



## INTRODUCTION

### Well-child care is the heart of health care for young children.

- It is recommended that children have 10 well-child visits in the first three years of life.
- Front-line health care providers report that the cornerstone of their partnerships with patients is the discussions they have during well-child visits.
- Parents view the well-child visit as an important time to have their child's growth and development assessed, to ask questions and address their concerns, and to receive advice and guidance.
- Health systems affect the settings and providers of well-child care. Health systems also provide parents of young children with a wealth of information. Parents of young children are important health care consumers and invaluable members of a health system.

Recent national and regional studies find that recommended preventive and developmental services are not routinely provided and that parents have unmet informational needs.

The question for you then is: **What is the quality of preventive and developmental services in your health system?**

The Promoting Healthy Development Survey (PHDS) is a survey for parents of young children (3 years old and younger) that assesses whether recommended preventive and developmental services are provided, and the degree to which parents' informational needs are met. The PHDS also collects baseline descriptive information about the child, parent, and family that is useful for targeting improvement efforts. Since 1997, the **Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI)** has developed, tested, and implemented the PHDS. The PHDS has been used at the national, state, health plan, practice, and provider-level. To date, more than 45,000 surveys have been collected by 10 Medicaid agencies, four health plans, 38 pediatric practices, and nationally through the **National Survey of Early Childhood Health (NSECH)**. Components of the PHDS are also included in the **National Survey of Children's Health**.

Appendix 1 provides a summary of the PHDS and why health systems should use this tool.

### Evidence of the Quality Chasm in Developmental Services

- ✓ **Nine of 10** young children have one or more unmet developmental service need.
- ✓ **Six of 10** young children's parents did NOT get needed guidance and information on promoting their child's health and development.
- ✓ **Half of young children** with significant risks to their development did NOT receive follow-up.
- ✓ **Half of young children's parents** are NOT asked about smoking, alcohol, and drug use in the home.
- ✓ **Less than half of children whose parents have symptoms of depression** were screened for depression by their child's provider.