




Parents, are you concerned about how your baby or young child is:

Seeing? Hearing? Moving? Playing? Talking? Learning? Behaving?


Learn how you can find the help you need.



Are You Concerned about Your Child's Development?

Maybe you have a feeling that something is wrong. Perhaps relatives or friends think that your child isn't learning skills as quickly as other children of the same age. Maybe a doctor has told you that your child has a condition or developmental delay. If any of that sounds familiar, you may have concerns about your child.

Although children develop at their own pace, there are some general guidelines for the age at which most children have successfully developed important skills. You might expect to see the following skills at these ages:



At 3 months: Raise head while lying on tummy; smile back at people


At 6 months: Roll over; coo and babble; turn head toward sounds

At 9 months: Creep or crawl; sit without help; say Mama or Dada

At 12 months: Feed self with fingers and cup; wave bye-bye; play peek-a-boo

At 18 months: Walk without help; say 10 to 20 words; imitate others

At 2 years: Refer to self by name; return a kiss or hug; pretend in play



At 3 years: Use the toilet during the day; use three-word sentences

At 4 years: Retell favorite stories; take turns; dress self, except for fasteners

At 5 years: Follow three-step directions; count to 10; cut with scissors


If you are concerned about your child's growth, development, or learning, the most important thing you can do is seek help as soon as possible. Here is why—and how you can help your child and family.



Why should I call for help?

You will help your child.

- Children with special challenges often need special kinds of help.
- The earlier children receive help, the more progress they are likely to make.
- Early childhood professionals will help your child learn the skills he or she needs.



You and your family will receive help and support.

- You will learn more about your child's special needs.

- By working with early education professionals, you will learn ways to help your child make better progress.
- When you help your child with special needs, the whole family benefits.

Who can receive help?

- Minnesota children from birth to age 5 who qualify may receive help. Children's abilities and needs must be evaluated by the school district in order to qualify.
- Help is available regardless of immigrant status.

What kind of help and services are available?

Your family can find many kinds of health, educational, and social services that help your child. Depending on the needs of your child and family, services may include such things as:

- Speech therapy
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Health services
- Social work services
- Family support and education
- Transportation

Supports and services are centered on the needs of your child and family. Your culture, family traditions, and values should be respected.

Who provides the help—and how much does it cost?

- Help is provided through your local public school district.
- There is no cost to you for the evaluation or for the services you and the planning team agree are needed for your child and family.

How am I involved?

- You provide written permission before an evaluation is begun and before any service is provided.
- You are an important member of the team of people planning for your child.
- You aren't alone. You may invite a relative, friend, or other person from the community to participate with you in all parts of the process.
- You have a say in all decisions about your child's plan.
- You can have people you trust review the information before any final decision is made.
- You choose whether to accept all, some, or none of the services offered.

Where will my child receive the help?

If your child is up to three years old, early intervention services typically are delivered in your home, in your child's daycare setting, or in an Early Head Start program. An education or health professional will work with your child. He or she will also show you, another family member, or your child-care provider effective ways to use everyday routines to help your child.

If your child is three to five years old, early childhood special education services may be provided at a community preschool program, a child care center, a Head Start classroom, an early childhood family education classroom, an early childhood special education classroom, or in other public or private preschool settings.

Whom do I call for help?

If you have questions—or don't even know what questions to ask—call PACER Center at (952) 838-9000 or (800) 537-2237 (toll free).

- You may ask to speak to a multicultural staff person. You will be able to discuss your concerns and explore choices with an understanding parent advocate who also has a child with special needs. You can learn where to find the services you need. You may also request family-friendly written materials.
- Call your local school district office and ask to speak to the person in charge of early childhood special education. Explain that you have concerns about your child's development. Ask how to find out if your child qualifies for services and how to find the help your child needs.

Every child deserves a chance to grow, develop, and learn.

Call now, and find out how early childhood services can help your child and family.



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