



Learn The Sign. Act Early. Campaign

*In Partnership with the NY Acts and the
ONA Ramirez June Initiative*



Department of State
Office for New Americans





Learn the Signs. Act Early.

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Acknowledgment

The Act Early Ambassador Program is a collaborative effort of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) to advance CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." program to improve early identification of developmental disabilities. The project is funded by CDC.

Disclaimer

The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the authors and do not represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Health Resources and Services Administration.

www.cdc.gov/ActEarly



Presentation Objectives

- Learn about the CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early. Campaign*. Free resources for families to monitor and discuss their child's development
- Recognize many children with developmental delays and disabilities are not identified early.
- Improve awareness of systems for early identification of developmental delays and disabilities.
- Promote parent-engaged developmental monitoring/surveillance through a case discussion.
- Review developmental milestones of 18 months old.
- Learn about referral process





Learn The Signs. Act Early.



CDC Learn The Signs. Act Early. Campaign

- The CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* (LTSAE) program was launched in 2004:
 - to improve early identification of children with ASD/DD,
 - to enable children and families to access the services and support they need.
- As part of this program, the Act Early state systems grants focused on the need to improve State capacity and strengthen State and community systems for early identification and coordination of services for children with developmental disabilities.
- To advance these efforts, in 2011, the Act Early Ambassador program established points of contact within participating States to disseminate LTSAE materials within systems and organizations that serve children and their families.



Learn The Signs. Act Early. Mission

- To improve early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including autism, by increasing parent-engaged developmental monitoring so children and their families can get the early services and support they need.



Learn The Signs. Act Early. Focus.

- ***The focus of LTSAE is to engage, educate, and empower parents and other caregivers to monitor milestones*** and discuss child's developmental progress between recommended screenings.
- LTSAE complements screening by ***engaging those who care for young children in celebrating a child's developmental progress and discussing any concerns.***





Developmental Monitoring



What is Developmental Monitoring?

- A series of activities in partnership with parents/caregivers of children birth to 5 to promote a healthy development through regular check-in conversations with parents using developmental checklists
- Ensure that all children who need support get access to developmental screenings and supports as soon as possible.



Benefits of Developmental Monitoring

- Opportunity for meaningful discussion.
- Supports parents to learn about developmental milestones.
- Engages parents in actively monitoring development.
- Encourages parents to play with their children.
- Helps us know if children are developing on track.
- Provides parents an opportunity to voice concerns about development and choose a course of action.
- Identifying developmental delays as early as possible.



Developmental Monitoring: Limitations

- Milestone checklists are not validated screening tools.
- Milestone checklists cannot be used to diagnose any developmental disability.
- Diagnosing a child with a developmental disability often requires an in-depth evaluation by one or more specialists.





Why Monitor Development?

- Early childhood (ages 0–3) is a critical period that can set the stage for an individual's health trajectory.
- Developmental disabilities are common and often not identified before school age
- More than 80% of children with a developmental delay, don't receive the needed services until after the age of 3.
- Only about one-half of children with developmental problems are identified before school entrance.
- Early intervention can improve skills, abilities, future school performance, long-term self-care skills, and quality of life





LTSAE Resources

Learn the Signs.
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CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Materials:

- All are available in English and Spanish to download
- Materials can be ordered for free in limited quantities based on what is available in the warehouse
- Materials can be adapted, translated, and customized to help health professionals, early care and education providers, and other service providers work with parents to track the development of the children they serve.



Milestone Checklists

- Complete checklists address
 - Four domains of development
 - Activities to foster child's development
- How to use
 - Distribute to families at every home visit
- Can be printed in many languages

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/freematerials.html#toolsfortrackingmilestones-2017>

important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your baby has reached by 9 months. Take this with you and talk with your baby's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your baby has reached and what to expect next.

