

Developmental Monitoring: Getting the Conversation Started



WHAT TO SAY WHEN...

Introducing the milestone checklist

The following talking points make up just one example of how you can introduce the milestone checklist. For your convenience, there are separate talking points for in person or virtual discussion, as well as talking points that are common to both. Modify them as needed to best fit the situation.

IN PERSON

Have you noticed the pictures on the walls and floor about developmental milestones?
(If applicable)

- Developmental milestones are things most children do by a certain age.
- Tracking how _____ plays, speaks, learns, acts, and moves for their age is just as important as measuring their height and weight.
- Milestone checklists help us work together to track your child's development. If you haven't completed it yet, we can do it together now.

Hand the family member the checklist or direct them to a virtual version

If the child's age is between available checklist ages, always use the checklist of the younger age.

- Let's answer these first two questions together. Does _____ (read first item on the checklist)? Does _____ (read second item)?
- Answer the rest of the checklist and let me know if you have any questions.

Be sure to add _____'s name and age, along with today's date.

VIRTUAL

You might remember that I shared the link to CDC's online milestone checklist **OR** CDC's *Milestone Tracker* app.

Open the app or click on the link to the [online checklist](#). Let me know when you have it pulled up.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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www.cdc.gov/actearly
1-800-CDC-INFO

Reviewing checklist results and determining need for referral

The child's development is on track and no referral is needed.

ALL milestone boxes are checked AND NO concerns are noted.

The following talking points are examples that can be used to support your conversation when the child is on track with their developmental milestones. Modify them as needed to best fit the situation.

IN PERSON

It looks like _____ is on track for meeting their developmental milestones!

Take this checklist home and share it with your family and _____'s doctor so they can see how great _____ is doing.

- Keep tracking _____'s milestones! CDC's free *Milestone Tracker* app is an easy way to keep tracking milestones until your next visit.
- If you ever have any concerns or questions about _____'s development, be sure to talk to the doctor.

VIRTUAL

You can email or share this checklist with your family and _____'s doctor so they can see how great _____ is doing.

NOTE: Potential developmental concerns are indicated by a missing checkmark alongside ANY milestone or ANY concerns written or shared verbally about the child's development. If there are any missing checkmarks or noted concerns, the child should be referred for developmental screening and follow-up. Unless there is another referral protocol in place, refer the participant to the child's doctor for review of the checklist and developmental screening.

A referral is needed.

One or more milestone boxes are NOT checked OR ANY concerns are noted.

The following talking points are examples that can be used to support your conversation when you need to make a referral. Modify them as needed to best fit the situation.

IN PERSON

- Thank you for completing your child's milestone checklist. It's a great way to support your child's development.
- Anytime even one milestone is missed or you have a concern about your child's development, it is important to speak with your child's doctor. Acting early on a possible delay can make a big difference.
- *Point out the missed milestone or written note.*
- Since you marked a possible concern, it's a good idea to talk with your child's doctor about this checklist and ask for screening to be sure _____ is being supported in all they ways they need to be.
- Please call _____'s doctor to schedule an appointment for developmental screening.

I will write _____'s doctor's name on the back of this checklist along with a note about the checklist we completed today, and the next steps.

I can send you an email with a note to share with your child's doctor about the checklist we completed today and the next steps.

Next time, please share with me what the doctor had to say. Like you, I want to be sure we're doing all we can to support _____'s development.

In addition, you can call _____ to have your child evaluated for free or low-cost services to help their development. The phone number to call is _____. When you call, say "I have concerns about my child's development and would like to have my child evaluated to find out if they are eligible for services to help."

See page 4 for further details

I look forward to hearing what progress you and _____ have made. Please feel free to call if you have any questions and keep tracking _____'s development. CDC's free *Milestone Tracker* app is an easy way to keep tracking milestones until your next visit.

WHAT TO SAY WHEN...

The child's doctor isn't responsive to concerns

The following talking points are examples that can be used to support your conversation with families if they report their child's doctor wasn't responsive to their concerns. Modify them as needed to best fit the situation.

Acting early on concerns is the best way to help your child. You are doing the right thing, and you know your child better than anyone.

If the doctor told you to "wait and see" and you feel uneasy about that advice, you can seek a second opinion with another healthcare provider.

You can also call your local intervention program to find out if your child qualifies for services to help. Evaluation for services is free and you do not need a doctor's referral.

Share the contact information below based on the child's age.

Free Evaluation for Services

IF THE CHILD IS UNDER AGE 3

Call your state or territory's early intervention program and say:

"I have concerns about my child's development, and I would like to have my child evaluated to find out if they are eligible for early intervention services."

You can find your early intervention contact here:
www.cdc.gov/FindEI

IF THE CHILD IS AGE 3 OR OLDER

Call any local public elementary school (even if your child does not go to school there) and say:

"I have concerns about my child's development, and I would like to have my child evaluated through the school system for preschool special education services."

Find additional free resources to help you talk about developmental monitoring here: www.cdc.gov/ActEarly/Materials



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