

# Concerned about Development?

## How to Get Help for Your Child



Talking to the doctor can be one first step toward getting help for your child if you are concerned about his or her development (how your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, or moves). **Don't wait.** Acting early can make a real difference!

### 1 Make an appointment with your child's doctor

- When you schedule the appointment, tell the doctor's staff you have concerns about your child's development that you would like to discuss with the doctor.

### 2 Complete a milestone checklist

- Before the appointment, complete a milestone checklist by downloading CDC's free [Milestone Tracker mobile app](#) from the App Store or Google Play or printing a paper checklist from [www.cdc.gov/Milestones](http://www.cdc.gov/Milestones).
- Write down your questions and concerns; take these with you to the doctor's appointment.

### 3 During the doctor's appointment

- **Show the completed milestone checklist to the doctor**
  - > If your child **is** missing milestones, point them out, and share any other concerns that you have.
  - > If your child **is not** missing milestones but you still have concerns, tell the doctor about them.
- **Ask the doctor for developmental screening for your child**
  - > Developmental screening is recommended whenever there is a concern. It gives the doctor more information to figure out how best to help your child.
  - > For more information about developmental screening, go to [www.cdc.gov/DevScreening](http://www.cdc.gov/DevScreening).
- **Ask the doctor if your child needs further developmental evaluation**
  - > If your child does, ask for a referral and call right away. If you have difficulty getting an appointment, let the doctor know.

### 4 Make sure you understand what the doctor tells you, and what to do next

- Before you leave the appointment, check the notes you have written and make sure all of your questions have been answered.
- If you do not understand something, ask the doctor to explain it again or in a different way.
- When you get home, review your notes and follow the steps the doctor has given you. Remember, you can always contact the doctor's office if you have any questions.

## You Know Your Child Best

If your child's doctor has told you to "wait and see" but you feel uneasy waiting, you can seek a free developmental screening for your child. You do not need a doctor's referral.

Parents have options to seek a free developmental screening for their child:

- Call Birth to Three Connections if your child is under age 3. 1-800-305-3064.
- Call your local community health staff. 1-800-305-3064.
- Call your local elementary school if your child is age 3 or older.
- Call SD Parent Connection for free guidance and support. 1-800-640-4553.

**Don't wait.**  
**Acting early can make a real difference!**



1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



Download CDC's Milestone Tracker App



Learn the Signs. Act Early.

## Tips for Parents

# How to Get Help for Your Child

### 1 Who you can call

- Your family or child's doctor. When you call, say, "I would like to make an appointment to see the doctor because I am concerned about my child's development."
- Your local community health staff. 1-800-305-3064. When you call, say, "I am concerned about my child's development and would like to request a screening."
- Birth to Three Connections (if your child is not yet 3 years old). 1-800-305-3064. When you call, say, "I am concerned about my child's development and would like to request a screening."
- Your local elementary school (if your child is 3 or older). When you call, say, "I am concerned about my child's development and would like to talk with someone about having my child screened."

### 2 When you call

- Be ready to share your specific concerns. Your child's Milestone Checklist or Milestone summary can provide examples of why you are concerned.
- You will be asked general information about yourself and your child, such as your name, your child's name and age, and where you live.
- Write down who you speak to, the date, and what was said; you might need this information later.

### 3 You are told to "wait and see" or "we are not doing screenings now" but feel uneasy about waiting

- SD Parent Connection is a free resource to help you decide what steps to take to Act Early about your concerns regarding your child's development. Call 1-800-640-4553 or visit [www.sdparent.org](http://www.sdparent.org).

### 4 While you wait for scheduled screening, evaluation or services to begin, there are some simple things you can do every day to help your child's development

- Make the most of playtime: Interact with your child as much as possible. Read books, sing songs, play with toys, do household chores, and play outside together.
- Talk to your child: label items, point out interesting things, tell stories, comment about what you see and how you feel, and explain how things work and why things happen. Your child may not always seem to be listening, but he or she may be paying more attention to you than you think.
- Download the Milestone Tracker app or sign up for Bright by Text for more free information on how to help your child's development.

## What is Developmental Screening?

- A doctor, nurse, early childhood teacher, or other trained professional will talk with you and watch your child to look for developmental milestones. Milestones are things most children can do by a certain age as they play, learn, talk, move and act.
- The *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* is a common screening given by professionals. Developmental screening of all children is recommended at 9, 18, and 30 months of age.
- Screening helps you know if your child needs extra support in their development, because it is not always easy for doctors, child care providers, or parents to know.
- The results of developmental screening can help your child and family get extra supports to boost your child's development. These extra supports are generally free to families.



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