

19,000) were exposed to LTSAE messages through environmental graphics installed in WIC offices and related materials. More than 8600 parents were informed about their children's development using LTSAE checklists, asked to talk with their doctors about development, and immediately referred for further screening if a child's checklist indicated possible developmental concerns. Program acceptance by staff and parents was high. Nearly all staff (96%) referred one or more children for further assessment, and parental awareness of developmental milestones improved.

LTSAE-Phase II: Expansion and Replication

Because of this initial success, MU sought and was awarded additional funding for Phase II of the WIC Developmental Milestones Program (2013-2016). Its purpose was to replicate and refine the program in four counties surrounding St. Louis City in eastern Missouri and to assess its feasibility, impact and sustainability. During the 1-year program, WIC nutritionists asked parents to complete an age-appropriate checklist for their child at 6-month certification visits, and then reviewed the checklist with the parent. If staff noted potential developmental concerns on the checklist, the parent was referred to the child's doctor for screening and further assessment. WIC staff also noted the referral in their WIC electronic records so they could follow up at a subsequent visit, just as they do with other referrals.

Approximately 6,000 families receiving services at 9 WIC clinics in eastern Missouri completed checklists, and an estimated 400 children were referred to their doctor because of potential developmental concerns. WIC staff helped collect data for the three evaluation studies. Results are summarized below.

Study 1: Parent Survey

- 119 parents of children aged 12 to 48 months completed a survey about the Checklist Program before and after program implementation
- 99% said they spent time looking at the graphics
- 41% said they filled out a checklist, and of these, 98% talked with WIC staff about the checklist and their child's development
- 86% had seen or heard recently about developmental milestones (vs. 78% prior to program)
- 97% said graphics helped them learn about their child's development
- 97% learned new information about child development from the checklist

Study 2: Referral Outcomes Tracking

- 122 children aged 12 to 48 months were referred to their primary care doctor for possible developmental concerns during the first 6 months.
- 84 children returned to WIC clinics during the next 6-10 months, and parents reported what happened after the referral.
- 61% of these children were seen by their doctor because of the WIC referral
- Of those children seen by their doctor, 41% were referred on for additional testing by another professional and 29% accessed intervention services.

Study 3: WIC Staff Survey

- WIC staff members indicated this program was easy to implement (80% said program takes 5 minutes or less)
- 90% of WIC staff said the program helps them learn when to refer and how to support parents
- 95% said they referred one or more children
- 95% reported that the program promotes healthy development
- All 9 WIC clinics plan to continue the Developmental Milestones Program

The continuing success of this program has led to requests for statewide and national expansion. MU has been awarded CDC funding to develop, implement and evaluate a statewide model for adoption of the WIC Developmental Milestones Program in Missouri and across the nation (2016-2017). State WIC leaders support this expansion and will provide LTSAE materials to participating clinics.

For more information, contact:

Janet E. Farmer, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, farmerje@health.missouri.edu