

ALL ABOUT Social-Emotional Screening

What is social-emotional development?

- Social-emotional development is a child's ability to experience, express, and manage emotions; develop positive relationships with caregivers and others; and explore their environment with curiosity and confidence.

What is social-emotional screening?

- Social-emotional screening is an applied method for detecting and monitoring signals that indicate whether a young child may be delayed in aspects of social-emotional development, such as communication, autonomy, affect, and interaction with people.

Why do we need social-emotional screening?

- Developmental delays, learning disorders, and behavioral and social-emotional problems are estimated to affect 1 in every 6 children.¹
- An estimated 13% of all children living in the United States have an emotional or behavioral disorder.²
- Only 20% to 30% of these children are identified as needing help before school begins.³
- If social-emotional problems are identified and addressed early, children are more likely to experience better outcomes in the areas of education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health.⁴

Key words used in social-emotional screening

- *Surveillance*: The monitoring or tracking of children's developmental progress over time.
- *Referral*: The action taken by screening personnel to connect families with the appropriate service for their child.



¹ Dunkle, M. (Fall 2004). High Quality Developmental Screening. *Developmental & Behavioral News*, 13(2).

² Jallinek, M., & Murphy, J. (1999). Psychosocial problems, screening, and the pediatric symptom checklist. Retrieved August 21, 2001 from <http://dpbeds.org/handouts>

³ Component Seven: Surveillance and Screening Facilitator Manual, Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs. Retrieved January 2, 2006, <http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org/training/materials/April2004Curriculum/SS/ScreeningFacilitator.pdf>

⁴ Jones, D., Greenberg, M., & Crowley, M. (2015). Early social-emotional functioning and public health: The relationship between kindergarten social competence and future wellness. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(11), 2283–2290.