Promoting Early Identification in Alameda County WIC Offices
PROJECT SUMMARY

In 2014, Help Me Grow Alameda County (HMG) partnered with Alameda County Public Health Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to introduce the use of developmental checklists at WIC sites in Alameda County, California. Looking to enhance its support to families regarding child development and school readiness, Alameda County Public Health WIC approached Help Me Grow Alameda County for assistance and collaboration. Together, the agencies planned the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project, which was piloted at the Eastmont WIC office in East Oakland. This report provides an overview of the project and a summary of evaluation results from the Eastmont WIC site, a pilot site in East Oakland, which has approximately 3,700 family visits per month.

PROJECT MODEL

The WIC Developmental Checklist Project replicated aspects of a model program developed in Saint Louis, MO1 utilizing developmental checklists from the Centers for Disease and Prevention Control’s (CDC) “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” (LTSAE) campaign, together with wall and floor graphics that support the campaign. In Alameda County, the checklists were available in English and Spanish for 10 age intervals and included HMG program information. WIC staff were engaged throughout project development and design which included training on child development and project implementation.

After caregivers completed the checklist, WIC staff used a decision tree process resulting in one of two recommendations: when no concerns were raised by the checklist or the parent, staff encouraged caregivers to share the results with their pediatric provider, and when concerns were raised, WIC staff recommended a referral to Help Me Grow and/or discussion with their pediatrician.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

1 Parents and caregivers are aware of developmental milestones, the importance of acting on concerns, and the availability of support & resources through HMG

2 WIC staff are committed to the early identification of developmental concerns and the successful implementation of the project

3 The number of referrals to HMG from WIC offices and clients increases

PROJECT SUCCESSES

FAMILY KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM CHECKLISTS

Participants learned about their child’s development, about how to support their child’s growth, and about general child development and developmental milestones.

“I learned about] the signs according to my child’s age, and [to] be on the lookout if something is different.”

“I learned] how my child is developing and that she’s doing what she should at her age.”

REFERRALS TO HMG

Before the project started, Eastmont WIC had referred 36 children to HMG from November 2013 through October 2014. During the 12 months following the implementation of this project at the Eastmont WIC site (November 2014–2015), Eastmont WIC staff referred 121 children, a 236% increase compared to the previous year of partnership. In addition, 10 parents from Oakland called HMG on their own and said they had heard about HMG from their WIC office.

PROJECT EXPANSION

There are 17 WIC offices in the county. Since piloting the project at the Eastmont WIC office, the project has expanded to include 5 additional WIC offices. Planning is underway to expand to the remaining sites. HMG will evaluate all participating WIC sites approximately six months after participation begins to assess outcomes across all sites and support the success of the project.

For the full report, see “Promoting Early Identification in Alameda County WIC Offices” available at www.first5alameda.org. For more information about the project, contact Angelina Ahedo, Help Me Grow Prevention Manager at Angelina.ahedo@first5alameda.org or 510-227-6943.
Promoting Early Identification in Alameda County WIC Offices

STATEMENT OF NEED

The first five years of life is a critical time for a child’s development. It is also an important time to identify and address developmental concerns that may arise. In California, approximately 25% of children under age 6 are at moderate- or high-risk for developmental, behavioral, or social delays. When children are behind, it can impact their ability to be ready for kindergarten and succeed in school. Locally, in Alameda County, approximately 55% of children entering kindergarten are not fully ready for school. Research tells us that early intervention is effective in ameliorating developmental and behavioral concerns. Moreover, the earlier a child receives early intervention, the better their outcomes will be — including higher school achievement and greater well-being in adulthood.

PARTNERS

Help Me Grow Alameda County provides an integrated system of supports that helps families navigate the often complex path they face in identifying and addressing concerns regarding their child’s development. With a focus on children ages birth to 5 years, Help Me Grow promotes developmental screenings across service sectors; provides care coordination for families; and works to build a connected and robust system of care for families with young children. Help Me Grow is supported by and operated out of First 5 Alameda County.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children provides supplemental food, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. There are 4 WIC offices in the county operated by the Alameda County Public Health Department — Eastmont (East Oakland), Telegraph (North Oakland), Hayward, and Fremont — which, collectively, schedule approximately 13,000 visits with families per month. Families receiving WIC support are low income and many are from underserved communities. Research indicates that not only are children from lower-income families at higher risk for developmental concerns, but they also tend to be identified later.

Looking to enhance its support to families regarding child development and school readiness, Alameda County Public Health WIC (specifically, the Eastmont office) approached Help Me Grow Alameda County for assistance and collaboration. Together, the agencies planned the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project to introduce the use of developmental checklists at WIC sites in Alameda County, beginning with the Eastmont office.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project replicates aspects of a model program developed by Janet Farmer, Ph.D. and colleagues from the University of Missouri (UM). In partnership with nine WIC clinics in St. Louis, the UM researchers utilized developmental checklists from the Centers for Disease and Prevention Control’s (CDC) “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” (LTSAE) campaign to develop a pilot program for parents and WIC staff to work together on the early detection of young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities. LTSAE is an awareness campaign that focuses on three key messages for parents: (1) learn the milestones of healthy early childhood development, (2) act early if there is a concern, and (3) talk to your doctors about your child’s health and development. Evaluation findings from the St. Louis project included an increase in parents’ knowledge about their child’s development, increased parental awareness of the LTSAE campaign, and positive responses from participating WIC staff about the use of the checklists and developmental graphics at WIC sites.

