

Section 2:

Pre-Referral

Pre-referral is a process in which a district implements scientific research-based strategies to address a student's needs within the general education classroom. The classroom teacher is responsible to implement at least 2 research-based interventions, collect data on these interventions, and document the results. For a child with suspected ASD at least 1 of the pre-referral interventions will need to address the concern(s) related to social skills, as this is the primary requirement to be identified with ASD. Additional interventions may address concerns related to communication, behavior, and/or academic concerns.

Although pre-referral is a process that is completed by the general education staff it is included in this manual as pre-referral teams may require assistance from special education staff on implementation of appropriate interventions specific to ASD concerns. Pre-referral teams tend to focus on academic and behavioral needs without the consideration of the social deficits that are at the heart of ASD. It is noted that the pre-referral process can be waived under special circumstances that are addressed in the "MDE Q & A on Pre-referral Process" within this section.

- [MDE Q&A on Pre-Referral Process.pdf](#)
This is a direct link to the MDE webpage that lists questions and answers about pre-referral interventions.
- [Pre-Referral Observation Form \(external website\)](#)
The CLC Network created a four-page checklist to assist a school's child study team in determining whether to initiate an evaluation for ASD. The four pages address sensory, behavior, communication, and social skills.
- [ASD Pre-Referral Chart.pdf](#)
A flowchart created to show the pre-referral process.
- [Evidence-Based Practices.pdf](#)
A list of the evidence-based practices from The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder 2020 report.
- [Pre-Referral Documentation Checklist.pdf](#)
This pre-referral checklist is used as an informal tool with teachers

and/or guardians to list characteristics observed of the child that indicate possible ASD. This checklist was created as part of a consult request for initial observation by an ASD consultant of a suspected ASD need.

- [Personal Challenges for Young Children.pdf](#)
A three-page document listing behaviors observed that may be challenging for young children with ASD.
- [Overlapping Characteristics Chart – Screener Tool.pdf](#)
A screening tool created for teams to identify characteristics or behaviors observed in an individual and then compare those behaviors to ASD or other overlapping disorders.