

CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Program

Milestones matter! CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." program encourages parents and providers to learn the signs of healthy development, monitor every child's early development, and take action when there is a concern.

The program offers free checklists and other tools to make developmental monitoring practical and easy.



Identifying developmental delays and disabilities is important.

- **1 in 6** children aged 3–17 years have developmental disabilities—conditions that affect how children play, learn, speak, act, or move.
- Many children with a developmental disability are not identified until after starting school.
- Early intervention (before school age) can have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn new skills as well as reduce the need for costly interventions over time.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends both developmental monitoring (also called surveillance) and developmental screening for all children.

The tools provided by "Learn the Signs. Act Early." encourage ongoing, parent-engaged, developmental monitoring and they support developmental screening.

"Learn the Signs. Act Early." improves early identification of children with developmental delays and disabilities by promoting parent-engaged developmental monitoring and facilitating early action on concerns.

It does this through the following:

- **A health education** campaign that promotes
 - Awareness of developmental milestones;
 - The importance of tracking milestones and acting early on concerns; and
 - The availability of free checklists, children's books, a mobile app, and other resources.
- **Act Early Ambassadors** who collaborate with early childhood programs in their states or territories to advance developmental monitoring and support developmental screening
- **Research and evaluation** to
 - Improve "Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials;
 - Develop strategies to implement materials in practice; and
 - Increase understanding of factors that influence developmental monitoring and referral for intervention.

"Our practice uses the Learn the Signs. Act Early. milestone checklists and they have significantly improved our ability to conduct developmental surveillance with our patients. Our parents and providers love these resources!"
—Pediatrician, FL

"Learn the Signs. Act Early."

"Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials are

- For parents, early care and education providers, healthcare providers, WIC staff, and others who work with young children;
- Helpful for discussions between parents and professionals about a child's development or developmental concerns;
- Intended to aid in the identification of children with developmental delays and disabilities;
- Free, based on research, and customizable with local contact information; and
- Available in English and Spanish to print or order online at www.cdc.gov/ActEarly/Materials.

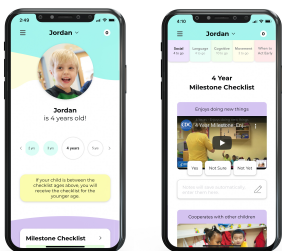
"Learn the Signs. Act Early. fits perfectly with the work we do every day with families. The materials give our families a simple, concise overview of key milestones they can watch for in their children. And our staff is glad to have this additional support in talking with families about child development in a consistent, effective way."
—WIC Manager, MO



Free Materials for Families and Providers

- **Developmental milestone checklists** (for ages 2 months to 5 years), booklet, brochure, and growth chart
- **Milestone Tracker mobile app** (iOS and Android) with interactive, illustrated checklists, tips for supporting development, sharable summary and more
- **Children's books** that teach parents about milestones
- **Milestones in Action** (*temporarily not available*): a collection of free photos and videos of developmental milestones
- **Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns**: a free 1-hour online training for early care and education providers to learn how to monitor each child's development
- **How to Help Your Child and How to Talk with the Doctor**: tip sheets to support parents when there is a developmental concern
- **Promotional materials** for any program or provider serving young children and their families

CDC's Milestone Tracker App



"I love the content and having all the information together in one place. This app would have helped me recognize the signs of my daughter's autism earlier."
- Parent, GA



To learn more about "Learn the Signs. Act Early." visit www.cdc.gov/ActEarly or write to ActEarly@cdc.gov.

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
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