PROJECT DESIGN AND STAFF TRAINING

Using the St. Louis project as a guide, Help Me Grow (HMG) and WIC staff met to design the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project. Following the model from St. Louis, the project included the distribution of checklists during parents’ visits to WIC and the placement of colorful developmental graphics in the WIC office. Please see Appendix A for the program logic model.

WIC staff were engaged in tailoring the checklists for Alameda County, including editing milestone descriptions to reflect the community and adding HMG program information (see Appendix B for a sample copy). WIC staff also were involved in creating the implementation plan for the Eastmont pilot site, including the office flow and distribution of the checklists. At the suggestion of WIC staff, a 2 hour staff training providing an overview of child development was included in the implementation plan. Talking points (Appendix C) were provided to WIC staff to assist in communicating with parents about the checklists and referral process. The talking points summarized the basic points of the program and provided specific information about how to discuss the results of checklists with caregivers/parents. An implementation training was also provided which included role plays and practice using the checklists. It was expected that the checklist project would add less than five minutes to the appointments with parents. WIC staff assisted in developing and updating the talking points, assembled materials, and posted materials on the walls.

Colorful wall and floor graphics originally designed by the University of Missouri and edited to include HMG contact information and logo were placed throughout the WIC office and waiting room to provide additional developmental information.

IMPLEMENTATION

WIC Eastmont began handing out checklists in November 2014. While the St. Louis project provided checklists at recertification visits only, Eastmont WIC staff decided to provide the checklists at all visits with 2 month, 6 month, 12 month, 2 year, 3 year, 4 year, and 5 year olds. Parents complete the checklist in the waiting room and hand the completed checklists to the WIC Nutritionists or Nutrition Assistants. If no potential warning signs for developmental problems are indicated and the parents do not raise any concerns, WIC staff ask parents to take the checklist with them to share it with their doctor, and provide the parent with the CDC’s developmental milestone brochure (Appendix D). If the checklist includes potential warning signs or the parent has a question or concerns, a referral to Help Me Grow is made with parent approval (Appendix E). The family is also encouraged to call HMG on their own if they have further questions. After a referral is made, WIC staff make a note in their online tracking system under the “Family Comments” section. This allows the next WIC staff to meet with the family to see that a referral was made in the previous appointment and to follow-up with the family about the referral.

6. Note: Since parents are encouraged to take the checklist home and share it with their child’s health care provider, WIC staff do not have an easy way to track whether or not a family receives a checklist.
EVALUATION DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The evaluation of the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project at the Eastmont WIC office relied on surveys conducted with both parents and staff approximately six months after implementation began. Survey questions were based on the evaluation conducted in St. Louis, with some additional questions (regarding, for example, parental awareness and use of HMG services, availability of child development support resources for families, and suggestions for program improvement).

PARENT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

The parent survey had 14 questions with both qualitative and quantitative items (see Appendix F); it was designed to take about 5–10 minutes to complete. HMG staff and volunteers surveyed WIC participants at the Eastmont WIC office from 9am–12pm on six days in June 2015 and five days in July 2015 while participants waited to collect their WIC vouchers for that visit. A total of 248 WIC participants were asked if they had previously filled out a Developmental Milestone Checklist. Only families who had completed the checklist were asked to complete the evaluation survey. Of the 248, 114 had not completed the checklist previously because they were pregnant, their babies were too young, or it was their first visit at this WIC office. Another 44 parents/caregivers reported that they had not completed a checklist but, based on the implementation plan, they should have received a checklist. Of the remaining 90 parents/caregivers, all spoke either English or Spanish and all agreed to complete the evaluation survey.

STAFF SURVEY

On June 10, 2015, ten out of twelve Eastmont WIC staff completed a staff survey which was designed to gauge staff views on successes and challenges in project implementation, as well as the staff’s opinion of the project’s impact on or importance for their clients. The survey was administered during a staff meeting attended by two Front Desk staff, three Nutritionists, and five Nutrition Assistants. Front Desk staff received a slightly different survey that did not include questions regarding administering the checklist. The front desk staff completed a 15 question survey, while the remaining staff completed a 25 question survey collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. This survey was designed to take about 20 minutes to complete. (Please see the WIC Staff Survey in Appendix G and WIC Front Desk Staff Survey in Appendix H.)

7. Although the St. Louis project used pre/post parent surveys, a post-only design was selected for this evaluation because of the additional tracking challenges involved in matching pre and post surveys and because it was difficult for WIC staff to record who had received the checklist.
A total of 90 WIC participants were surveyed, representing 4.5% of the total potential WIC participants over a two month period.

SURVEY PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey respondents were mostly English speaking (67%); the largest group (45%) had 2–3 children.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Overall responses from participants were positive, with 99% of participants saying that they felt the checklist was helpful. 79% reported that WIC staff discussed the checklist with them after completion. 95% reported having talked to their doctor about their child’s development. About two-thirds of participants had heard of the term, “developmental milestones.” As indicated below, more English speaking participants reported they had heard the term, “developmental milestones,” than Spanish speaking participants.

PARENT EXPERIENCES WITH THE DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST, by language (% yes)

8. For the St. Louis project, Farmer asked a similar question and found that about 57% of families had heard of the term, “developmental milestones.”
Participants were asked to report where they would go if they had questions about their child’s development. Of the 80 participants who responded to this question, over 90% stated they could go to their doctor if they had any questions about their child’s development. Over half of participants (68%) indicated they could go to their friends and family. About one-third of participants stated they could call the HMG Phone Line, visit websites or use the internet or talk to their child care provider or teacher if they had questions about their child’s development. English speaking participants were more likely to check multiple answers than Spanish speaking participants. More English speaking participants said they would seek support from friends and family (68% English, 29% Spanish), their doctor (96% English, 79% Spanish), the HMG Phone Line (36% English, 21% Spanish) and their childcare provider (30% English, 25% Spanish) than Spanish speaking participants.

