



1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative Annual Report

September 2020

What is 1st Five?

Iowa's 1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative is a public-private partnership between the Iowa Department of Public Health and primary care providers in 88 Iowa counties.

Since 2007, the 1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative has supported the healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development of Iowa's youngest children through cost-effective early detection and early intervention services. Experts agree that early detection of developmental delays during the first five years increases the effectiveness of interventions and improves long-term outcomes for our youngest children. When children are connected to early intervention services, we can lessen the burden on Iowa tax payers by reducing the impact of developmental and behavioral problems on our state's health, education, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems.

Screening is crucial for early detection of developmental and social-emotional delays. In general, the earlier a child with developmental and/or social-emotional issues receives services, the better the outcome for healthy growth and development.¹

Early identification opens the door to early intervention services, which are key to building strong foundations for cognitive, social, and emotional health. Yet only about one-third of young children in the U.S. receive recommended screenings or surveillance designed to catch developmental delays.²

Over the years, 1st Five has helped to steadily increase the use of developmental screening and surveillance in the 18 regions it serves. 1st Five engages and supports health providers in their use of developmental surveillance and screening tools during child health visits. This support increases the number of young children who are screened and who receive early intervention services.

When working with the caregiver to connect the child to interventions that address concerns identified through a screening, a Developmental Support Specialist (DSS) may also identify and provide referrals to address caregiver issues, such as maternal depression and basic needs. Using this comprehensive approach to children's health optimizes the healthy development of children during their critical first five years.

SCREENING: A formal questionnaires or checklists based on research that ask questions about a child's development, including language, movement, thinking, behavior, and emotions. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends developmental and behavioral screening for all children during regular well-child visit.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Developmental Monitoring and Screening. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html>

1 Fifty State Chart Book: Dimensions of Diversity & The Young Child Population. (n.d.). The BUILD Initiative. Retrieved August 15, 2020, from <https://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/50StateChartBook.pdf>.

2 Developmental Screening and Surveillance Rates Remain Low, New Study Suggests. (2018, July 10). Developmental Screening and Surveillance Rates Remain Low, New Study Suggests. <https://www.jhsph.edu/news/news-releases/2018/developmental-screening-and-surveillance-rates-remain-low-new-study-suggests.html>

1st Five supports Iowa children, families and health providers using a four-part service model

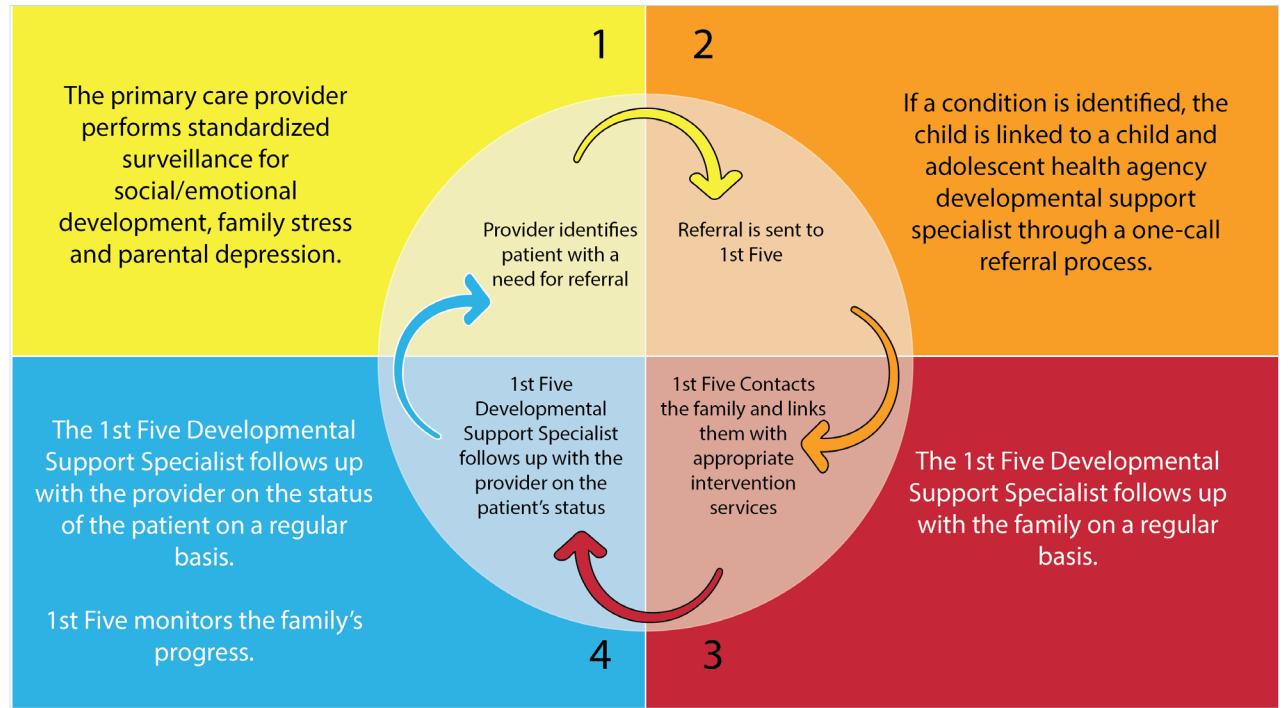
The 1st Five four-part service model lays the foundation to effectively support providers in implementing developmental screening and surveillance that identifies and connects young children with the early intervention services they need. The parts of 1st Five's model build on each other to create a feedback loop between the provider, the family, and 1st Five staff. The model's feedback loop helps address any new or persistent developmental concerns identified by the child's health provider.