What most babies do by the end of 9 months

Social/Emotional Milestones

- Is shy, clingy, or fearful around strangers
- Shows several facial expressions, such as happy, angry, and surprised
- Looks when you call her name
- Reacts when you leave (looks, reaches, or cries)
- Smiles or laughs when you play with her

Language/Communication Milestones

- Makes different sounds like "mamama" or "babababa"
- Lifts arms up to be picked up

Other important things to ask your doctor

- What are some things you and your baby do together?
- Is there anything your baby does that you're worried about?
- Has your baby lost any skills he or she once had, or you have ever been worried about?
- Does your baby have any special needs?

You know your baby best

- he or she once had, or you have ever been worried about
1. Ask for a referral to a specialist if you're worried about your baby's development.
 2. Call your state or territory's early childhood program.

Help your baby learn and grow

As your baby's first teacher, you can help his or her learning and brain development. Try these simple tips and activities in a safe way. Talk with your baby's doctor and teachers if you have questions or for more ideas on how to help your baby's development.

- Repeat your baby's sounds and say simple words using those sounds. For example, if your baby says "bababa," repeat "bababa," then say "book."
- Place toys on the ground or on a play mat a little out of reach and encourage your baby to crawl, scoot, or roll to get them. Celebrate when she reaches them.
- Teach your baby to wave "bye-bye" or shake his head "no." For example, wave and say "bye-bye" when you are leaving. You can also teach simple baby sign language to help your baby tell you what he wants before he can use words.
- Play games, such as peek-a-boo. You can cover your head with a cloth and see if your baby pulls it off.
- Play with your baby by dumping blocks from a container and putting them back in together.
- Play games with your baby, such as my turn, your turn. Try this by passing a toy back and forth.
- "Read" to your baby. Reading can be talking about pictures. For example, while looking at books or magazines, name the pictures as you point to them.
- Limit screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) to video calling with loved ones. Screen time is not recommended for children younger than 2 years of age. Babies learn by talking, playing, and interacting with others.
- Find out about choking risks and safe foods to feed your baby. Let him practice feeding himself with his fingers and using a cup with a small amount of water. Sit next to your baby and enjoy mealtime together. Expect spills. Learning is messy and fun!
- Ask for behaviors that you want. For example, instead of saying "don't stand," say "time to sit."
- Help your baby get used to foods with different tastes and textures. Foods can be smooth, mashed, or finely chopped. Your baby might not like every food on the first try. Give her a chance to try foods again and again.
- Say a quick and cheerful goodbye instead of sneaking away so your baby knows you are leaving, even if he cries. He will learn to calm himself and what to expect. Let him know when you return by saying "Daddy's back!"

To see more tips and activities download CDC's Milestone Tracker app.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

www.cdc.gov/ActEarly | 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



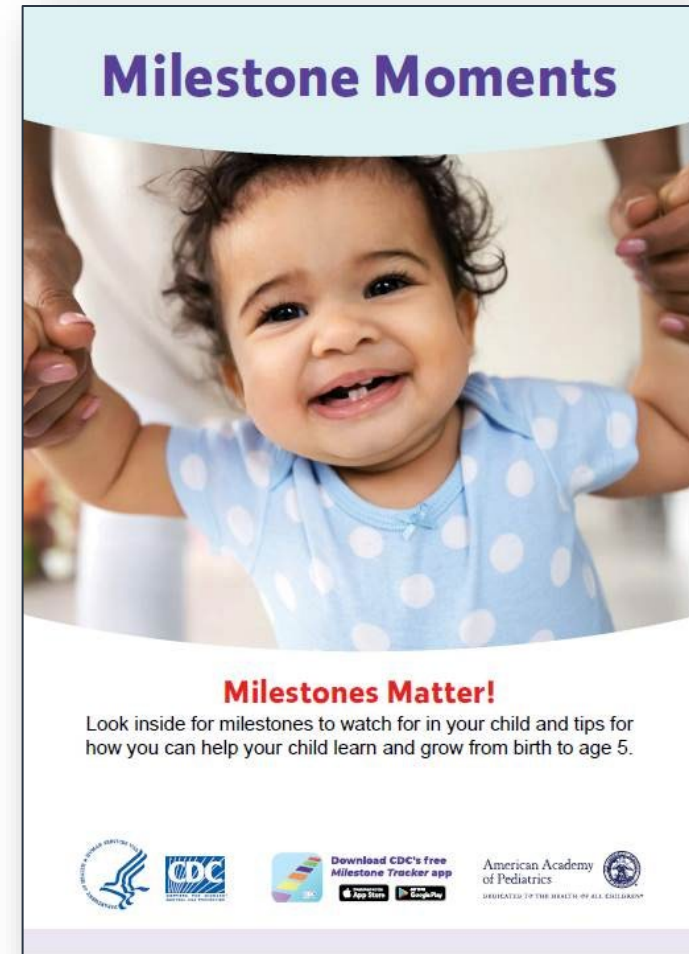
Learn the Signs. Act Early.



