

Mental Health Screening (6-20 Years)

CHILD AND TEEN CHECKUPS (C&TC) FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

C&TC Requirements

General

Mental health *surveillance* is required at all C&TC visits for all ages. This includes obtaining the child and family's mental health history and the child's history of exposure to trauma.

Mental health *screening* using an approved, standardized instrument is

- recommended for all C&TC visits age 6 through 11 years, and
- required for age 12 through 20 years.

For younger children, refer to the [Social-Emotional Screening \(0-5 Years\) C&TC Fact Sheet \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us).

Personnel

Mental health *surveillance* must be completed by a licensed primary care clinician (MD, NP, PA) or a Registered or Public Health Nurse (RN, PHN) who has completed C&TC Comprehensive training through MDH.

Qualifications for mental health *screening* are instrument-specific; refer to the instrument's manual for more information.

Documentation

Surveillance must be documented in the C&TC visit record. Document *screening* with the name of the instrument, the score, and anticipatory guidance with the parent/caregiver based on the results. For positive results, document referral and follow-up plan.

For documentation examples, refer to the [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms \(www.dhs.state.mn.us\)](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us).

Screening Procedure

Instruments

The list of [Mental Health Screening Instruments for Children 6-21 Years of Age \(https://mn.gov/dhs/\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/) lists all recommended instruments, and the [detailed comparison table \(https://mn.gov/dhs/\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/) offers more information on each instrument.

General Mental Health Screening

- Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC)
- Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN-SS)

Depression Screening

- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9 or PHQ-9 Modified for Teens)
- PHQ-2, followed by more robust validated screener (e.g. PHQ-9) for positive results; refer to [PHQ-2 Review \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us) for details
- Kutcher Adolescent Depression Scale (KADS)
- Beck Depression Inventory II (BDI-II)
- Children's Depression Inventory (CDI-2)

Referral

It is critical that children with identified concerns receive or be referred for specialized services (Weitzman & Wegner, 2015). Referral resources may include mental health services that are integrated in primary care, available within health systems or in the community. Refer to the DHS website for a [map](http://www.mn.gov/dhs/) of school-linked mental health agencies across Minnesota (www.mn.gov/dhs/).

Follow-up

After making a referral, ensure the young person or family obtained services without encountering barriers, and that the services were effective. Provide more frequent C&TC or other follow-up visits in clinic if needed.

Importance of Screening

In any given year, 13-20% of children in the United States experience a mental health condition (CDC, 2013). Identification of mental health problems improves with standardized screening (SAMHSA, 2012). Half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by early adolescence (Weitzman & Wegner, 2015). Substantial evidence shows that early mental health interventions help prevent behavior problems and poor school performance (Weitzman & Wegner, 2015).

Many children and adolescents with mental health concerns have a co-existing substance abuse disorder (SAMHSA, 2012). Refer to the [Tobacco, Alcohol, and Substance Use Risk Assessment C&TC Fact Sheet \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us) for more resources.

Professional Recommendations

American Academy of Pediatrics

Standardized depression screening is recommended at all well-child checks beginning at 12 years of age (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2017).

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

Screening for major depressive disorder at 12-18 years when systems are in place to ensure accurate diagnosis, psychotherapy, and follow-up is a Grade B Recommendation (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2016).

Resources

Minnesota Department of Human Services

- [Children's mental health: policies and procedures \(https://mn.gov/dhs\)](https://mn.gov/dhs)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs Provider Manual C&TC Section \(www.dhs.state.mn.us\)](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us)

Minnesota Department of Health

- [Child and Teen Checkups \(www.health.state.mn.us\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

Other resources

- [Mental Health Initiatives \(www.aap.org\)](http://www.aap.org)
- [Preventing Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders among Young People: Progress and Possibilities \(www.nap.edu\)](http://www.nap.edu)

References

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2017, February). Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care. Retrieved from Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics: https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/periodicity_schedule.pdf
- CDC. (2013). Mental Health Surveillance among Children-United States, 2005-2011. MMWR, 62(2), 1-35.
- SAMHSA. (2012, April). Identifying Mental Health and Substance Use Problems of Children and Adolescents: A Guide for Child-Serving Organizations. Retrieved from <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Identifying-Mental-Health-and-Substance-Use-Problems-of-Children-and-Adolescents-A-Guide-for-Child-Serving-Organizations/SMA12-4700>
- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. (2016, November). Final Recommendation Statement: Depression in Children and Adolescents: Screening. Retrieved from Recommendations for Primary Care Practice: <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/RecommendationStatementFinal/depression-in-children-and-adolescents-screening1>
- Weitzman, C., & Wegner, L. (2015). Promoting Optimal Development: Screening for Behavioral and Emotional Problems. Pediatrics, 135(2), 385-395.

For More Information

The Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is administered through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

For questions about this fact sheet or to obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-3760 email health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us.

Revised 1/2018