Part 1: Provider identifies patient with a need for referral

1st Five's site coordinators engage, educate, train, and provide needed tools for providers to implement developmental screening. Site coordinators also offer ongoing education and support to help providers address any barriers to implementation. When they identify developmental concerns, providers refer a child to 1st Five to help connect the child to early intervention services. Being able to refer a child to 1st Five for needed early intervention services helps alleviate a provider's apprehension over identifying developmental delays in a child without having the resources to connect the child to needed services.

Part 2: Referral is sent to 1st Five

Eighteen 1st Five sites serving 88 Iowa counties received 2,788 referrals from 652 providers representing 362 clinics. The primary reasons for referrals were developmental (38% of referrals) and hearing



Source: 1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative

1st Five's impact on communities

1st Five sites conduct extensive training and outreach, while also participating in community collaborations. Through these activities, they participate in and contribute to community collaborations and family support efforts, while interacting with educators, family support staff, early childhood professionals, and public health officials. In community forums, these professionals valued 1st Five's contributions to community collaborations, noting how they:

- Promote children's mental health programs and coordination with mental health organizations
- Increase appreciation of young children's mental health and its impact
- Strengthen connections among early childhood providers and enhance their awareness of community resources and all early childhood programming,
- Bring a health perspective and dedication to birth-to-five services
- Raise awareness of the importance of early childhood programs and young child well-being

and speech (24%) concerns. Other leading causes for referral were parental/family stress (16%), social/behavioral concerns (7%), and resource needs, such as employment, housing, and financial help (6%).

