



ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE AND PARENT EDUCATION IN YOUR PRACTICE

STEPS TO IMPROVE ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE

If you decide to incorporate new anticipatory guidance topics into your practice, you might find it helpful to initially select one or two specific topics. Consider the following when introducing new content in your practice:

- Communicate with staff about new content changes**
 - Ask staff to share past experiences of introducing new information and tools into their routines.
 - Try to understand existing work routines that you could build on. For example, the nurses might hand out parent information already and adding new materials would be easy for them.
 - Inform staff of the anticipatory guidance topics and resources that are newly available in your practice so that they can share them with parents. Be sure to describe how materials will be organized, where they will be kept, and who to inform if materials need to be ordered.

- Start your improvement efforts by asking parents**
 - Use tools such as the Promoting Healthy Development Survey to enable your parents to provide feedback to guide your improvement efforts. By asking parents directly where they are and are not having their information needs met, you will design a quality improvement effort that is parent-centered.
 - Design a communication strategy to be used by health care providers that addresses these topics.
 - Add prompts about these topics to the well-child visit prompt sheet.
 - Develop parent handouts or posters that address these anticipatory guidance topics.

- Test out ideas before implementing changes throughout the practice**
 - Try a new tool or strategy with five families and review what you learn. For example, after using a new parent handout, ask: “Did these handouts result in the parent understanding this information better than in the past? How did the parents react? Did these tools improve my encounter? Do I need more training to make this a better interaction?”
 - Repeat tests several times before deciding which new materials or strategies to implement.

- Train health care providers**
 - Consider holding informal training sessions for everyone to ask questions about topics and introduce new tools.

- Consider asking a parent to come to this training to highlight the kinds of information that they would find valuable.
- Include instructions on any new roles or responsibilities for health care providers.
- Staff might welcome a session on how to discuss sensitive topics or how to handle difficult situations that might arise during a visit (e.g., discipline).

☐ Identify tools to support improvements in care

- Review your chart tools to determine if you have prompts for the new topic. Adapt existing flow sheets or age-appropriate health maintenance records to reflect new content.
- Check with whoever is responsible for printing in your practice that appropriate prompts are added before charting tools are reordered.
- Consider adding text to standard physical exam forms to facilitate family interviews (e.g., How many hours per week does your child watch television?). Or, add prompting words to remind health care providers of the important key points for a topic (e.g., car seat safety – installation).

☐ Select appropriate anticipatory guidance materials to reinforce content

- Consider whether anticipatory guidance materials in languages other than English are appropriate.
- Create a list of Web sites, books, and videos for parents.
- Consider using educational videos in your waiting room.
- Identify a person or team to be responsible for checking the anticipatory guidance material inventory and periodically reviewing parent handouts for accuracy and appropriateness.
- Consider asking a handful of parents to provide you with feedback about your anticipatory guidance materials.

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANIZING ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE MATERIALS

One key ingredient to effective anticipatory guidance is to have a system designed that ensures all parents receive appropriate information when they need it. Below are listed a number of suggestions for organizing anticipatory guidance materials.

☐ Understand your patient population

Understanding your families' needs helps you identify which topics are most important to them. Talking to families, reviewing charts, talking to your staff and colleagues, and using surveys are all strategies for gathering information about your patients and their families. You can use the Promoting Healthy Development Survey to get standardized, reliable feedback from parents about whether their informational needs are being met on key recommended anticipatory guidance and parental education topics.

☐ Selecting anticipatory guidance materials

When reviewing or creating anticipatory guidance handouts, consider the following questions to determine if they are appropriate for your practice and its population:

- Are materials culturally appropriate?
- What is the reading level? A reading level of grade 5 is suggested by many experts.
- Are the materials graphically appealing? Are the illustrations appropriate for your population?
- Do materials reflect the parenting practices in the community?
- Is the information straightforward and understandable?
- Is the advice something that a typical parent in your practice could act on?

Use interactive materials when possible

There are numerous resources for anticipatory guidance books, videos, and handouts. Consider integrating videos into your practice. Instead of having commercial television on in your waiting room, install a videotape player that can play educational videos. Some practices might find that videos are a helpful way to share sensitive information with parents. Set aside an exam room that has a videotape player for patients and families to view special information. Compile a list of recommended books and resources for parents to take home.

Train health care providers

Provide opportunities for staff to become familiar with the new materials. Use existing meetings to provide training and orientation. You want everyone in the office to understand the information so that parents receive consistent information. It might be helpful to discuss how to use the materials with families. Describe how handouts will be organized so that staff can easily obtain handouts when they need them.

Review handouts with parents

It is essential that health care providers review all educational materials that are given to a parent for the materials to be effective. Offer parents an opportunity to ask questions about the information on the handout and be sure the parent understands how to obtain additional information if needed.

Link to your community resources

Establishing a link to local community resources can be an important aspect of parent education. For topics that are particularly sensitive (e.g., discipline) or challenging (e.g., car seat safety) identify resources in the community as referrals for parents (e.g., local parenting groups). For some topics, national organizations might have useful information that you can incorporate into your parent interactions (e.g., national locator service on the Web for local car seat safety inspection centers).

MONITORING PROGRESS

USING THE PROMOTING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

To monitor improvement efforts focused on parents' informational needs, the PHDS includes an age-specific section that asks parents to report whether key recommended topics were discussed and whether they had their informational needs met about these

topics through these discussions or via other resources. To view versions of this section go to <http://www.cahmi.org>.

The survey results can be used to identify the following:

- The proportion of parents who have one or more unmet information needs.
- Topics for which the most parents in your practice reported “No, but I wish we had discussed that.”

Regardless of the method you use to collect data from patients on a regular basis, be sure to set aside time at regular practice meetings to share feedback from patients with others on your clinic staff.

Administering the Promoting Healthy Development Survey

The Promoting Healthy Development Survey can be administered to a sample of patients at regular intervals (i.e., five consecutive patients per age group in a month OR all patients in the first two weeks of a month). There are three age-specific versions of the survey: 3–9 months, 10–18 months, and 19–46 months. Ongoing use of this tool can provide data to help you track improvements your practice is making over time and identify areas that can be the focus of new improvements. The objective assessments should be completed annually. Consider timing the collection and summarization of this data so that is available to inform annual priority setting for your practice. More details about administering the PHDS in your practice can be found at <http://www.cahmi.org>.