WIC participants were also asked what they did with the checklist after they reviewed it at their appointment. They were able to select multiple answers to describe all the ways the checklist was used. More than one-third of participants put the checklist someplace easy to find, like on the refrigerator or in a folder (41%), and about a quarter had shared it with their friends or family (23%). Many participants said they did not remember what they did with the checklist and/or chose not to keep it (50%). Only 11% of participants said they shared the checklist with their doctor. Other responses included faxing the checklist to HMG, sharing it at the WIC office, and allowing WIC staff to keep the checklist. Interestingly, no Spanish speaking participants said they shared their checklist with their doctor. Also, more English speaking participants said they shared the checklist with friends or family (25% English, 17% Spanish) or put it someplace easy to find (43% English, 35% Spanish).
One goal of the checklist project was to increase referrals and parent calls to the HMG phone line and to increase knowledge of and access to the services offered by HMG. Of the 90 participants surveyed, about half (52%) had heard about HMG, and 42% indicated they had been referred to the HMG phone line. Some parents (18%) reported that they called HMG on their own, and some (12%) had visited the HMG website. When looking at the data by participant language, a greater percentage of Spanish speaking participants reported hearing about HMG, being referred to, and calling HMG on their own than English speaking participants. On the other hand, more English speaking participants reported visiting the website.

**QUALITATIVE RESPONSES**

Participants were asked three open-ended questions at the end of the survey. First, participants were asked what, if anything, they learned from the checklist. Of the 61 participants who responded to this question, 56 (92%) said they learned something from the checklists. About 40% of participants reported having learned about their own child’s development.

**EXAMPLES INCLUDE >>>>>>**

“[It] feels comfortable to know my baby is good and developing well. [I] had an emergency cesarean because his heart rate was low. I was concerned about oxygen flow and scared about his development. I am reassured by the checklist.”

“It made me more aware of my son’s development.”

“[I learned] how my child is developing and that she’s doing what she should at her age.”
About 20% of participants reported learning about general child development and milestones. Parents listed milestones they learned about and general facts. Participants also learned how to support their child’s growth (10%) and about the importance of early identification (8%).

**EXAMPLES INCLUDE  >>>>>>**

Participants were also asked if they were doing anything differently because of what they learned. Of the 61 participants who answered this question, 72% said they were not doing anything new because of what they learned, and 17 (28%) reported that they were doing something different.

**EXAMPLES INCLUDE  >>>>>>**

Finally, participants were asked if they had any suggestions for how to improve the checklist project. Of the 60 participants who answered this question, 97% said “No” or “N/A.” Two participants gave suggestions to improve the project:

“Provide a touch pad to do the evaluation survey and save paper.”

“List more examples of child milestones.”

“[I learned about] the signs according to my child’s age, and [to] be on the lookout if something is different.”

“[I learned] how to help my child learn/grow.”

“... paying more attention to her development and behavior” (FIVE OTHER PARTICIPANTS MADE SIMILAR REMARKS)

“... help[ing] him more, reading books, helping him stand & walk”

“... do[ing] more activities with my children to help them grow”
WIC staff feedback is vital to assessing the effectiveness of this project. Almost two-thirds of WIC staff members agreed or strongly agreed that families were willing to complete the checklist and that the checklists were easy for families to understand. A smaller number (4 or 40%) of WIC staff reported that families look at or comment on the environmental graphics.

Seven (70%) WIC staff agreed or strongly agreed that families are interested in learning more about their child’s development. Of the staff who work directly with WIC participants, 6 (75%) agreed or strongly agreed that families indicate the checklists help them learn about their child’s development, but only 3 (38%) reported that families planned to share this information with their doctor.

WIC staff were asked a series of questions about how the project is working for staff. The majority of staff (8, 80%) agreed or strongly agreed that the checklists enhance their ability to support families, and all staff (10, 100%) believe that it is important to identify child development concerns early. Fewer staff, between 60–63%, agreed or strongly agreed that the checklists easily fit into the routine of a WIC appointment, that there are opportunities for staff to talk about the project while in the office, and that they get adequate support to implement the project. When exploring responses by staff roles, Nutrition Assistants were more likely to say that the checklist did not fit easily into their appointments than the Nutritionists. Also, more Nutrition Assistants and Front Desk staff stated they did not feel they had adequate support to implement this project or opportunities to talk about how the project is going.

The majority of WIC staff who work directly with families reported that they feel comfortable talking to families about the checklist (7, 87.5%), that families are interested in a referral or services from HMG (7, 87.5%), and that it is easy to know when to refer a family (7, 87.5%) to HMG. Also, a majority of staff (6, 75%) agreed or strongly agreed that conversations with families about developmental milestones is as easy as conversations about height and weight, a goal frequently mentioned during training.
Staff whose role it is to review the checklist directly with parents were asked to estimate the amount of time the checklist adds to the regular certification appointment. Over half of these staff members indicated that the checklist adds approximately 2–5 minutes to each appointment, and a quarter stated that it adds more than five minutes to every appointment.

Only a quarter of WIC staff (2) indicated they incorporate the checklist into the certification appointment every time (per the protocol), while a majority of participants (5) reported incorporating it 75% of the time.