Milestone Moments Booklet

- Includes:
 - Complete milestone checklists (2mo – 5yrs)
 - Activities to try at home
 - Space to write down questions
- Intended for parent use throughout a child's early years
- Helps parents prepare for well-child visits; gives you a parent-friendly reference

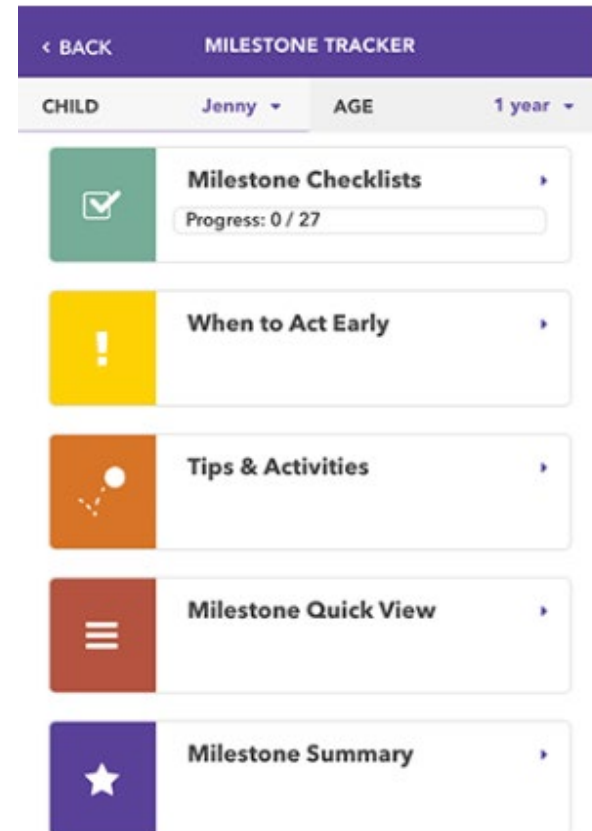
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Milestone Tracker App

- Available in English and Spanish for iOS and Android
- Can add multiple children
- Milestones tracker including photos and videos to help understand
- Tips and Activities
- Track appointments

