

Concerned About the Health or Development of a Child?



A project of co-lead agencies

**Nebraska Department
of Education**

**Nebraska Department
of Health &
Human Services**

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Nebraska CHILD FIND
1-888-806-6287
<http://edn.ne.gov>

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Babies Can't Wait

Nebraska's system of services for infants
and toddlers with disabilities and their families



Do you have concerns about a child's development?

Most parents wonder at times if their child is growing and developing like other children the same age. Each child develops differently.

Babies Can't Wait.

If a child's growth or learning is slower than that of other children the same age, it is best to check it out as soon as possible. The same is true if a child has a health condition that could be long lasting. Many children do not "out-grow" a problem. They may need extra community services and support to live healthy and successful lives.

All children develop at different rates. Listed below are some guides to see how your child is developing:

0-1 Years

- ✓ Holds head up by four months
- ✓ Picks up objects by six months
- ✓ Responds to sounds by six months
- ✓ Makes some of the sounds made by others by nine months
- ✓ Uses furniture to pull self to standing position by 12 months.

1-2 Years

- ✓ Holds out arms & legs while being dressed by 18 months
- ✓ Points to objects he/she wants by 18 months
- ✓ Walks without help by 18 months
- ✓ Says two words by 18 months
- ✓ Drinks from a cup by two years
- ✓ Shows one body part (eyes, nose) when asked by two years

2-3 Years

- ✓ Speaks in 2-3 word sentences by three years
- ✓ Walks up and down stairs without help by three years
- ✓ Plays with an adult by three years
- ✓ Undresses self by three years
- ✓ Asks some questions by three years
- ✓ Speaks so non-family members understand most words by three years

Co-Lead Agencies

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The Early Development Network is a collaborative effort shared by co-lead agencies, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE). Assistance and advice is provided by the statewide Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council.



The 28 Planning Region Teams across the state are responsible for assisting in the planning and implementation of the Early Development Network in each local community or region. The program is supported by federal and state funds, and by other local and private agencies in Nebraska.

For more information about the Early Development Network, including detailed information about the rights of children and families who participate in services, see the Early Development Network web site at: <http://edn.ne.gov>.

Print materials can be requested by calling Nebraska CHILD-FIND at 1-888-806-6287.

For information about your local program, or to make a referral locally, call:

(insert local contact here)

What happens after a child turns three?



Families may remain in the Early Development Network system until August 31 after their child's third birthday if they choose. After that time, educational services are provided by the school district based on needs identified in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). If a child/family still needs other types of services, the Services Coordinator can connect the family with other programs of the Health and Human Services System and other community agencies before the family leaves the Early Development Network system.

How can members of the community help?

Remember – babies can't wait for the help they need! There are almost 1,000 children in Nebraska, from birth to age three, being served through the Early Development Network. Yet some eligible children still have not been identified. You can be part of a grassroots effort to locate these children and to make parents and the public aware of the assistance available through the Early Development Network.

There are many ways to help:

- A concerned grandparent, child care provider, physician, social worker, or neighbor who knows of a child who would benefit from these services can make a referral to Nebraska CHILDFIND after receiving the family's permission.
- By making this booklet and other information materials about the Early Development Network available in the community.
- By inviting staff of the Early Development Network to provide information and technical assistance about services to parents, service providers, schools, and community leaders.

To make a referral, obtain copies of this booklet or other Early Development Network materials, or to talk to someone about the Early Development Network, please contact:

Nebraska CHILDFIND at 1-888-806-6287

How can the Early Development Network help?

The Early Development Network provides services and supports that are designed based on the needs of children birth to age three and their families with the belief that parents know what is best for their families. These services are designed to act on what families think is important for their child and family. The Network is staffed by friendly, supportive people who listen to and respect families. The Network also can connect families with other families who have had similar experiences.

The goal of the Early Development Network is to provide coordinated services for Nebraska families as conveniently as possible. The program helps families to understand their child's disability and provides assistance in dealing with situations that interfere with the child's development. Families may choose a particular service or all services. Families also may refuse services at any time.

How do I find out if a child is eligible?

The Early Development Network serves children from birth to age three and their families. A child is eligible for Early Development Network services if he or she is not developing typically, or has been diagnosed with a health condition that will affect his or her development.

Identifying such delays or disabilities usually involves both the family and a team of professionals. To find out more:

call Nebraska CHILDFIND at 1-888-806-6287



What happens next?

After receiving the family's permission, a referral may be made by anyone concerned about the child's development (e.g. a family member, child care provider, physician, social worker, or other service provider). The call will go to a Services Coordinator, who will contact the family within seven days to determine if they are interested in Early Development Network services.

With the family's permission, the Services Coordinator will arrange for an evaluation with the local school district to determine the unique needs of the child and his or her eligibility. The Services Coordinator can link the family with community resources before the evaluation if needed. If the child qualifies, the Services Coordinator will identify others who can participate on a team to help the family develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), which sets goals for the child and family and identifies activities and services needed to achieve those goals. The IFSP will be completed within 45 days, so the family can access Early Development Network services as quickly as possible.

Why is a Services Coordinator important?

Because families of children with disabilities often need many different services, the Services Coordinator is instrumental in working with the agencies that provide these services to make sure the child and family get the help they need. The Services Coordinator also informs families about services available in the community, makes sure services are delivered smoothly and properly, and informs families about advocacy and support groups.

Families are entitled to help from a Services Coordinator up to the time of the evaluation, and after the evaluation if the child is verified as having a disability. The family also may choose not to use the help of a Services Coordinator. In that case, the child's services will be coordinated by the family and the local school district.

What services are provided?

The Early Development Network provides family-centered services, based on the special needs of each child and family. Services that may be provided to children and families include, but aren't limited to:

- services coordination
- early childhood special education
- speech/language therapy
- physical therapy
- occupational therapy
- psychological services
- assistive technology devices & services
- transportation
- audiology
- vision services
- nutrition services
- family training
- respite

Other services may be provided based on the needs and eligibility of the child and family.

The Supporting Parent Program

Many parents whose children have been identified as having a disability find they appreciate the chance to talk to other parents who have "been there" and can help the family adjust to the new challenges they are facing. Through the Supporting Parent Program, a project of PTI Nebraska (Parent Training & Information for Families with Children with Disabilities), experienced families provide one-on-one support and answer questions. The Supporting Parent Program can be reached at 1-866-991-6713.

