

# Building a Community-wide Early Childhood System



Lessons Learned from a State and Local Partnership: How CT's Child Development Infoline (CDI) and the City of Norwalk are developing a universal developmental screening process

**PRESENTATION FOR MCH COALITION**

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# Presentation Overview



- Implementing the *Help Me Grow* system within a local community
- Early childhood system building work in Norwalk
  - ✦ Establishing an integrated system of services and supports
  - ✦ Understanding the importance of developmental screening
  - ✦ Using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire as a common agenda
  - ✦ Informing policy, methods for tracking activities, and measuring outcomes using a cross sector approach.
- Potential for replication in other communities and on a state level

# Project Goal: Norwalk children enter Kindergarten ready to learn



- **Micro**

- Ensure families have access to information, referrals, and help navigating health/behavioral health systems:
  - ✦ Increase routine screenings as early as possible
  - ✦ Identify children with developmental concerns and connect to services as needed

- **Macro**

- Use data on child development to inform:
  - ✦ decisions related to resource allocation
  - ✦ policy development

# Why do formal developmental screening?



	<b>Without screening tools</b>	<b>With screening tools</b>
<b>Developmental Disabilities</b>	<b>30% identified</b> Palfrey et al, 1994	<b>70-80% identified</b> Squires et al, 1996
<b>Mental Health Problems</b>	<b>20% identified</b> Lavigne et al, 1993	<b>80-90% identified</b> Sturner, 1991

# Developmental Screening: Why the ASQ?



- Validated tool with diverse populations
- Family-friendly: A tool for parents
- Used with general and at-risk populations
- Fosters parents' understanding of development (promotes development)
- Endorsed by American Academy of Pediatrics
- Has been used as an outcome measure in public health studies, home visiting programs and early head start

# ASQ Domains



- **ASQ-3**
  - Communication
  - Gross motor
  - Fine motor
  - Problem solving
  - Personal-social
- **ASQ-SE2**
  - Self-regulation
  - Compliance
  - Communication
  - Adaptive behaviors
  - Autonomy
  - Affect
  - Interaction with people

