Anyone can make an [Early Steps](#) referral, including parents, teachers, and pediatricians. Children can be referred to EarlySteps by contacting the System Point of Entry (SPOE) in their region.

Step 2: System Point of Entry

Once the [System Point of Entry \(SPOE\)](#) receives the referral, the family will be contacted to begin the eligibility determination process.

Step 3: Eligibility Determination

If the child under the age of 3 qualifies for EarlySteps, a team works with the family to develop an [Individualized Family Service Plan \(IFSP\)](#) that will include intervention services and supports.

Supporting Children after Screening: Ages Birth-Three



When a child age birth to three is at risk on a developmental screening tool, educators should encourage and support the family to refer their child to EarlySteps.

- To locate the EarlySteps contact in your network, please select your parish in the [Network Resource Finder](#). The EarlySteps contact is shown under the “Learn the Signs. Act Early” document.



Learn the Signs. Act Early. (LTSAE) is a federally mandated program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that encourages parents of children ages birth to 5 years and providers who care for them to:

- learn the signs of healthy development
- monitor every child's early development; and
- act early on possible developmental concerns: talk with doctors and ask for developmental screening.

[Acadia Early Childhood Network Learn the Signs. Act Early PDF](#)

For more information about your child's development and what to do if you have a concern, call:

Child Find
(3+ years):
(337) 783-3668

Early Steps
(birth-3 years):
(337) 359-8748

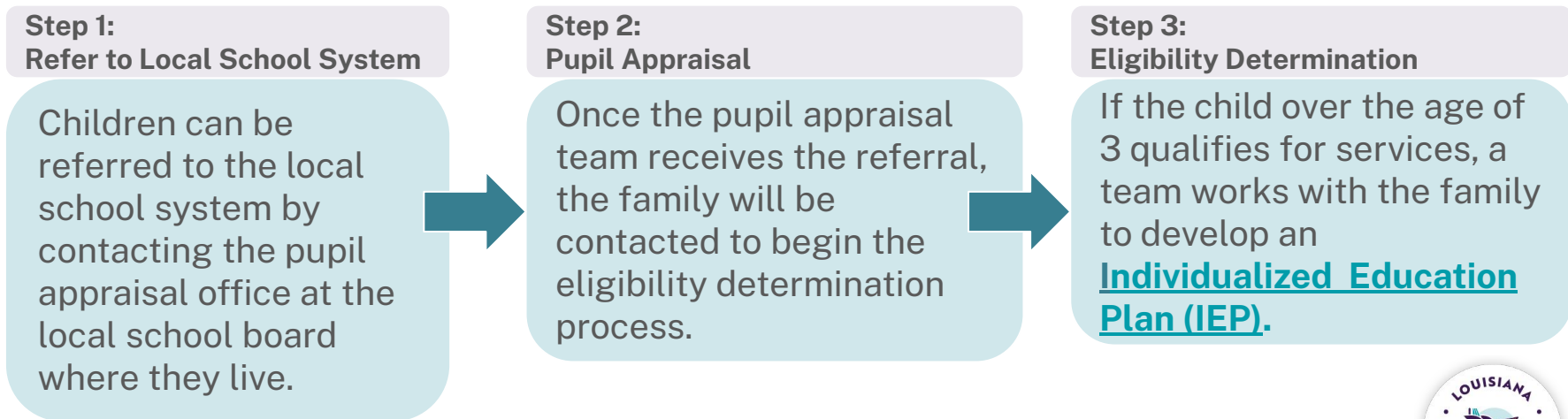
to get help finding resources in your area.



Guiding and Supporting Families Through the Referral Process (Ages 3 - 5)



Once educators and families have worked together to determine the individual needs for the child, educators should guide families through the referral process and examine supports that are available. Children **ages three to five** who score in the **at-risk** range should be referred to the local school system where they live. The flowchart below indicates the steps that should be taken to maximize support for children and families.





Building Connections to Coordinate Supports

Collaborating with Partners



Cross-collaboration with community agencies to train staff on screening and referral processes will ensure that children receive the services they need.

- Join [EarlySteps](#) transition meetings to discuss screening, evaluation, and next steps.
- Provide referral, screening, and evaluation information to area pediatricians, early childhood medical professionals, and community agencies such as homeless shelters: [Network Resource Finder](#)
- Work collaboratively with the pupil appraisal team to identify effective assessments and processes.

Coordinate Supports for Transitions

When transition goals are child-centered, ambitious, and aligned to the child's present and anticipated needs in a new context, IFSP and IEP teams can identify and implement effective services, supports, and activities.

Coordinate supports around Key Transition Points, including from EarlySteps (birth to 3) to School System Services (3-22):

- Identify a key service provider to coordinate the transition.
- Clarify how and where services and supports will be implemented in the new context.
- Familiarize the student and family with the structures, routines and expectations of the new setting/school.



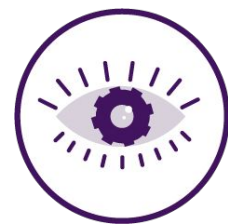
Connecting with Families

Educators can connect with families by using social media and hosting events to educate parents on developmental milestones and the screening process.

- Use traditional methods and social media to provide parents with screening and evaluation information.
 - *Ex: Milestone Monday*
- Set up regular meetings with the parents of identified students to share results and identify next steps.
 - *Ex: Milestone Nights*



Promising Practices



There are several promising practices that can inform educators and caregivers about developmental screening and the impacts of early identification:

- Integrate materials into community entities including early childhood programs; pediatric practices; libraries; Women, Infant and Children (WIC) nutrition clinics; community parks and centers; etc.
- Facilitate parent education workshops throughout the year. Leverage parent leaders to message and advocate to learn about developmental milestones.
- Integrate training into annual onboarding for new educators and staff.
- Disseminate milestone information in all communication systems with families (e.g. parent/teacher conferences).



Next Steps

Early Identification and Developmental Screening Resources

Educators can disseminate milestone information in all communication systems with families (e.g. parent/teacher conferences, birthday parties, family engagement events, bulletin boards).

Resources that can assist families learn more about early child development include the following:

- [Bureau of Health Developmental Screening Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Learn the Signs, Act Early](#)
- [CDC Family Resources to Share](#)
- [Sample Record-Keeping Worksheet for Families](#)
- [Child Care Resource and Referral agencies](#) provide a resource center and provider training, coaching, and technical assistance.



Developmental Screening Resources

Elements of Identification	Key Actions	Resources
Coordinate Early and Accurate Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enact a comprehensive screening and intervention plan.• Educate staff on the administration of screening assessments and how to use them effectively.• Choose and administer a screening assessment to every child upon entry into the program.• Collect and complete ongoing formative assessment data for every child.• Develop a sub-committee that consists of key stakeholders from various entities to support screening process.	<p><u>Developmental Screening Guidebook</u></p> <p><u>Developmental Screening Toolkit</u></p> <p><u>Screening Tools for Children Birth to Age Five Years with Potential for Remote Administration</u></p> <p><u>Pk - 3rd Grade Assessment Guidance</u></p>





Closing

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