

Overview & Instructions for QCCN

This Speech and Language Referral Checklist is intended to help child care professionals identify children who may benefit from an assessment of their communication development by a Speech-Language Pathologist. The Checklist allows the professional to identify whether or not communication skills seem to be developing as expected, if behaviours are present that sometimes occur when a child is not developing communication as expected, and if there are concerns with stuttering, resonance, or quality of voice.

The Checklist is not a diagnostic test: specific results cannot confirm the presence or absence of communication delays or disorders. This is **not** a "milestone" checklist that lists average ages that skills are developed. Although the tool is divided into age categories, some skills within each age category should have developed many months before the corresponding age and some may have only recently developed.

The Checklist is divided into 10 age categories: 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 2 years, 2.5 years, 3 years, 3.5 years and 4 years. **Complete ONE age category per child**: choose the category that the child has most recently reached. For example, if the child is 44 months old, choose the 3.5 years category because the child has reached 3.5 but not 4. Infants under the age of 6 months can be referred without completing the Checklist if there are concerns with the child's interaction/early communication skills.

The Checklist will typically be completed by an RECE who is caring for the child. In certain circumstances, based on agency protocol, an RC may complete the Checklist (e.g. if the RC is already involved with the child, at an EarlyON Centre). The RECE/RC should make it clear to the parent that the Checklist will be completed by Child Care staff, not a Speech-Language Pathologist with the Niagara Children's Centre.

It is preferred (but not mandatory) that the RECE/RC completing the Checklist consult with the parent(s)/guardian(s) when completing the Checklist. At minimum, parent(s)/guardian(s) should be asked to review the results. If the parent/guardian is not concerned and/or does not consent to a referral (when the results indicate a referral should be made), **do not refer**. Suggest completing the Checklist again in a few months time and continue to provide language-rich experiences. If the parent/guardian reports skills that you have not observed, brainstorm ways together to help the child use the skills in the child care setting.

The Checklist asks about how the child is communicating with "you". It does not matter whether the child has demonstrated the skill with the RECE/RC, parent, other adult, or other children as long as the child has demonstrated the skill.

Children Whose Primary Language is not the Language of the Child Care

The Checklist should be completed by thinking about the child's skills in the language they know best. In most cases, this involves consultation with the parent/guardian. If a child is exposed to/speaking a different language at home than at the child care and this is considered the child's "first" or "primary" language:

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- Ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) if they have concerns with their child's communication in their primary language
- Ask for how long and how the child has been exposed to the language of the child care (e.g. by parents a % of the time, by TV, by a child care, etc.)
- Do not refer if the parent has no concerns regarding the development of the child's first/primary language. Do not refer if the child has minimal exposure to the language of the child care. Continue to monitor the child's communication development and provide rich language experiences. Suggest completing the Checklist again in a few months time.
 - If the child is exhibiting other possible developmental delays or atypical behaviours, you may refer with parent consent
 - If you cannot determine whether there are concerns in the first/primary language due to a language barrier with the parent/guardian you cannot overcome AND it is unclear whether and how long the child has been exposed to the language of the child care, you may refer with parent consent
- The Referral Form has a place to indicate whether an interpreter will be required for the assessment (and what language), including whether an interpreter will be needed to complete the intake and book the appointment
- The Referral Form has a place to indicate whether it was possible to confirm that there ARE concerns in the child's first/primary language

How to Score the Checklist

- Each age category is divided into **TWO** boxes.

Box 1:

- Questions in the "first box" represent skills that are expected "by" or "before" the age listed.
- Answer each question with a YES or NO
- Make a referral if there are any "no" responses in this box

Box 2:

- Questions in the "second box" refer to atypical communication concerns and behaviours that sometimes occur when a child is not developing communication as expected.
- Make a referral if there are any "yes" responses in this box (unless indicated by a * , as questions with a * must have at least 1 other response in Box 1 or 2 that warrants a referral)

How to Make a Referral

Please see the following documents:

- Niagara Children's Centre Speech and Language Referral Pathways for QCCN
- Niagara Children's Centre Speech and Language Referral Form for QCCN
- Niagara Children's Centre Speech and Language Referral Checklists (10 by age category)