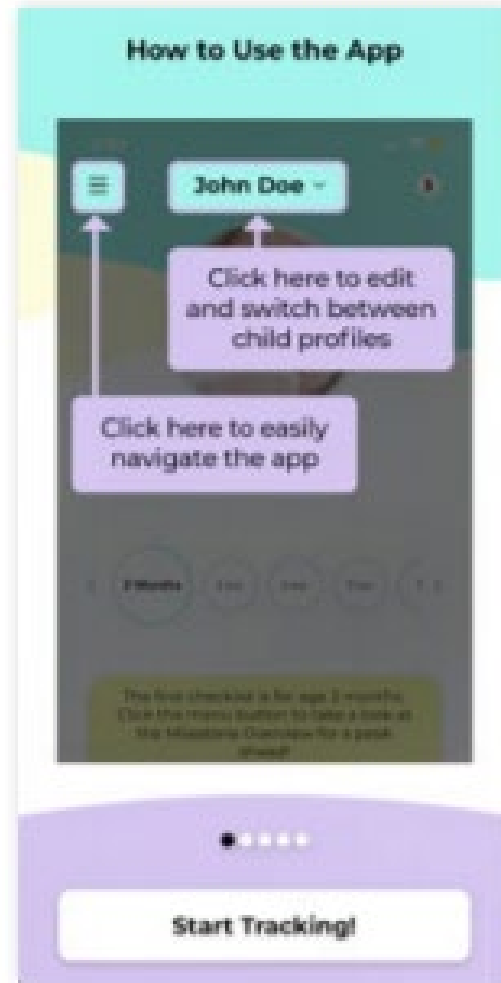
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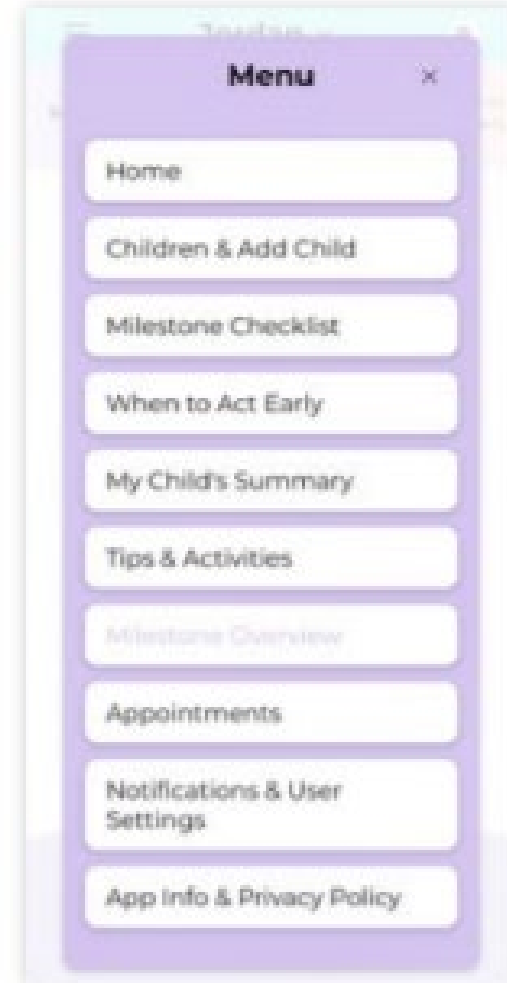
Welcome



