



1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative Annual Report

September 2021

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.

1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative began in 2007. By partnering with primary care providers and providing training and assistance, 1st Five supports the healthy cognitive, social, and emotional development of Iowa children from birth through five years.

Experts agree that early detection of developmental delays increases the effectiveness of interventions and improves short- and long-term outcomes for our youngest children. Improved outcomes lessen the burden on Iowa taxpayers by reducing the incidence and severity of child developmental and behavioral problems, benefitting our state's health, education, child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The sooner a child with developmental and emotional issues receives early intervention services, the better the outcome. Ongoing and consistent developmental screening beginning at birth is critical to ensure early identification of developmental and/or social-emotional issues potentially impacting a child's healthy development.

Despite the critical role of early developmental screening, data from the National Survey of Children's Health finds that only 40 percent of all Iowa children (9 months to 35 months) were screened using a developmental screening tool in the past 12 months.¹ To address this shortcoming, the 1st Five Initiative seeks to increase the use of developmental screening by engaging health providers and supporting their use of developmental screening tools during child health visits.

1st Five's comprehensive approach to child health in the early years enhances the healthy development of Iowa children. A 1st Five Developmental Support Specialist (DSS) works with a child's caregiver to connect the child to interventions that address concerns identified in developmental screening. The DSS may also identify and provide referrals to address other issues that can hinder healthy development, such as maternal depression and resource needs, including food insecurity or inadequate housing.

What is screening?

Screening is a set of standard questions based on the child's age that help determine how kids are growing and developing. The screening includes questions and/or activities (like stacking blocks) that examine how a child plays, learns, speaks, behaves and moves.²

¹ Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2019 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Accessed at <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8235&r=17>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, February 22). Developmental monitoring and screening. Retrieved August 25, 2021 from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html>.

1st Five's 4-part service model assures a comprehensive approach to child health and well-being

The four areas of 1st Five's model build on and reinforce each other and create a continuous loop to identify and address new or persistent developmental concerns noted by the child's health provider. The model effectively encourages and supports practitioners in implementing developmental screening and surveillance tools that lead to early intervention services. It also helps ensure that families are empowered in accessing services and practitioners are informed of service outcomes.

Part 1

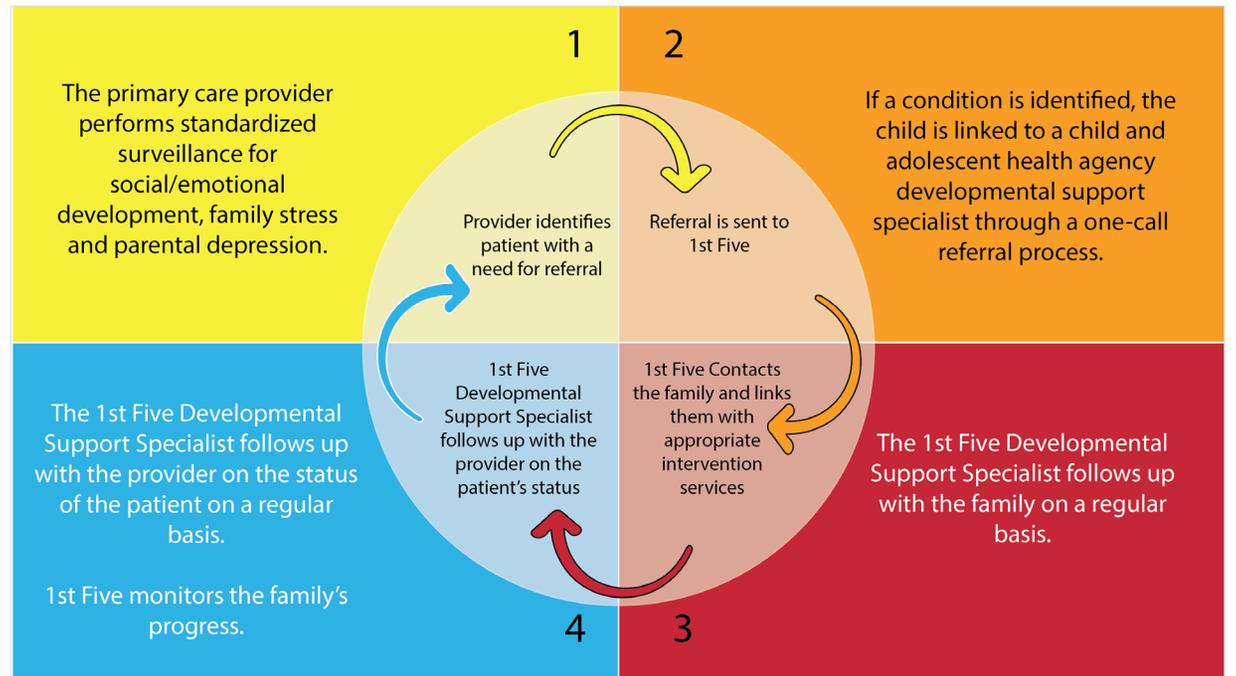
Provider identifies patient needing referral

