

CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* FREE Resources for WIC Staff

1 in 6 children has developmental delays or disabilities. Children from families with low incomes, like those served by WIC, are at an even greater risk. You can make a difference for these children by using the FREE resources described below and by making a referral when there is a concern.

CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* resources, including developmental milestone checklists can:

- ✓ Help staff respond to questions or concerns from families about their child's development
- ✓ Help families set goals related to their child's growth and development
- ✓ Offer family education about developmental milestones and tips for supporting their child's development
- ✓ Help staff know when and where to refer a child with a possible developmental delay

Note: These resources support developmental monitoring, but do not replace developmental screening. They help WIC staff decide when to refer a child to other professionals for screening and further assessment.

WIC staff can help children at risk for developmental delays get the help they need.

The Developmental Milestone Checklist program was developed in collaboration with Missouri WIC staff and tested in Missouri WIC clinics. The program helps staff engage families in monitoring their children's development and supports them with timely referrals when needed.

CDC's [free Online Implementation Guide](#) provides everything needed to get your Developmental Milestone Checklist program up and running in WIC, including

- ✓ **Engaging graphics** for the walls and floors of the clinic to introduce milestone monitoring in a fun and friendly way and tips for introducing milestones as part of a virtual visit
- ✓ **Parent-friendly milestone checklists** to be completed by parents before or during a virtual or in-person visit
- ✓ **Tips** to guide a brief discussion of the completed checklist
- ✓ **Resources to support referral** to the child's healthcare provider and/or Early Intervention program ([cdc.gov/FindEI](https://www.cdc.gov/FindEI)) when concerns are noted

In fewer than 5 minutes, WIC staff can use FREE and trusted resources from CDC to improve families' awareness of their children's development and make timely referrals. Acting early can make a real difference for families.

It's Working in WIC!

Studies of the Milestone Checklist program in 4 states (MO, AR, MA, and NV) have shown the program:

- Engages families in monitoring their child's development
- Empowers staff to act when they have concerns
- Leads to referrals that support children's development, such as early intervention services
- Is effective and easy for WIC staff to implement — taking fewer than 5 minutes

What WIC Staff are Saying!

"The 'Learn the Signs. Act Early.' program fits perfectly with the work our WIC program does. The resources give our families a simple overview of key milestones to watch for in their children. And our staff is glad to have this additional support."

"It's nice to see that when a referral was made, on a return WIC visit, the family is receiving services."



For more about this model or to replicate or adapt it for your clinic, visit [cdc.gov/WICguide](https://www.cdc.gov/WICguide).

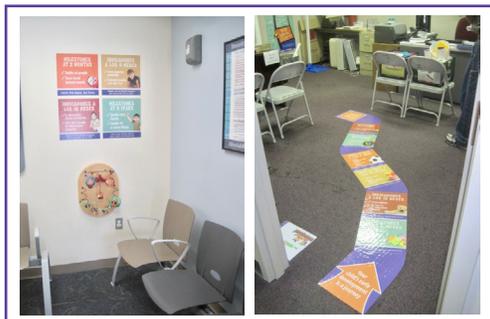
www.cdc.gov/ActEarly | 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Find the free resources shown below and more at cdc.gov/WICGuide

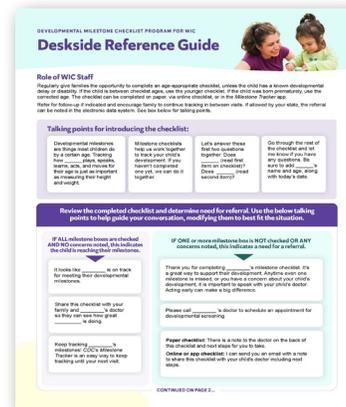
Engaging graphics for clinic floors and walls



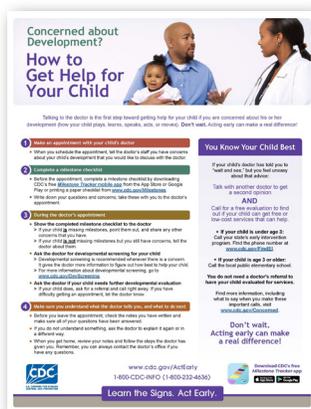
Milestone Checklists with customizable "next steps" to best support families



A desktop reference guide to support you in making referrals when needed



How to help families get help for their child



Children's Books



CDC's FREE Milestone Tracker App



Most resources are available in English and Spanish. CDC's milestone checklists are available in additional languages.

Contact your Act Early Ambassador at cdc.gov/ActEarly/Ambassadors

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.

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