

Apple Health (Medicaid) developmental and behavioral health pediatric screening FAQ

What are developmental and behavioral health screenings?

Developmental and behavioral health screenings are conducted by a health care provider or early childhood professional using a validated tool and engaging in collaborative conversations with caregivers about their child's development.

These screenings provide an opportunity to discuss children's health and development with their caregiver and to understand the child's needs and strengths.

Why are developmental and behavioral health screenings important?

Standardized screenings play a critical role in the early identification of conditions that impact children and youth, in the present and in their long-term development.

When a screening indicates a concern, health care providers and early childhood professionals help families identify resources and access necessary services.

What screening tools should be used?

Providers may reference the [American Academy of Pediatrics Bright Futures Toolkit for Commonly Used Screening Instruments](#) for examples of available screening tools.

How are screening results used?

Screening results indicating outcomes within a normal range (negative screen) provide an opportunity to celebrate strengths and continue to provide anticipatory guidance on maintaining healthy development.

When a screening indicates a concern (positive screen), providers partner with families to identify whether additional assessment is needed, identify relevant resources, and support the family in accessing services.

What developmental and behavioral health screenings does Apple Health cover?

Routine developmental and behavioral health screenings are required as a part of [Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic, and Treatment \(EPSDT\)](#). Apple Health covers all medically necessary screenings provided to children and youth under the age of 21.

Screenings typically included as a part of a well-child checkup include:

- Child development, including screening for autism.
- Behavioral health and social emotional development, including depression, anxiety, and substance use.
- Caregiver depression screening during the first year after pregnancy/postpartum.

Learn more about what codes to use, billing requirements, and current reimbursement rates in [EPSDT's Well-child program billing guide and fee schedule](#).

How does the Health Care Authority (HCA) use screening claims data?

Apple Health screening claims are required to include an ICD-10-CM diagnosis code and a modifier. These data points provide necessary information on the specific screening type and screening outcomes. HCA uses this information for the following purposes:

- Meeting Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS) requirements.
- Assessing current developmental and behavioral health needs and access to care.
- Informing future policies to support children and youth services.

Who do I contact if I have a billing question or issue?

See the [Apple Health clinical policy and billing contact information](#) to connect with HCA and managed care organizations (MCO).

