Early Childhood Developmental Health Systems | EVIDENCE TO IMPACT CENTER

CHANGE IDEA 10: Develop a training protocol for new hires to ensure consistent implementation of early childhood screening and referral workflows.

STEP 1: GET READY (TASKS)

A. Identify staff roles involved in development screening and referral (e.g., medical assistants, providers, front-desk staff, care coordinators). This example uses the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) "Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials to support early identification and referral follow-through.
B. Review existing onboarding materials to identify training gaps.
C. Select relevant "Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials for inclusion.
D. Assign a lead trainer or team to develop and implement the protocol.

STEP 2: PLAN AND PRACTICE

Develop a structured training module for new hire orientation. Include developmental milestone tracking, screening tools (e.g., Ages & Stages Questionnaires), and referral workflows. Pilot the training with a small group of new hires.

SAMPLE PROCESS:

A. Develop a training checklist and PowerPoint or online module.
B. Provide printed and digital milestone checklists and parent-facing materials.
C. Demonstrate the electronic health record (EHR) developmental screening template and referral documentation process.
D. Assess staff knowledge and confidence using brief pre- and post-training surveys.

STEP 3: REVIEW AND REFINE

Collect feedback from new hires and trainers. Monitor early screening completion rates for newly onboarded staff. Adjust training content and delivery as needed.

STEP 4: EXPAND

Integrate the training into all new hire orientation processes. Offer refresher training for existing staff during meetings or professional development sessions.

STEP 5: SUSTAIN

Maintain an accessible training library (e.g., intranet, learning management system) and incorporate training completion into onboarding documentation. Assign a staff champion to update and deliver the training periodically.

Monitor screening and referral metrics across the care team and update training materials as guidelines or EHR workflows change.