

*“Learn the Signs.
Act Early”*

Why is developmental monitoring important? What do the changes to the developmental milestones mean for families and providers?

Objectives

- Share about importance of developmental milestones and developmental monitoring
- Discuss updates to the developmental milestones from the CDC and what those changes mean for families and providers

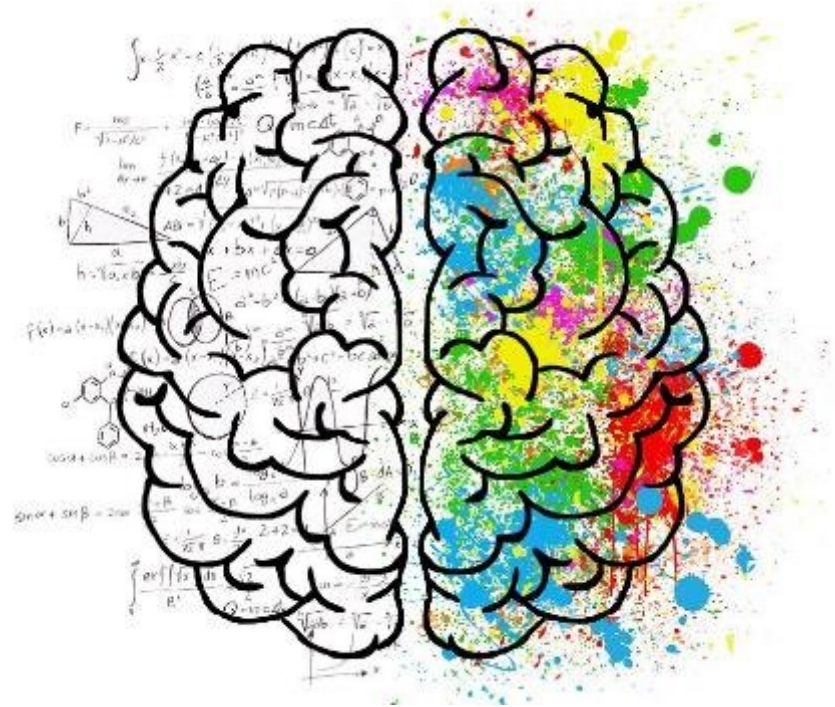
Why do we need to monitor a child's development?

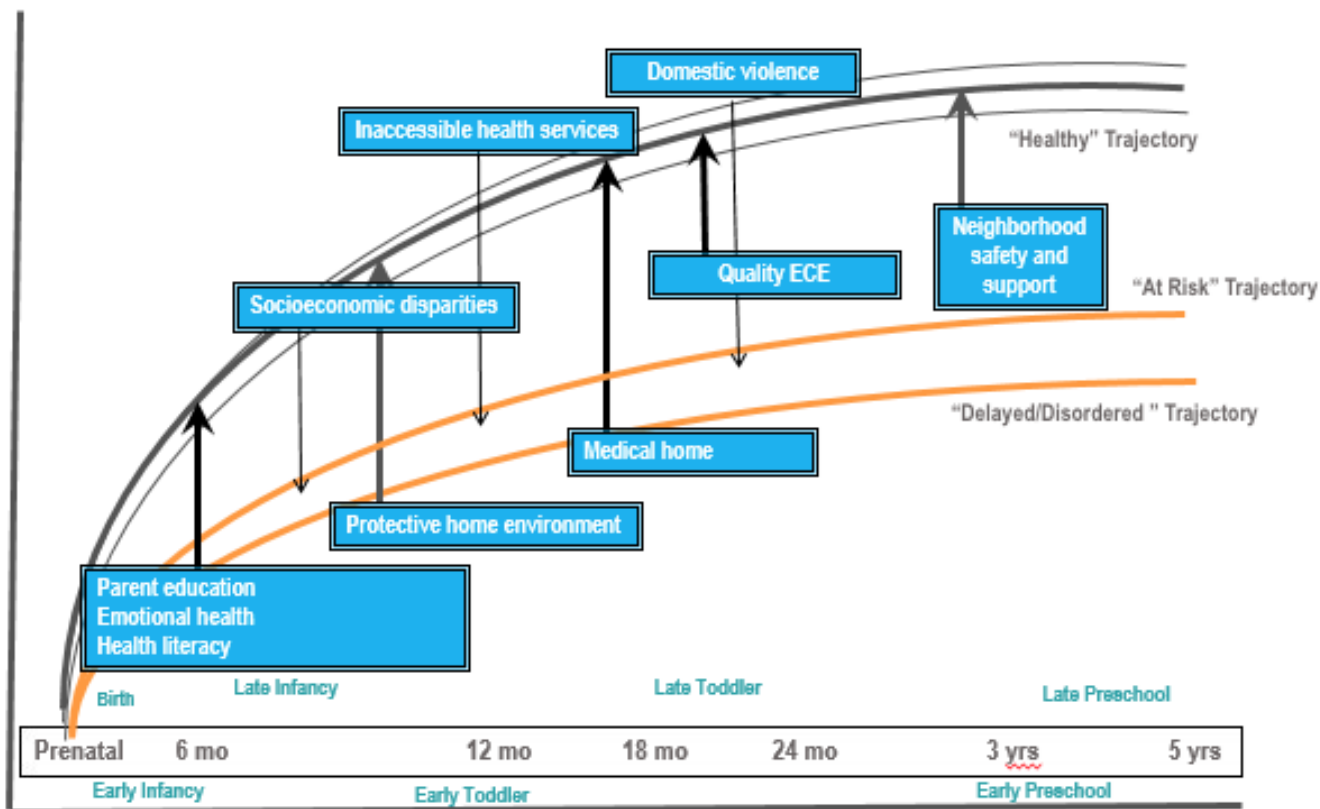
- **1 in 4** children are at risk for developmental, behavioral, or social-emotional delays.
- **1 in 6** children have a developmental delay
- **80%** of brain development happens by the age of 3 and **90%** by the age of 5.
- **80% of children** with developmental/behavioral problems do not receive early intervention
- **1 in 10** children in the USA is a **Texan**
- Many **initiatives exist** to provide services to young children, their families
- A **gap exists** between child health and child development/early childhood education programs