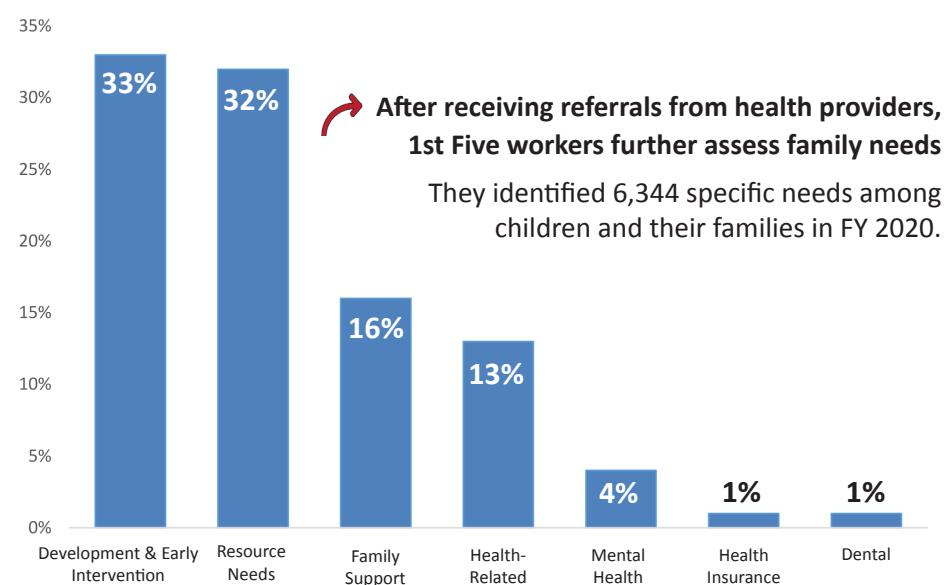
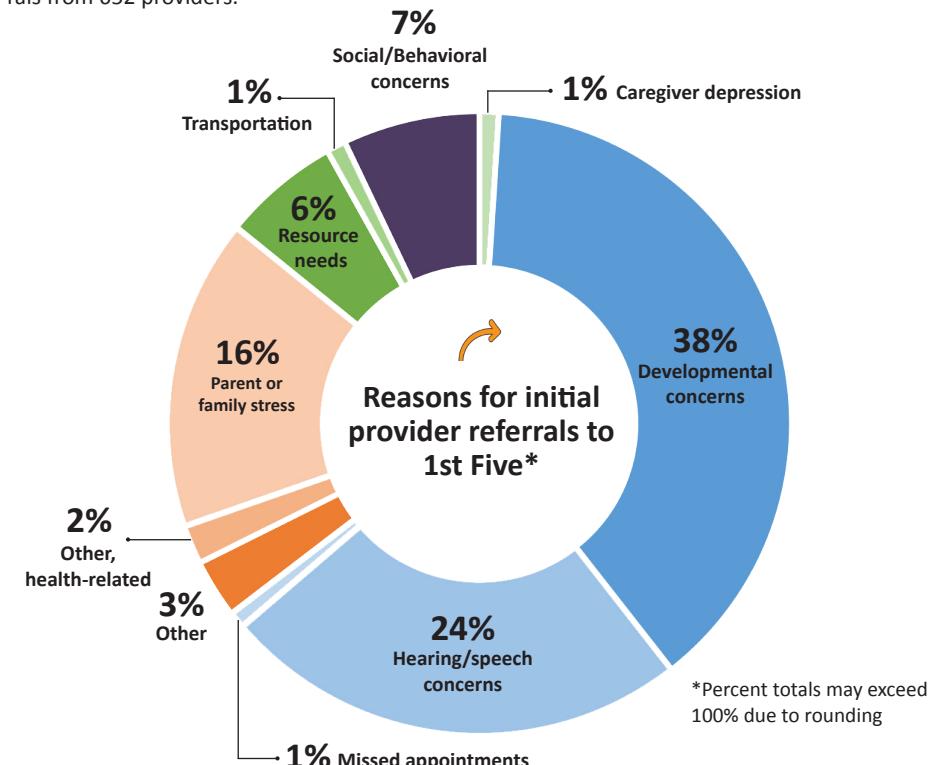
Part 3: 1st Five contacts the family and links them with appropriate intervention services

1st Five's comprehensive approach recognizes the importance a child's caregiver plays in their child's health. In FY2020, 1st Five Developmental Support Specialists identified an additional 6,344 diverse and complex needs for both the children and their caregivers beyond the original reason(s) for referral. One-third of the identified concerns were for child development and early intervention services, such as delays in speech and fine and gross motor development. Another 32% of referrals concerned the need for additional resources, including housing, transportation, education, and financial assistance. Sixteen percent of families needed family support services, such as childcare and in-home care. Linking parent/caregivers with appropriate interventions includes follow-up to make sure the resources were accessible.

Part 4: 1st Five Developmental Support Specialists follow up with the provider on the patient's status

The DSS monitors all referrals through check-ins with families and the service organizations to which they are referred — ensuring that children and caregivers are receiving the needed intervention services. The DSS also follows up with referring providers to update them on the status of the child and the outcome of the referral. This feedback loop with providers informs their ongoing patient care.

Reasons for referrals. Providers refer children and their families to 1st Five based on a range of development, health, and family concerns. In FY 2020, 1st Five sites received over 2,700 referrals from 652 providers.



Participating caregivers said 1st Five made:

94%

"a great deal" or
"some" difference in
their family's life

4%

"very little" difference in
their family's life

2%

"no" difference in their
family's life

1st Five's legacy of supporting healthy development of young children

Since establishing the 1st Five initiative in 2007, Iowa lawmakers have continually recognized its value and, for many years, increased its appropriation. As a result, 1st Five has expanded to engage more providers and serve more families. Communities served by 1st Five view the program as a stable and valuable community resource. To date, 1st Five has supported the healthy mental development of almost **24,000 children** through the early identification and intervention for social-emotional and developmental concerns prior to school entry. 1st Five has also made over **52,500 connections to community resources** to help caregivers address stress, caregiver depression and environmental factors causing toxic stress.

Currently, 1st Five is in all Iowa counties except for: Cherokee, Clinton, Ida, Iowa, Jackson, Johnson, Lyon, Plymouth, Scott, Sioux, and Woodbury.