# What do families say about ASQ?

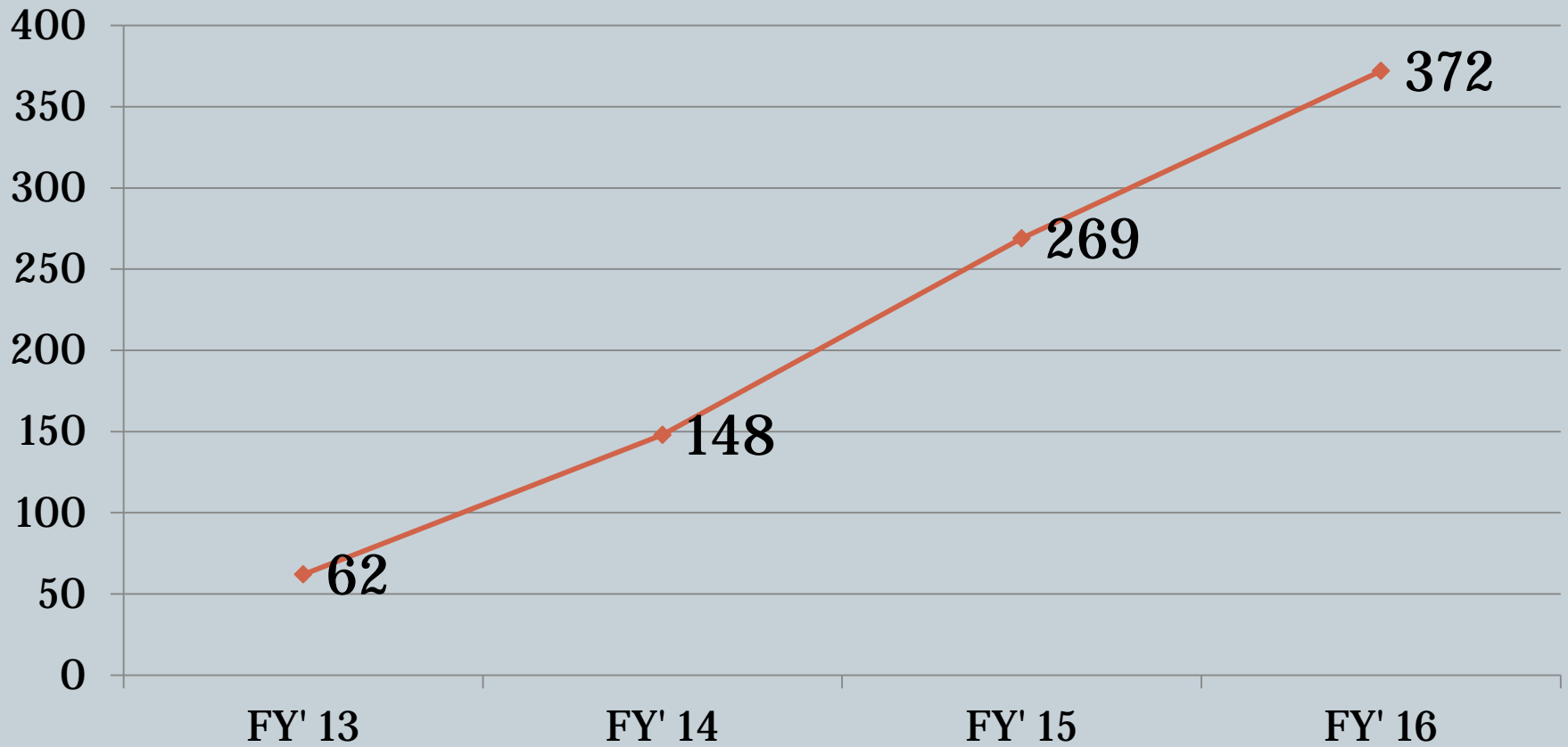


- *“As a mom you have concerns but the program (ASQ) has alleviated that for me..... ASQ provides validation for where he should be at his age.”*
- *“My husband and I are much more confident, aren’t afraid and fueling on the feeling of fear, our mental well-being, and not calling a doctor a hundred times a day if we thought something was wrong.”*
- *“ASQ is giving me re-assurance to know he is on track.”*
- *“Now she is going through the terrible two’s, they (CDI) just sent me some info on temper tantrums which is helpful since I marked that as a concern on the last questionnaire I sent back.”*

# Number of ASQ referrals by year



## Referrals to ASQ Monitoring Program





# Accomplishments



- Identified champions and work groups
- Approval/adoption by Norwalk Early Childhood Council
- Aligned our efforts with Norwalk ACTS
- Engaged ECE and home visiting providers
- Creation of universal home visiting referral form
- State-wide visibility: presentation to OEC commissioner
- Formation of CQI group to own the work: PDSA cycles
- ASQ SE included in 800+ kindergarten registration packets

# Challenges



- **Three years is not enough time to tell if this initiative is moving the needle**
- **Need to determine if there is a clearly demonstrated correlation between ASQ and kindergarten readiness**
- **Determine what policies are needed to support an early childhood system**

# Where are we now?



- Institutionalizing developmental screening as early as possible (i.e., 0-3) through 5 years of age
- Identifying children with developmental problems and connecting families to services as needed
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process:
  - Modeled after Help Me Grow Collaborative in Michigan
  - Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles

# Focus of the CQI Process



- Identify partners for each developmental touchpoint
- Create a messaging/marketing campaign on the benefits of developmental screening that targets families and providers
- Increase routine screenings as early as possible
- Identify children with developmental concerns and connect to services as needed (tiered interventions)
- Create an ongoing system of support and training for providers for utilizing ASQ and entering the data
- Develop mechanisms to track and measure impact of project
- Identify policy implications for sustainability of initiative

# Indicators:

## How do we know if the CQI process is working?



<b>Measures of success</b>	
Total # of community partners	
Percent increase in total # of community partners	
Total # screens	
Total # repeat / routine screens	
Percent increase from 201x-201x in total # of screens	
Total # of children screened routinely at different age levels	
# of children identified with developmental concern	
# of children with developmental concern referred for services	

# Resources



- Child Development Infoline Website:  
[cdi.211ct.org](http://cdi.211ct.org)
- Developmental Screening Toolkit:  
<http://www.eccsct.org/toolkit/>



**Thank you!**

**Questions / Comments**

**Feedback**

# Contact information



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