Brain Science: How are children's brains growing?

A child's brain undergoes an amazing period of development from birth to three—producing more than a million neural connections each second.



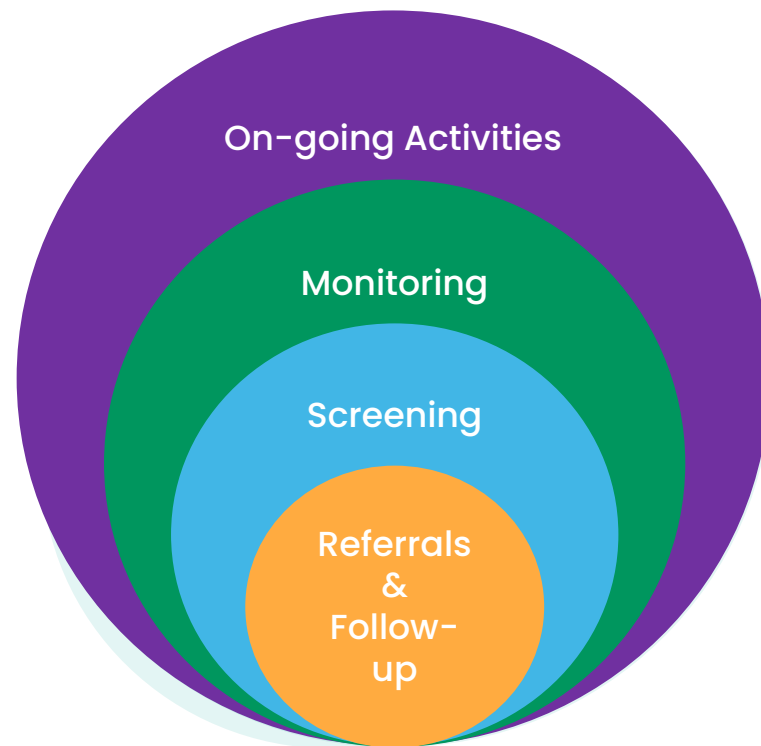


Graphic Concept Adapted from Neal Halfon, UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities

Early is Best

- Evidence shows that starting supports as early as possible is best
- The earlier a child is identified, the sooner targeted intervention and family supports can start.
 - It is never “too late” to start services and supports
- Intervention can improve skills, abilities, future school performance, long-term self-care skills, and quality of life
- Other benefits of early identification & intervention
 - Families understand their child’s strengths, and areas they may need support
 - Family wellness

Developmental Promotion



Monitoring/Surveillance

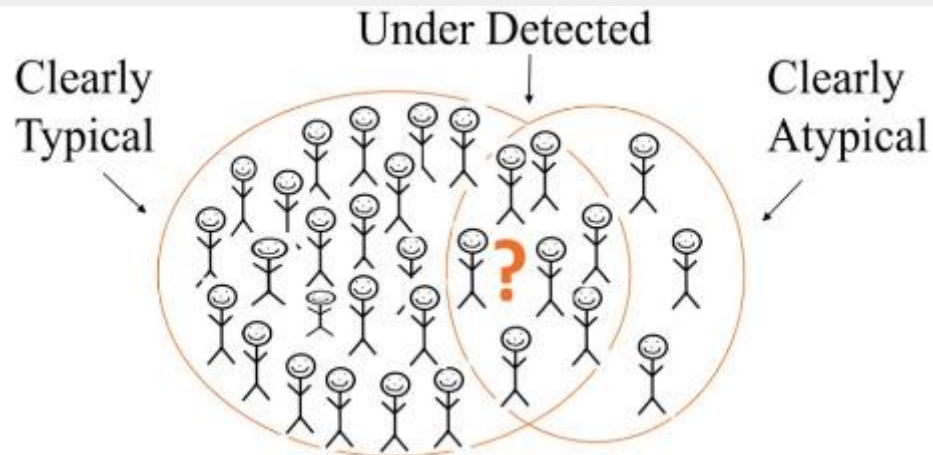
- Also called developmental surveillance
- Occurs at each well child visit
- Uses developmental milestones and much more
- Families and early childhood professionals also monitor development (team approach)
- Ongoing and longitudinal
- No scores, no risk categorization
- Can support the need for any additional developmental screening
- Education/protective factors