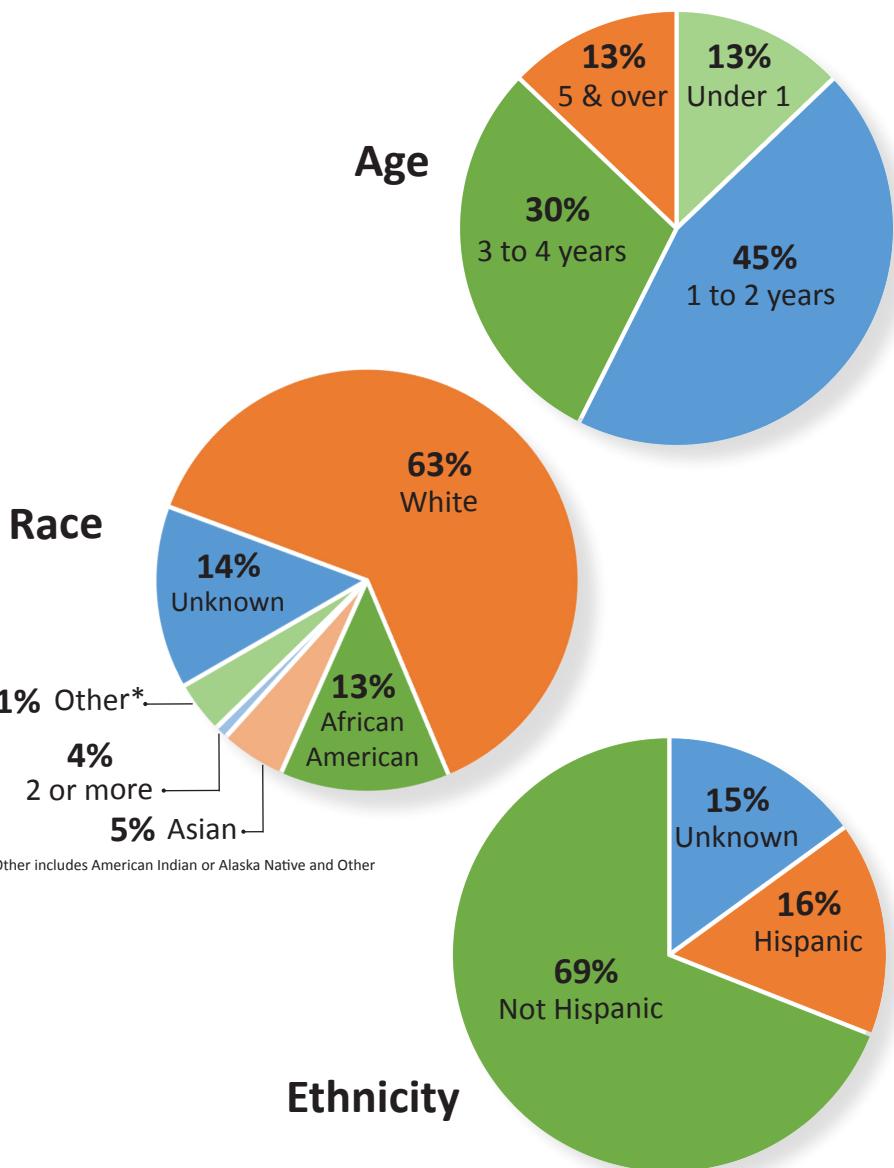
Real impact: Here's how 1st Five helps families in Iowa

Meet nine-month-old Jenny*. Her provider administered the nine-month Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) at a routine well-child visit. The results showed that Jenny was delayed in problem-solving, gross motor skills, and personal-social skills. The provider referred Jenny to 1st Five. Jenny's older sister had previously been involved with 1st Five, and her mom understood the benefits of participating in the initiative. The Developmental Support Specialist provided Jenny's mom with written information on early intervention and made a referral for Jenny to Early ACCESS. Early ACCESS evaluated Jenny and helped her qualify for additional therapies to address the delays identified by the ASQ-3. Jenny is receiving early intervention therapies to help her meet her developmental milestones. 1st Five provided Jenny's provider a final progress report, which the provider can use to inform future well-child visits with Jenny.

*Name has been changed to protect family privacy.

About the children participating in 1st Five

(Percent totals may exceed 100% due to rounding)



This report is based on evaluation findings conducted by Common Good Iowa (formerly Child and Family Policy Center).

- ▶ Learn more about Common Good Iowa's evaluation efforts. Contact Angelica Cardenas-Chaisson (acardenas@cfpciowa.org)
- ▶ Learn more about 1st Five. Contact Michelle Holst (Michelle.Holst@idph.iowa.gov) or visit www.idph.iowa.gov

