

Addressing ACEs by integrating a parenting assessment into pediatric primary care: time, costs, and impact on a practice's finances

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Background

- The cost of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to society in the U.S. is estimated at hundreds of billions of dollars per year.
- Some ACEs are negative parenting practices (e.g. spanking).
- Pediatricians are motivated to intervene for unhealthy parenting, but hurdles include time constraints and lack of reimbursement.
- Time and costs to integrate a parenting assessment are unknown.

Study Aims

- To estimate the time, costs, and impact on a practice's finances to integrate a validated parenting assessment tool into the well child visit.

Methods

- The Quick Parenting Assessment (QPA) is a validated, 13 item ACEs screening tool that assesses for healthy and unhealthy parenting practices. Elevated QPAs (>2) are associated with an increased likelihood of childhood behavior problems. (Figure 1)
- In a clinic serving low-income parents, the QPA was integrated into the 15-month, 30-month, 5-year, and 8-year well child visits. Health care providers were educated about how to review the QPA with parents with a 20-minute presentation.
- After a QPA encounter, providers were invited to complete a one-page survey about the QPA review process (N=428).
- Key measures were the QPA score and providers' estimate of time required to review the QPA with parents. We estimated the range of costs of QPA integration and the impact of QPA integration on a practice's finances.

Figure 1: The Quick Parenting Assessment

Quick Parenting Assessment (QPA)

Date: _____ Name of your child: _____ Age of your child: _____
 What is your relationship with your child? Mother Father Grandparent Other

Parents use many options to discipline their children and no parent does it right 100% of the time. To support you and your child, please let us know what YOU and OTHER CAREGIVERS do, not what you think you should do.

In the past month, what have YOU done when your child needed to be disciplined?

1. You redirected your child toward a good behavior. For example, you said something like: "Don't bite people, use your teeth to eat food" or "Don't kick the dog, let's go kick a ball".	Yes	No
2. In general, more than once per day, you used time-out or took away privilege.	Yes	No
3. In general, more than once per day, you spoke angrily or raised your voice.	Yes	No
4. You told your child that he/she is going to be spanked, smacked, popped, or slapped.	Yes	No
5. You gave your child a spanking, smack, pop, or slap.	Yes	No
6. You told your child something like "You are a bad boy" or "You are a naughty girl".	Yes	No
7. You spent more time with your child to talk about or show them how to improve behavior.	Yes	No

In the past month, what have your child's OTHER CAREGIVERS done when your child needed to be disciplined? SKIP questions 8-12 if you are the only caregiver.

8. In general, more than once per day, they used time-out or took away privilege.	Yes	No
9. In general, more than once per day, they spoke angrily or raised their voice.	Yes	No
10. They told your child that they are going to be spanked, smacked, popped, or slapped.	Yes	No
11. They gave your child a spanking, smack, pop, or slap.	Yes	No
12. They told your child something like "You are a bad boy" or "You are a naughty girl".	Yes	No

Your health care provider wants to support you.

13. I would like to discuss healthy ways to respond to my child's behavior.	Yes	No
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Results

Figure 2: QPA Review and QPA Risk Category

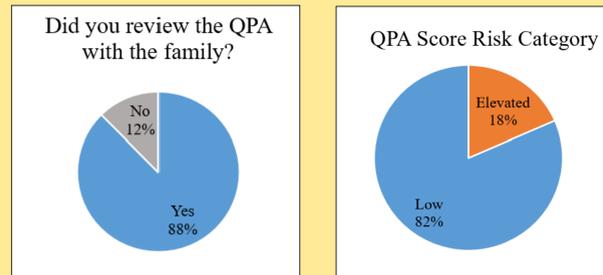


Figure 3: Provider Estimates of Time to Review QPA

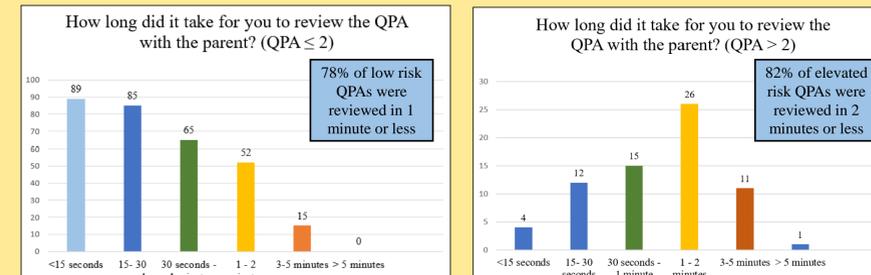


Table 1: Time and cost estimates to administer the QPA in clinic

QPA reviewed with parent: N= 375 (%)	Time needed to review the QPA	Cost for health care providers' time, assuming providers' time is worth: \$60/hour \$180/hour		Range of cost per assessment***
Low: ≤ 2 N= 306 (82%)	1 minute*	\$1	\$3	\$1-\$3
Elevated: >2 N= 69 (18%)	2 minutes**	\$2	\$6	\$2-\$6

*78% of providers reported that low risk QPA reviews were completed in 1 minute or less.
 **82% of providers reported that elevated risk QPA reviews were completed in 2 minutes or less.
 ***Assumes that other costs such as printing, \$0.03 per 1-page QPA in our clinic, and labor to print and distribute the form are less than \$0.50 per QPA assessment. Does not include upfront costs (e.g. time to train health care providers.)

Table 2: Method of integrating the QPA and the likely impact on a pediatric practice's finances

Method of integrating the QPA	Impact on a pediatric practice's finances per QPA assessment
Provider does not substitute other anticipatory guidance for the QPA review. Provider does not bill for the additional service.	Loss of \$1-\$6*
Provider substitutes other anticipatory guidance topics for the QPA review. Provider does not bill for the additional service.	Loss of up to \$0.50**
Provider is reimbursed for the QPA review by billing for a patient focused health risk assessment (CPT code 96160).	Increased revenue***

*Based upon calculations in Table 1
 **Assumes that other costs such as printing, \$0.03 per 1-page QPA in our clinic, and labor to print and distribute the form are less than \$0.50 per QPA assessment.
 ***Assumes reimbursement for billing for CPT code 96160 is over \$6.

Conclusion

- An ACEs screening instrument, focused on parenting, can be integrated into pediatric primary care relatively efficiently and inexpensively.
- The potential for health care providers to bill and be reimbursed for the QPA as a patient-focused health risk assessment could further incentivize them to routinely address parenting as part of the well child visit.

Limitations

- This study was performed at one clinic site and may not be generalizable.
- There is potential for response bias in our survey results.

Implications

- These findings have implications for improving pediatric primary care, preventative and value-based care, and mitigating ACEs.

Next Steps

- Assess for changes in discipline practices as a result of QPA review.
- Compare perspectives of parents to those of health care providers.
- Trial the QPA at other sites.