Screening

- Administered by early childhood professionals
- Recommended at specific ages
- Also recommended if there are concerns when monitoring or other times
- Uses validated developmental screening tools with milestones
- Provides a risk categorization/scores
- Not diagnostic
- Helps determine if additional diagnostic evaluations are needed
- May be used to qualify for state early intervention programs

Why Do We Screen?

- Our eyes play tricks on us
- 3 screenings by 3 years old
- “Wait and see” does not work
- Universal screening



Adapted from Macias, M. (2006) D-PIP Training Workshop

Slides may have been modified from their original version for this presentation
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Monitoring Development



Your child at 15 months

Child's Name: _____ **Child's Age:** _____ **Today's Date:** _____

Milestones matter! How your child plays, talks, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your child has reached by 15 months. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.



What most children do by this age:

Social/Emotional Milestones

- Copies other children while playing, like taking toys out of a container when another child does
- Shows you an object one way
- Copes when someone leaves
- Plays with other child or other toy
- Knows your emotions (happy, sad, angry, or thoughtful)

Language/Communication Milestones

- Starts to say one or two words, besides "mama" or "dada," like "ju" for juice or "ba" for dog
- Looks at a familiar object when you name it
- Follows directions given with both a gesture and words. For example, he gives you a toy when you hold out your hand and say, "Give me the toy."
- Points to ask for something or to get help

Cognitive Milestones (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Thinks in our things the right way. For example, sees, or feels
- Stacks at least two small objects, like blocks

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Takes a few steps on his own
- Uses fingers to feed herself some food

Other important things to share with the doctor...


- What are some things you and your child do together?
- What are some things your child likes to do?
- Is there anything your child does or does not do that concerns you?
- Has your child lost any skills he/she once had?
- Does your child have any special healthcare needs or was he/she born prematurely?

You know your child best. Think about if your child is not meeting any or more milestones, has lost skills he or she once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Talk with your child's doctor, share your concerns, and make sure developmental screening. If you or the doctor are still concerned:

- Ask for a referral to a specialist who can evaluate your child more and
- Call your state or nation's early intervention program to find out if your child can get services to help. Learn more and find the number of early.gov/first5.

For more on how to help your child, visit early.gov/first5

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



Milestone Moments



Milestones Matter!

Look inside for a checklist to watch for a your child's age to see you can help your child learn and grow with it to get to.



Updates to the CDC Developmental Milestones

What has changed? Why is this better for families?

Why Revise the Milestones?

- Incorporate feedback from over 15 years of use
 - Where are 15- and 30-month checklists?
 - Vague (“may”, “begins”)
 - “How many milestones can be missing without being concerned?”
 - Are only the “warning signs” important?
 - Are these milestones MOST children do by this age?



Revision Criteria

1. Age most ($\geq 75\%$) children would be expected to demonstrate the milestone
2. Eliminate “warning signs”
3. Easy for families of different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds to observe
4. Able to be answered with yes/not yet/not sure
5. Use plain language; avoiding vague terms like may, can, and begins
6. Organize in developmental domains
7. Show progression of skills with age, when possible
8. No repetition across checklists
9. Include open-ended questions
10. Include information for developmental promotion
11. Include information on how to act early if there are concerns

Results of the Process

- 26% reduction in total milestones
 - 216 to 159 milestones
 - 25 duplicates removed
 - Average number of milestones/checklist was reduced from 23 to 13
- 40% milestone replacement
 - 94 retained and 65 new
- 1/3 of retained milestones were moved to a different age
 - 2/3 moved to older age
- 80% of the final milestones had normative data from ≥ 1 source
- Social-emotional and cognitive milestones were the most difficult to find



Who helped revise?

Developmental-behavioral pediatricians

Neurodevelopmental pediatrician

General pediatrician

Speech language pathologist

Child and developmental psychologists

Professor of special education and early intervention

Developer of developmental screening tools

Editor of *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents 4th Edition*

Authors of AAP's 2020 clinical report *Promoting Optimal Development: Identifying Infants and Young Children with Developmental Disorders Through Developmental Surveillance and Screening*

Parent representative/ disability navigator

CDC *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* Ambassador

Other Changes/Updates

- Open-ended questions (new)
- Act early messaging
- Early intervention information
- Tips and activities for developmental promotion and early relational health (revised/expanded)
- Reminders about developmental screening
- “Red Flags” now listed instead of “When to Act Early”
- Expanded tips and activities section

Contact Information

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