Two front desk staff members were asked specific questions regarding their role and the project. Both staff members (2, 100%) agreed or strongly agreed that families ask them questions about how to complete the checklist and what the checklist means.

All WIC staff were asked to choose the top two elements of the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist Project that best help a family understand the importance of monitoring developmental milestones. Almost all participants (9, 90%) stated that the checklist was the most helpful, while 60% (6) stated that referrals to HMG were the most helpful in teaching families about the importance of monitoring developmental milestones. No staff indicated that the environmental graphics were the most helpful. This is in contrast to the results from the St. Louis study, which found that a majority of WIC staff felt the graphics were an integral part of the project.
All staff were asked to share the biggest barrier to implementing the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project at Eastmont WIC. Almost half believed the biggest barrier to program implementation is lack of family interest, which stands in contrast to the interest shown by families who were surveyed. The next most reported barriers were families’ difficulties with literacy or comprehension and lack of time. One staff member indicated that families do not always receive the checklist at their appointment.

Many WIC staff (5, 71%) said they encountered approximately 1–5 families whose children showed signs of potential delay, while one (14%) staff member reported working with 6–10 families whose children showed signs of potential delay, and one (14%) had not encountered any. All staff (7, 100%) who work directly with families reported feeling comfortable talking to parents when the checklist reflects a concern.
EASTMONT WIC REFERRALS TO HELP ME GROW

A benefit of the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project is that all caregivers who indicate a concern on the checklist or express interest in finding out more information about their child’s development are provided a referral to HMG or encouraged to call HMG on their own.

Before the project started, Eastmont WIC had referred 36 children to HMG from November 1, 2013 through October 31, 2014. Over the last year (from November 2014–2015), Eastmont WIC staff has referred 125 children, a 247% increase compared to the previous year of partnership. Also, ten parents from Oakland called HMG on their own and said they had heard about HMG from their WIC office. All staff working directly with families reported having referred at least one parent to HMG, while more than half of staff (57%) reported referring more than 10 families.10

All families who were referred to the HMG phone line by WIC spoke to a Child Development Care Coordinator, received child development information, and received referrals to outside agencies if needed. In the past year (November 2014–2015), 121 participants who were referred to the HMG phone line from Eastmont WIC had completed their relationship with HMG and 4 are still receiving services. Of those who have completed their services with HMG, 59 (49%) participants received referrals to outside agencies, 34 (30%) were lost to follow-up before Help Me Grow Support could be completed, and 33 (27%) received parenting information and consultation from the phone line, but determined they did not need a referral for services. In addition, five families were encouraged to continue to monitor their child’s development through Help Me Grow’s online screening program.

In total, 95 referrals were made on behalf of Eastmont WIC participants. The top three referrals made for WIC participants were to child care (29%), to the Regional Center of the East Bay (24%), and to mental health services (23%). Other referrals were to caretaker/parent education and developmental therapies services. See the chart on this page for more referral information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENT OF REFERRALS FROM HMG PHONE LINE NOVEMBER 2014–2015 (n=95)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care/ECE</td>
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<td>Regional Center</td>
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<td>Mental Health Services</td>
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<td>Developmental Play Groups</td>
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<td>Additional Screening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health/Medical/Domestic Violence Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing/Legal Services</td>
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<td>Employment Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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10. Staff consider “referring” a family to HMG as either giving families contact information and encouraging them to call on their own or sending in a referral.
Overall, feedback received from WIC staff and participants on the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project at Eastmont WIC was very positive. The evaluation results suggest the checklist project is making progress toward achieving the program’s desired outcomes.

**DESIGNED OUTCOME 1**

Parents and caregivers are aware of developmental milestones, the importance of acting on concerns, and the availability of support and resources through HMG

Although only two-thirds of the parents/caregivers said they were familiar with the term, “developmental milestone,” almost all (99%) felt the developmental checklists were helpful. Many described ways in which they learned something new from the checklist about their particular child’s development or about child development in general. Participants also mentioned the importance of paying attention to their child’s development and acting early as things they learned from this project. About 50% of participants said they had heard of HMG, 42% said they had been referred to the HMG phone line, 32% listed HMG as a place to reach out to if they had questions about child development, and 13% had visited the website.

**DESIGNED OUTCOME 2**

WIC staff are committed to the early identification of developmental concerns and the successful implementation of the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project

All of the staff surveyed (100%) agreed that it is important to identify developmental concerns early and about 80% of staff agreed that the checklists assist in their work with supporting families. All staff (100%) who work directly with families reported feeling comfortable talking to parents when the checklist reflects a concern. These are positive findings and suggest the importance of this project for WIC staff and the families they serve.

**DESIGNED OUTCOME 3**

The number of referrals to Help Me Grow from WIC offices and clients increases

During the 12 months following the implementation of this project at the Eastmont WIC site, referrals to HMG increased by 236%. WIC staff have connected 121 families with children under five to child development care coordinators who provide child development support, information, resources, and referrals. It is possible that, without this project and the support of WIC staff around child development, these families may not have received support. It is noteworthy that the percentage of families referred to the HMG phone line and then lost to follow-up is higher for WIC referrals than for the general public. HMG and WIC staff will continue to work to encourage referrals to HMG and to decrease the number of families who are lost to follow-up.
SOME CHALLENGES

Although a majority of staff (60%) feel supported in this project, a subgroup of staff (40%) did not. Similarly, 37% of staff did not agree that the checklists fit easily into their appointments with families. In addition, while a majority of staff felt that families appreciated the checklists and were open to completing them and to receiving information and referrals, when asked what was the biggest barrier to project implementation, over half of WIC staff stated “Lack of Family Interest.” Nutrition Assistants and Front Desk Staff were more likely to report that “Lack of Family Interest” was the biggest barrier than the Nutritionists. Differences in the opinions of specific staff groups warrants further exploration.