1st Five's site coordinators reach out to practitioners to acquaint them with the services and support 1st Five provides for them and the families they serve. 1st Five offers practitioners education, training, and, if needed, tools in English or other languages to implement developmental screening during well-child visits. Practitioners also receive ongoing education to address barriers they may encounter during implementation, including how to best integrate developmental screening into child health appointments.

Part 2

Referral is sent to 1st Five

When they identify a developmental concern, providers refer the child to the local 1st Five site, which helps connect the child to early intervention services. Being able to refer a child to 1st Five helps remove a practitioner's apprehension over-identifying developmental delays without having the capacity or access to resources to address those concerns. In FY 2021, 1st Five received 2,602 referrals from 595 practitioners, with the top three reasons to refer being developmental concerns, hearing and speech, and parent and family stress.



Source: 1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative

95%

of participating caregivers said 1st Five made "a great deal" or "some" difference in their family's life

98%

of participating caregivers said 1st Five "mostly" or "completely" met the needs of their family

Part 3

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

A 1st Five Development Support Specialist (DSS) works closely with the child's caregiver to help access services and overcome barriers, including transportation or language issues. The DSS follows up to ensure that the child is connected to appropriate services that meet their needs, address any challenges the caregiver might face, and identify any additional needs beyond those noted by the provider. In FY 2021, the DSS identified an additional 5,621 diverse and complex needs for both children and their caregivers. The top need identified by the Developmental Support Specialists was for development and early intervention services, followed by resource needs, such as food and clothing, and family support services, including child care and parenting education

Part 4

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

After referring a caregiver to identified appropriate services, the DSS monitors progress to ensure that the child and their caregiver are receiving the services they need. The DSS circles back to the referring provider to update them on the status of the services the child received and the referral outcome. This feedback loop helps to inform the provider's ongoing care of the child.

By the numbers

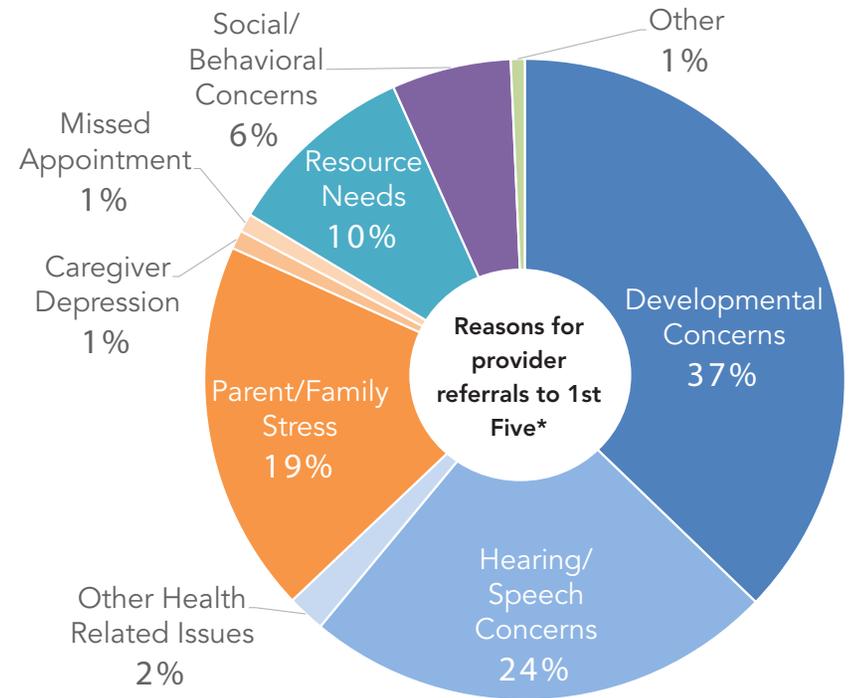
1st Five's legacy of supporting healthy development