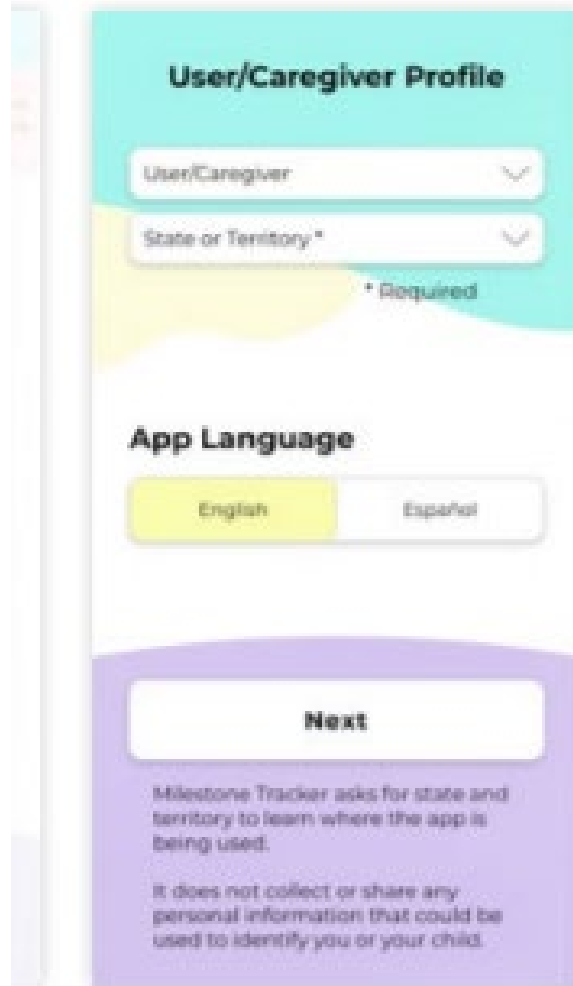
How To Use



Drop-down Menu



User Profile



User/Caregiver Profile

User/Caregiver

State or Territory*

* Required

App Language

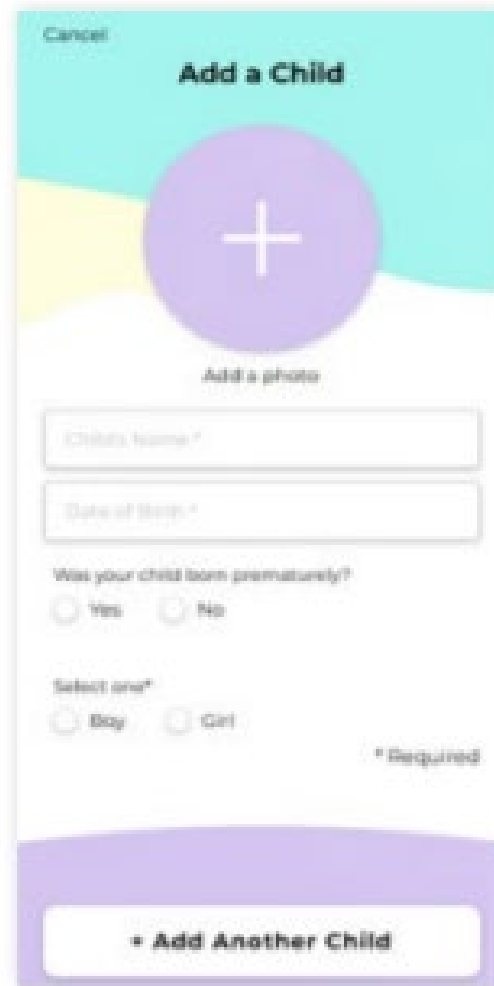
English Español

Next

Milestone Tracker asks for state and territory to learn where the app is being used.

It does not collect or share any personal information that could be used to identify you or your child.

Add a Child



Cancel

Add a Child

Add a photo

Child's Name*

Date of Birth*

Was your child born prematurely?

Yes No

Select one*

Boy Girl

* Required

+ Add Another Child

Checklist Intro

☰ **Jordan** ▾ 0

Social 7 to go | Language 4 to go | Cognitive 10 to go | Movement 4 to go | When to Act Early

4 Year Milestone Checklist

Milestone Tracker has checklists for ages 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18 months and 2 to 5 years

If your child is between milestone checklist ages, complete the checklist for the younger age.

Start Tracking!


Milestone Checklist

☰ **Jordan** ▾ 0

Social 7 to go | Language 4 to go | Cognitive 10 to go | Movement 4 to go | When to Act Early

4 Month Milestone Checklist

Smiles spontaneously, especially at people



Yes Not Sure Not Yet

Notes will save automatically, enter them here. ✍️

Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops

When to Act Early

☰ Jayden ▾

When to Act Early

If you select any of the items below, it's important to act early by talking with your child's doctor and asking for developmental screening. Don't wait. Acting early can make a real difference! For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/Concerned

Because you selected "not yet" for a milestone checklist item and/or selected an item on this page, it may be time to talk with the doctor about your child's development.

is missing milestones (automatically checked if you've selected "not yet" for any milestone)

✓ Add a note

Doesn't crawl


✓ Add a note

Can't stand when supported

✓ Add a note

Tips and Activities

< Jayden ▾



Tips and Activities

You can help your child learn and grow. Talk, read, sing, and play together every day. Below are some activities to enjoy with your 1 year old child today.

All ▾

Encourage your child to help with simple chores at home, like sweeping and making dinner. Praise your child for being a good helper.

♥ Favorite — Remove

At this age, children still play next to (not with) each other and don't share well. For play dates, give the children lots of toys to play with. Watch the children closely and step in if they fight or argue.