Also, evaluation results indicate that there have been some challenges with distributing the checklists, as about one-third of participants who had not completed the checklist should have been given a checklist in the past 6 months. One staff member indicated that one of the biggest barriers to program implementation was that families were not receiving the checklist at the front desk.

NEXT STEPS

CONTINUOUS PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Results indicate more brainstorming can be done to determine how to better support staff and help the project fit into the flow of appointments. There were notable differences in feedback between Nutritionists, Nutrition Assistants, and the front desk staff which need to be explored. Nutrition Assistants were more likely to say that the checklist did not fit easily into their appointments than the Nutritionists. Also, more Nutrition Assistants and Front Desk staff stated they did not feel they had adequate support to implement this project or opportunities to talk about how the project is going. These staff members also reported “lack of family interest” as the biggest barrier to the checklist project. More time must be spent determining how to support the project for front line staff members, who function as gatekeepers and are important contributors to the success of the project. One idea is to explore the differences between the types of appointments the Nutritionists and Nutrition Assistants have with clients. Differences in time restrictions and required paperwork may impact the ability of a WIC staff member to fully incorporate the checklist into their appointment and require a more thoughtful process to determine the best way to do this with the least impact on the staff member. Alameda County WIC offices have quarterly staff meetings across sites where staff members participate in an observation process to ensure staff are following procedures correctly. A plan will be designed for how to integrate the checklist project into the regular WIC observation activity.

Also, more brainstorming can be done to help staff reflect on the potential benefits of this project for their clients. The site director suggested a few ways to demonstrate this, such as: sharing referral feedback with all staff at weekly staff meetings and providing a space for staff to ask questions and seek support, having HMG come quarterly to a staff training as a refresher, or providing short 30 minute trainings on relevant topics to maintain staff interest. Next steps will be discussed in detail with the site director and will hopefully guide future expansion of this project at other sites.

In order to capture all desired information from parents who have not completed the checklist by the time of evaluation, a separate survey will be designed for these parents to ask about the developmental graphics, whether or not this was their first visit to WIC, and their knowledge of HMG.
EXPANSION TO ADDITIONAL WIC SITES

Eastmont WIC was the pilot location for a larger plan to expand this project to additional WIC offices in the county. Three additional Alameda County Public Health WIC offices (Telegraph, Hayward, and Fremont) have begun implementing the developmental checklist project and are distributing checklists to participating families. All WIC offices have utilized the same implementation process as Eastmont WIC, through co-developing an implementation plan with HMG and participating in two trainings. In addition to distributing checklists at individual WIC visits, WIC staff have incorporated developmental information and the distribution of checklists into two classes provided to WIC participant families with infants less than 12 weeks old: the GA26 “Delay Until You’re Ready” and the GI01/GA25 “Welcome Your Newborn” class in the Alameda County-run WIC sites.

Besides the 4 county run WIC sites, there are 13 additional WIC offices located in the county. In 2015, the project expanded to two additional (non-Public Health) WIC offices—City of Berkeley and La Clinica’s Transit Village/San Antonio site. HMG will evaluate all participating WIC sites approximately six months after participation begins to assess outcomes across all sites and support the success of the project.

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<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>WIC LOCATION</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Plan Implementation</td>
<td>Eastmont</td>
<td>November 2014</td>
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<td>Program Plan Implementation</td>
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<td>Telegraph</td>
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<td>Program Evaluation</td>
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<td>Program Plan Implementation</td>
<td>City of Berkeley</td>
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<td>Program Plan Implementation</td>
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<td>INPUTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMG Staff &amp; Resources</td>
<td>Create HMG versions of the Learn the Signs. Act Early. checklists and materials used in St. Louis, MO with the assistance of WIC staff</td>
<td>10 checklists co-designed with HMG and WIC staff to reflect HMG project and the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIC Staff &amp; Resources</td>
<td>Train WIC staff on the Developmental Milestone Checklist Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early. campaign materials</td>
<td>Train WIC staff on Child Development</td>
<td>30 WIC staff will complete a Child Development training</td>
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<tr>
<td>UM developed &amp; HMG/WIC edited Learn the Signs. Act Early. Developmental milestone checklists</td>
<td>Provide Developmental Milestone Checklists to WIC participants and specific ages</td>
<td>80% of eligible WIC participants will complete a checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connect children, 0–5, and their families to services &amp; supports</td>
<td>WIC referrals to the HMG line will increase by 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide leadership and support to efforts to improve the early childhood development system in Alameda County</td>
<td>Pediatricians will be aware of the WIC Developmental Milestone Checklist project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide pediatrics a copy of the checklists and information on the project</td>
<td>Establish a new partnership between WIC and HMG</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX A**
Your Child at 1 Year

How your child plays, learns, speaks, and acts offers important clues about your child’s development. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age.

Check the milestones your child has reached by his or her 1st birthday. Take this with you and talk with your child’s doctor at every visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next. If you have questions, call Help Me Grow at 888-510-1211 to speak to trained staff who can provide information and support.