- Began in 2007, serving seven counties. Currently serves **88 of 99 Iowa counties**
- More than **26,500 children have benefited** from the early identification and intervention for social-emotional and developmental concerns before entering school.
- 1st Five has made over 58,000 connections to community resources that help caregivers address concerns related to their child's development, stress, caregiver depression, and other environmental factors that can impair healthy development.

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

Providers refer children and their families to 1st Five based on a range of concerns related to development, health and social stressors.

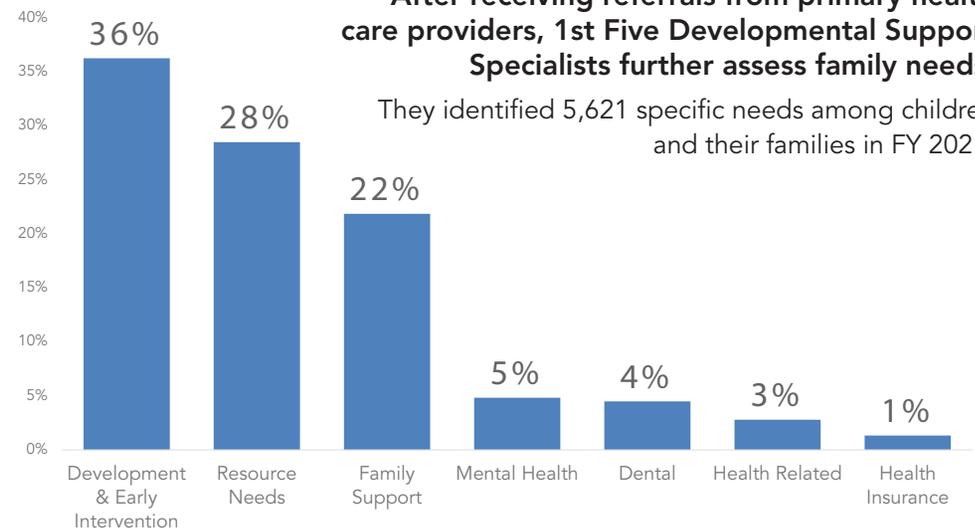
In FY 2021, 1st Five sites received 2,602 referrals from 595 providers.



*Percent totals may exceed 100% due to rounding

After receiving referrals from primary health care providers, 1st Five Developmental Support Specialists further assess family needs.

They identified 5,621 specific needs among children and their families in FY 2021.



Meet Alex*

At his 12-month well-child visit, **Alex received an ASQ-3 developmental screening from his primary health care provider.** The provider had previously received training on the ASQ-3 tool from 1st Five, which also provided ASQ screening materials. The screening identified areas of concern, including communication, gross motor skills, problem-solving, and social skills. In addition to developmental concerns, the provider also noted that Alex had food aversion, making it difficult for him to eat and swallow.