♥ Favorite — **Remind Me**

Summary

☰ Jordan ▾

Not Sure

Plays "Mom" and "Dad"

Edit answer Edit note

Cooperates with other children

Edit answer Edit note

Not Yet

Pours, cuts with supervision, and mashes own food

Edit answer Edit note

Yes

Enjoys doing new things

Edit answer Edit note

Is more and more creative with make-believe play

Edit answer Edit note

Would rather play with other



Developmental Milestones 18-months-old Case Discussion



Case Discussion

- You meet with a new family who immigrated from El Salvador 3 years ago. Family consist of mother, father, and their 18 months-old boy Liam. The family shares an apartment with another family. Liam is the only child. Both parents are undocumented. Liam was born in United States. Both parents are working full time at a local factory and Liam is being taking care by a mother's friend who runs a home daycare. Mother reports having no concerns about Liam's' development and states that he is growing and eating well. His last visit with the pediatrician was at the age of 12 months. While you are talking to the mother, Liam is sitting on the floor next to his mother playing with his toys. He remains very quiet while you are talking to the mother. All of the sudden Liam becomes frustrated and throws the toys. Mother then comments that Liam gets easily frustrated when things do not go his way. Mother points at the toy and asks Liam to bring the toy to her. You notice that he stares at the mother, and he does not seem to understand the mother's command. Mother then picks up the toy and fixes it for him. He then sits next to the mother and starts playing with the toys again.
- What would you do next? How would you support the family?





Developmental Milestones: 18-months

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/Eng.-18-mo-Milestone-Moments-Checklist-2021-P.pdf>



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Language Development

- Best predictor of cognitive function
- 2 types:
 - Receptive
 - Expressive
- Acquisition depends critically on environment
- 1 to 3 year of age is a critical period of language development.





Language Skills: Review of Definitions

- **Jargoning** = infants combine variety of consonant-vowel sounds with speech like inflection
- “Jabbering” “baby talk”
- Starts at 12-15 months
 - Immature – no comprehensible words
 - Mature – real single words mixed with incomprehensible words
 - As child’s vocabulary increases, jargoning will decrease





Language Skills: Review of Definitions

- **Echolalia** – child repeats other’s words
 - Imitation helps language processing and development
 - Immediate echolalia – typical when:
 - Child repeats part of sentence
 - Child repeats in their own tone
 - ATYPICAL when child repeats the whole sentence and imitates the person’s intonation
 - Delayed echolalia – always atypical
- Peaks between 18-24 months
- 18 months – Key age pf language development -
 - Vocabulary around 15 to 25 words
 - Use lot of gestures to communicate - “pointing, waving, showing, clapping”





Social-Emotional Development

Social–emotional skills are the ability to interact and empathize with other people. Several important milestones develop in the first 18 months of life.

- **Attachment.** Bonding with a primary caregiver begins at birth and is completed formation of reciprocal relationships at the age 18-24 months
- **Shared (joint) attention.** Emerges between 8 and 10 months of age when the infant follows the caregiver's gaze. By 14 months of age, children begin pointing to request something or show something spontaneously to a caregiver or social partner, to share awareness of an object or event. By 18 months of age, most children can point at, bring or share something with another person to indicate interest.
- **A sense of self and independence.** The process of separation and individuation begins at about 15 months of age.





If there is a concern...

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If the family is concern....

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
- 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.
- **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.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html>

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Getting
Materials is
very Easy!

Getting materials is easy with 3 simple options:

Print **FREE** materials directly at
www.cdc.gov/ActEarly/Materials



OR

Order **FREE** printed materials
(in limited quantities) in English or Spanish
from www.cdc.gov/ActEarly/Orders



OR

Download the **FREE**
Milestone Tracker mobile app
Learn more at www.cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker



Most materials are available in English and Spanish, many in simplified Chinese and Korean, and some in other languages.

Find the **FREE** resources pictured here and others at www.cdc.gov/ActEarly.

Want to customize CDC materials with your logo and contact information?
Local contact information is helpful to families. Request customizable files from ActEarly@cdc.gov and have them printed locally.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* program aims to improve early identification of children with developmental disabilities so children and families can get the services they need as early as possible.

www.cdc.gov/ActEarly | 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



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Questions?



ActEarly@cdc.gov





Thank You

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