What Most Children Do at this Age:
(Check all the things your child does now)

Social/Emotional
- Is shy or nervous with strangers
- Cries when mom or dad leaves
- Has favorite things and people
- Repeats sounds or actions to get attention
- Puts out arms or leg to help with dressing

Language/Communication
- Responds to simple spoken requests
- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head “no” or waving “bye-bye”
- Makes sounds with change in tone (like speech)
- Says “mama” and “dada” and exclamations like “uh-oh!”
- Tries to say words you say

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- Finds hidden things easily
- Looks at the right picture or thing when it’s named
- Starts to use things correctly; for example, drinks from a cup, brushes hair
- Bangs two things together
- Follows simple directions like “pick up the toy”

Movement/Physical Development
- Gets to a sitting position without help
- Pulls up to stand, walks holding on furniture (“cruising”)
- May take a few steps without holding on
- May stand alone

Act Early If Your Child:
(Check all the things that are true for your child)
- Doesn’t crawl
- Can’t stand when supported
- Doesn’t search for things that she sees you hide
- Doesn’t say single words like “mama” or “dada”
- Doesn’t learn gestures like waving or shaking head
- Doesn’t point to things
- Loses skills he once had

Tell your child’s doctor or nurse if you notice any of these signs.
You can also call Help Me Grow at 888-510-1211. Trained staff will listen to your concerns and help you get connected to resources for your child’s development.
You can also find local resources at www.alamedakids.org.

WIC EASTMONT
WIC Family encountered during infant, toddler, and child visits from age 2 months to 5 years

WAITING AREA AND OFFICE

LEARN THE SIGNS MESSAGES: Wall blocks in waiting room, posters in bathrooms, floor blocks throughout site.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLISTS: Front desk hands the age-appropriate checklist to parent to complete.

NUTRITION ASSISTANT OFFICE
Parent hands completed checklist to the Nutrition Assistant and Dietitian who reviews the results with the parent.

If all purple boxes are marked:
Indicates no concerns
Nutrition Assistant enters info in INEP; returns checklist to parent and encourages parent to share with PCP during next routine visit and call Help Me Grow if they have any questions.

Three or more purple boxes not marked:
Indicates potential concerns
Nutrition Assistant enters info in INEP; returns checklist to parent, makes a Help Me Grow referral if given consent, or requests parent to contact Help Me Grow and their PCP at next routine visit.

One or more blue boxes marked:
Indicates possible developmental delay
Nutrition Assistant enters info in INEP; returns handout to parent; directs parent to contact Help Me Grow or make a referral during the visit; requests that parent schedule follow-up visit with PCP as soon as possible.

Nutrition Aide follows up on each subsequent visit based on information in client file and working from a new age-appropriate checklist; repeats steps as necessary until parent takes action if screening is indicated.
WIC STAFF’S ROLE:
- Help parent complete age-appropriate checklist for each child being certified/recertified that day; if child is between checklist ages, use the younger checklist. Discuss checklist, results, and questions with parent and either refer to Help Me Grow immediately or encourage parent to contact Help Me Grow or their doctor. Add a comment in INEP.

KEY WORDS:

TALKING POINTS:
- “This is a new checklist we are using to help track children’s development. Thinking about how ___ plays, speaks, and acts is just as important as measuring his/her height and weight.”
- “So let’s see how ___ is doing on the checklist of Developmental Milestones and see how they are progressing for their age.”
- “If ALL the purple boxes are marked & NO blue boxes are marked: This indicates no concerns.
  - “It looks like ___ is on track for meeting these developmental milestones.”
  - “Please keep this checklist so you can show it to ___’s doctor at his/her next regular doctor’s visit.”
  - “Be sure to talk him/her about how ___ is developing.”
  - “There is a brochure on developmental milestones so you know what to watch for at every age.”
  - “If you want more information about ways to support your child or if you have any concerns be sure to call Help Me Grow.”

Return checklist to parent.
Add to INEP: “Developmental checklist completed; no concerns.”

If three or more purple boxes are NOT marked: This indicates a possible concern.
- “It looks like ___ is having some trouble meeting these developmental milestones.”
- “If you are interested, we can refer you to Help Me Grow today and they can contact you about how to help your child reach these milestones.”
- “Please keep this checklist so you can talk to your doctor about these boxes that are not marked.”
- “There is a brochure on developmental milestones so you know what to watch for at every age.”
- “If you want more information about ways to support your child or if you have any concerns be sure to call Help Me Grow.”

Return checklist to parent.
Add to INEP: “Developmental checklist completed; Some developmental concerns; referred to Help Me Grow.”

If ANY blue boxes are marked: This indicates immediate concerns.
- “The blue boxes are things we want to understand better.”
- “It would be a good idea to call Help Me Grow about this checklist. They can really help support your child’s development.”
- “We can refer you to Help Me Grow today and they will contact you about this checklist.”
- “Please keep this checklist and share it with your doctor.”
- “I want to know how Help Me Grow supported you the next time you come in.”
- “Here is a brochure on developmental milestones so you know what to watch for at every age.”

Return checklist to parent.
Add to INEP: “Developmental checklist completed; Developmental concerns. Referred to Help Me Grow and/or Doctor.”

Questions Parents May Have
On the Project
Why are you asking me these questions?
Thinking about how a child is developing socially and emotionally is just as important as tracking his or her height and weight. Height and weight can be indicators of healthy growth, just like these milestones can be indicators of healthy growth.

Who is sponsoring this project? This is part of a pilot program that First 5 Alameda County and Help Me Grow are doing with a few WIC offices in the county. If it is successful and well liked, we hope to bring this to all WIC offices in the county.