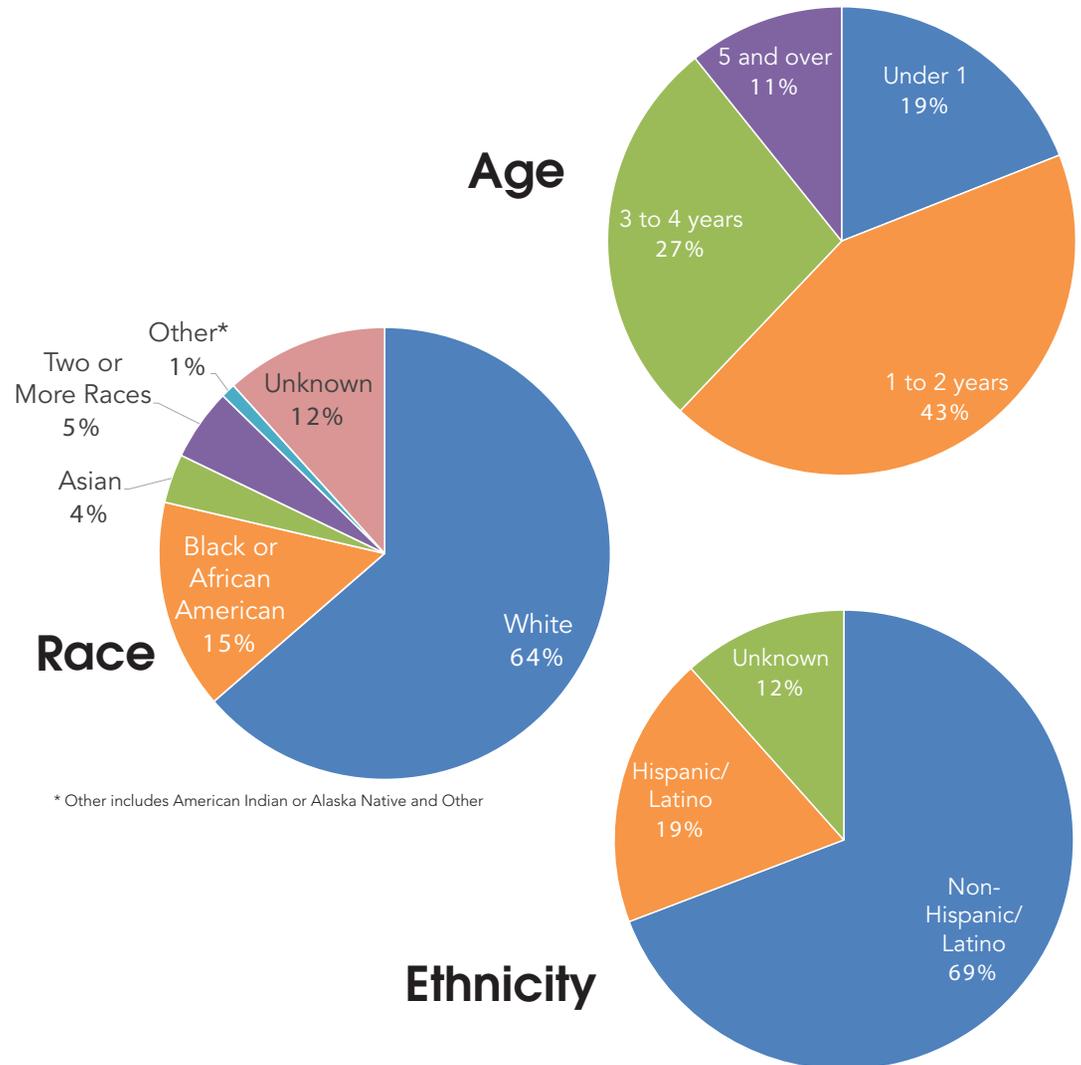
1st Five's Developmental Support Specialist connected Alex to Early ACCESS for a full assessment. Early ACCESS completed a comprehensive evaluation to address all developmental concerns identified in the screening. 1st Five also worked with the parents to connect them to a **local nutrition program.** When the DSS learned Alex did not have a dental home, she also **connected Alex to a dentist,** where his family established dental care for him.

Alex improved dramatically with Early ACCESS's support and services and, **within four months, was walking, running and climbing stairs.** Alex's parents also learned new feeding and strategies from the dietitian. Alex is now eating more foods without choking, which helps him maintain his weight. His parents are happy with Alex's development. These early-intervention services are helping **build a strong foundation** for Alex to grow and develop.

*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.

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

