

# Engaging Early Childhood Systems in Developmental Monitoring of all Children:

## Three States' Experiences Partnering Beyond the Obvious

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"I had not addressed child development much in PNCC visits until I received these booklets to share with moms. It is a good reminder to talk about this with moms."



"The materials prompt parents to ask questions that begin conversation from their end."



"It has helped the conversation with partners and parents."



"I feel better referring when the family is informed and comfortable with a referral concerning their baby's development."

### Purpose: Beyond Identifying a Delay

CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." (LTSAE) campaign aims to improve early identification of children with autism and other developmental disabilities so children and families can get the services and support they need.

- Celebrating children's developmental milestones together!
- Promote parent and provider knowledge about child development
- Increase parent-provider conversations about child development
- Provide tools to discuss milestones in an objective way
- Offering tips for positive ways to support child development
- Create opportunities for providers to work with families to support a child's development in the classroom, the community, and at home
- Provide tools to monitor development over time
- Train providers to become stronger observers of child development

### Need

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about 1 in 68 children has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and 1 in 6 has a developmental disability of any type.<sup>1</sup>
- Children with developmental problems are at increased risk for poor outcomes in many areas important to health, well-being, and success in life.<sup>2</sup>
- The majority of children with developmental delays enter preschool and kindergarten without concerns having been identified or addressed through early intervention.<sup>2</sup>
- ASD may be under-identified as early as 18 months.<sup>3</sup>
- The mean age of ASD diagnosis is 53 months of age.<sup>4</sup>

### Early Childhood Cross-Sector Systems



### Three States' Experiences

#### Indiana

- Infused LTSAE training into medical residency training**
- Customized LTSAE training materials for each program**
  - For example, customized for Early Head Start, Head Start, Childcare, Early Childhood Professional Conferences
- Made LTSAE available in everyday ways for everybody**
  - For example, made materials available in libraries
- Encourage and maintain conversations with stakeholders**
  - Families, Providers, and Program Administrators, Policy Makers, Elected Officials, and State Officials

#### Virginia

- Integrated in existing pediatrician professional development activities**
- Collaborated with existing early childhood initiatives**
  - Including Head Start Collaboration Office, Home Visiting Consortium, Part C Administrators and Service Coordinators, Infant & Toddler Specialist Network
- Expanded focus on "Birth to Five, Watch me Thrive!" initiative**
  - For example, encouraged use in various early childhood sectors
- Supported use at local level**
  - For example, pilot communities for Autism Implementation Grant
- Identified and supported local and state LTSAE champions**

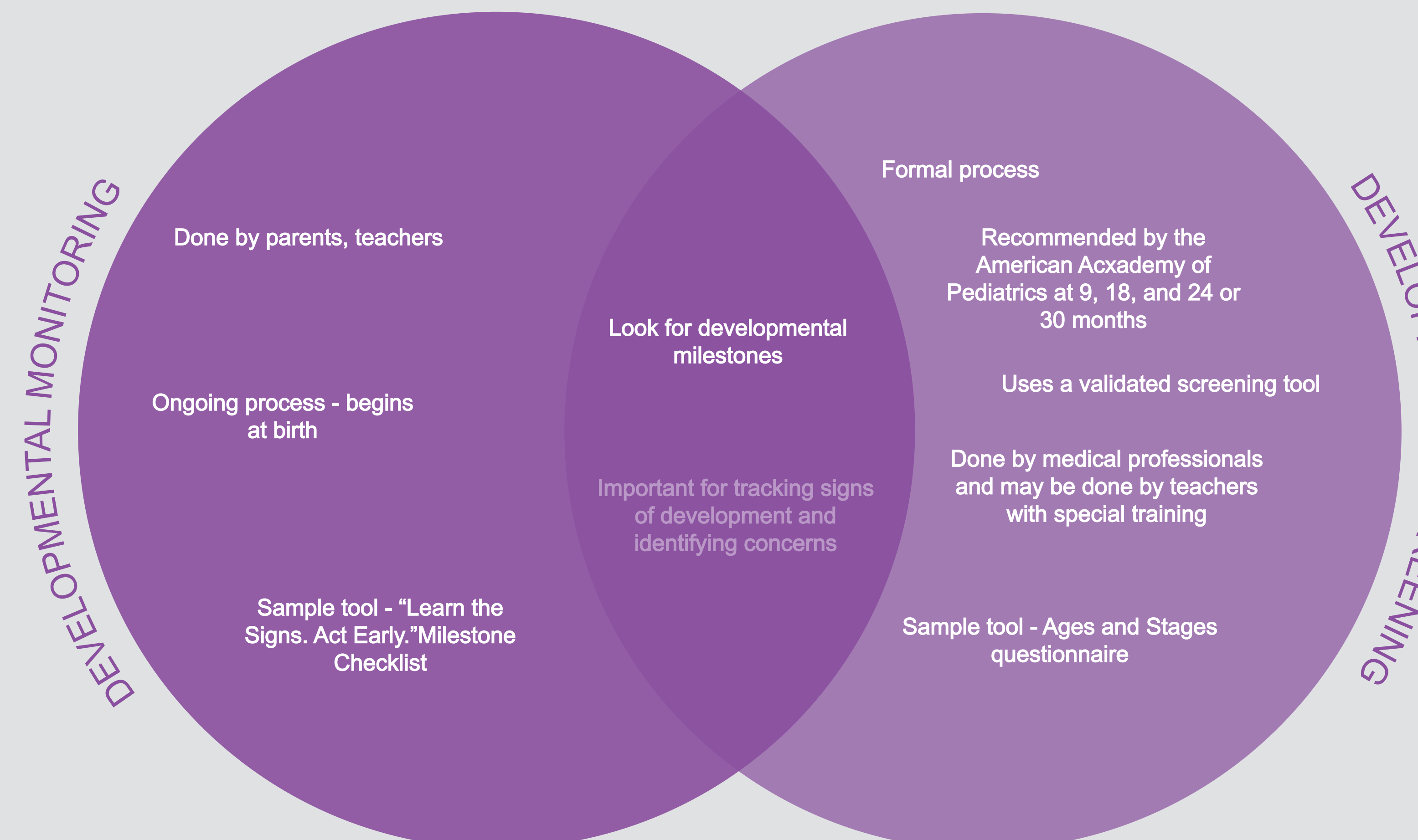
#### Wisconsin

- Aligned language and messaging with cross-sector partners**
  - Agreed on terminology and messages to enable consistent outreach, to help partners work together and support parent understanding
- Targeted program integration rather than dissemination**
  - Integrated in home visiting, prenatal care coordination, and statewide early childhood professional development
- Established sustainable supply of materials**
  - Used UCEDD as fiscal agent for bulk group-funded printing
- Customized all materials with state program information**
  - Created state website and used state phone numbers in materials

### Cross-Sector Collaboration

Early childhood is an important time to identify and intervene in developmental delays. Many children participate in early childhood care, education, or other services, but these occur in a cross-sector system made up of many types of professionals. Early childhood therefore presents a need as well as an opportunity to nurture cross-sector collaborations to meet that need.

The programs that touch children in the early years may include primary health care, childcare, Head Start/Early Head Start, early intervention (Part C), early childhood special education (Part B), home visiting, and other public health programs.



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### References

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