Do I have to do this? No. If you prefer not to, we can just move on.

Where can I go for more information on developmental milestones? I can give you a milestones brochure. It has the Help Me Grow phone number and website on it—they are great resources. You can call them Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm to ask any questions.

Where can I go for more information on developmental milestones? I can give you a milestones brochure. It has the Help Me Grow phone number and website on it—they are great resources. You can call them Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm to ask any questions.

Questions You May Have
What do I do if a parent is upset by this? Reassure the parent a you do when there is any concern—for low iron, for example. You can say: “Children develop at their own pace; each child is different. But it is important to ask for help and support from Help Me Grow and/or follow up with your doctor to make sure and to do things to help your child grow.”

What can a parent expect if we have her call Help Me Grow? The referral sheet and checklist will inform Help Me Grow phone line staff of the concern, and the checklist will help the parent explain why she was calling. After Help Me Grow Child Development Care Coordinator reviews the checklist and talks with the parent, they may do a developmental screening with the parent over the phone that further assesses the child’s development and the parent and HMG will decide what to do next. With the parent’s permission, HMG will also communicate with the child’s primary care provider.

How can a parent communicate this with their doctor?
The checklist you give the parent will help her explain why she scheduled an appointment with the doctor. After the doctor reviews the checklist, talks to the parent and observes the child, the doctor may do a routine developmental screening that further assesses a child’s development. The doctor may also refer the parent to Help Me Grow for more referrals and support.
The journey of your child’s early years includes many developmental milestones for how he or she plays, learns, speaks, and acts. Look inside to learn what to look for in your child. Talk with your child’s doctor about these milestones. Not reaching these milestones, or reaching them much later than other children, could be a sign of a developmental delay. 

YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD BEST. Talk to your child’s provider if you are concerned about your child’s development, learning or behavior.

Ask about the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). It is a developmental screening recommended for children 1 month - 5 years old. It is not a formal evaluation. ASQ results help you and your provider determine if your child might need extra support.

DON’T WAIT. Acting early can make a real difference! Help Me Grow is a free service for families. We support children’s development, learning and behavior.

Help Me Grow 888-510-1211

Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

CALL TO
• Share your concerns or questions
• Get information and tips for your child’s development, learning and behavior
• Connect to local services and resources

Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Your child’s early development is a journey. Use this map of milestones to know what to look for along the way.

For parents of children birth to age 4

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Learn the Signs. Act Early.
COMMUNITY REFERRAL FORM

REFFERING AGENCY INFORMATION
(If you would like feedback from Help Me Grow about this referral, please fill out the form on the reverse side)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral Date</th>
<th>Referring Agency/Program Name</th>
<th>Staff Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Fax Number</th>
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</table>

CHILD'S INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Last Name</th>
<th>Child's First Name</th>
<th>DOB</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

PARENT / CAREGIVER'S INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/Caregiver Last Name</th>
<th>Parent/Caregiver First Name</th>
<th>Relationship to Child</th>
<th>Language(s) Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Phone (check one)</th>
<th>Other Phone (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell</td>
<td>Cell</td>
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<td>( ) --</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REASONS FOR CONCERN/REFERRAL (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication/Language Development</td>
<td>Attention Span</td>
<td>Compliant (ability to follow directions/accept help)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Problem Solving</td>
<td>Adhesiveness</td>
<td>Sensitivity to praise, criticism, rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Motor Skills</td>
<td>Impulsivity</td>
<td>Compliance (ability to follow directions/listen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Motor Skills</td>
<td>Inappropriate Behavior</td>
<td>Conflict (ability to resolve conflict/interact with others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Social</td>
<td>Meltdowns</td>
<td>Cooperation (ability to resolve conflict/interact with others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reason</td>
<td>Tantrums/Aggressive Behavior</td>
<td>Vision/Hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER REASONS/NOTES FOR REFERENCING TO HELP ME GROW:

By signing this authorization, I am agreeing to this referral to Help Me Grow and I understand that Help Me Grow will contact me.

Parent/Guardian Signature: ________________________ Date: ________________________

AUTHORIZATION TO SHARE INFORMATION

Please fill out this form if you want your referring provider to receive information from Help Me Grow after we contact you.

Child's Name ____________________________ Date of Birth ____________________

Parent/Guardian Name: ____________________________ ____________________________

BY SIGNING THIS FORM, I AM GIVING PERMISSION FOR HELP ME GROW TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH ________________________________________________________________________________________________

(Referring Provider Name)

HELP ME GROW WILL SHARE ONLY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- RESULTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING
- RESOURCES AND REFERRALS THAT MY CHILD RECEIVES
- RESULTS OF LINKAGES TO RESOURCES AND REFERRALS

I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- I agree to allow the Help Me Grow staff to share information about my child with my child's provider as listed above.
- I cancelled these services at any time by notifying the Help Me Grow phone line at the number below.
- I received a copy of this form and may receive a copy of this form at any time by writing to: First 5 Alameda County, 1115 Atlantic Avenue Alameda CA 94501.
- I may cancel any part of this authorization at any time by writing to: First 5 Alameda County, 1115 Atlantic Avenue Alameda CA 94501. The cancellation will take place when F5AC receives the request. F5AC is unable to take back any disclosures already made with my authorization, and is required by law to retain records of the communication provided to me.
- Information shared under this authorization can be shared by the agency/provider who receives it. F5AC cannot control what the agency/provider does with this information. In some cases, California law prohibits the agency/provider receiving my health information from making further disclosures of it unless another authorization for that disclosure is obtained from me or unless that disclosure is specifically required or permitted by law. However, it is the agency/provider's responsibility to determine its legal and other obligations regarding this information and for them to comply with these obligations.
- Photocopies and faxes of this signed authorization shall be treated as originals.

Parent/Guardian Signature: ________________________ Date: ________________________

The Authorization expires one year from date of signature. For more information call 1-888-510-1211.
**Parent/Caregiver Survey**

Help Me Grow and WIC are working together on a new project focused on helping young children to grow and thrive. Each time you come to a WIC appointment, the project gives you a Developmental Milestone Checklist that matches your child’s age. To help us learn how we might improve the project, we would like to ask you to complete this brief survey. No names will be attached to the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is today the first time you filled out a Developmental Milestone Checklist?</td>
<td>Yes. You do not need to continue with this survey. Thank you for your time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. Please continue, beginning with question 2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Please tell us:</td>
<td></td>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. My age is...</td>
<td>18 or under</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19-29</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40 or over</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. I have...</td>
<td>1 child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-3 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 or more children</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For questions 3 through 10, check “Yes,” “No” or “Not Sure”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the Checklist(s) helpful to you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. After you completed the Checklist, did a WIC staff person talk about it with you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Have you heard of the term, “developmental milestones,” before?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Have you talked to your child’s doctor about your child’s development?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Have you heard of the services provided by Help Me Grow?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Have you been referred to Help Me Grow by a WIC staff person?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Have you called Help Me Grow on your own?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Have you visited the website, Alamedakids.org?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Who can you go to if you have questions about your child’s development (check all that apply)?</td>
<td>Friends, family or co-workers</td>
<td>Doctor or other health care provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What did you do with the Checklist(s) you received previously (check all that apply)?</td>
<td>I don’t remember</td>
<td>I didn’t keep it (e.g., left it at the WIC office, threw it away)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. What did you learn, if anything, from the Checklist(s)?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Do you have any suggestions for how to improve the Checklist project?</td>
<td>For example, how could the Checklists be improved? How could WIC staff better support parents when discussing the Checklist responses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you
## Appendix G

### WIC Staff Survey - Developmental Milestone Checklists

To help us learn how we might improve the Developmental Milestone Checklist project, we would like to ask you to complete this brief, anonymous survey.

**What is your role at WIC?**
- Nutritionist Assistant
- Nutritionist
- Other: __________________________

Check how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the use of the Developmental Milestone Checklists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I was involved in the design/planning of this project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The Checklists easily fit into the routine or flow of a WIC appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Families are willing to complete the Checklists</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The Checklists are easy for families to understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Families indicate that the Checklists help them learn about their child's development</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Families indicate that they share or plan to share the Checklist with their child's health care provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Families indicate that they share or plan to share the Checklist with their child's health care provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Families indicate that they share or plan to share the Checklist with their child's health care provider</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Families comment on the environmental graphics (milestone posters and other visual materials)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Families are interested in learning more about their child's development</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel comfortable talking to families about the Checklist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Conversations with families about milestones are easy as conversations about physical aspects of child's development such as height and weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**22. About how many families have you referred to Help Me Grow?**
- None
- 1-5
- More than 5

**23. What has been the biggest barrier to implementing the Developmental Milestone Checklist project so far?**
- Lack of time
- Lack of family interest
- Materials not available in languages other than English & Spanish
- Although the materials are in the family's home language, there are difficulties with literacy or comprehension
- Other, specify: ____________________________________________

**24. What additional training would help you prepare you to use the Checklists and to talk to parents about their child's development?**

**25. Do you have any suggestions for how to improve the Checklist program (e.g., how could the Checklists or visual materials be enhanced, how could distribution of the Checklists be improved, how could WIC staff better support parents when talking about the Checklist responses)?**

---

Thank you.
Check how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the use of the Developmental Milestone Checklists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I was involved in the design/planning of this project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Families are willing to complete the Checklists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The Checklists are easy for families to understand</td>
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<td>4. Families look at the environmental graphics (milestone posters and other visual materials)</td>
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<td>5. Families comment on the environmental graphics</td>
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<td>6. Families are interested in learning more about their child's development</td>
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<td>7. Families ask me questions about how to complete the Checklists</td>
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<td>8. Families ask me questions about what the Checklists mean</td>
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<td>9. The Checklists enhance the ability of WIC to support families</td>
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<td>10. There are opportunities for WIC staff to talk to one another about how the Checklist project is going</td>
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<td>11. I get adequate support to implement this project</td>
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<td>12. I am interested in getting more training about child development</td>
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<td>13. I believe it is important to identify child developmental concerns early</td>
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Please turn over →

14. Check the top 2 things that best help families understand the importance of monitoring developmental milestones (check no more than 2):
   - Checklists
   - Referrals to Help Me Grow
   - Floor and wall graphics
   - Parent handouts/ milestones brochure

15. What has been the biggest barrier to implementing the Developmental Checklist project (check one)?
   - Lack of time
   - Lack of family interest
   - Materials not available in languages other than English & Spanish
   - Although the materials are in the family's home language, there are difficulties with literacy or comprehension
   - Other, specify: _________________________________________________________

16. Do you have any suggestions for how to improve the Checklist program (e.g., how could the Checklists or visual materials be enhanced, how could distribution of the Checklists be improved, how could WIC staff better support parents when talking about the Checklist responses)?

Thank you