

## Don't Wait to Get a Child Help!

The best time to help a child is before they enter elementary school. If you think your child, or a child in your program, has special needs, ask for help right away. Don't wait until the child starts school. Getting help early can make a big difference in the child's development and readiness for kindergarten. It may also prevent more serious problems later on.

Be sure to talk with the child's pediatrician if you have any concerns about vision or hearing.

### Vision

- ▶ Squints, holds objects very close or turns head to look at toys or paper
- ▶ Closes one eye to see things far away
- ▶ Bumps into wall or other large objects
- ▶ Rubs eyes or complains that eyes hurt
- ▶ Seems to have trouble following things or people with eyes
- ▶ One eye turns out or in

### Hearing

- ▶ Does not turn toward you when name is called
- ▶ Has had frequent ear infections
- ▶ Turns body so that the same ear is always turned toward sound
- ▶ Talks in very loud or very soft voice
- ▶ Attention is very short during music or stories
- ▶ Uses gestures instead of words to communicate
- ▶ Speech is difficult to understand

## What are Special Needs?

All children develop at different rates and in different ways, but some children are born with special needs. These special needs affect how a child grows and develops. Some children have developmental delays or difficulties right after birth and others develop delays a little later. It is important to provide the support a child needs so they can grow to his or her fullest potential.

## Where to Find Help

If you think that your child or a child in your care may have special needs, you can get help.

- ★ Talk to the child's pediatrician
- ★ Call the local school district
- ★ Call the Special Education program at the County Office of Education

Your neighborhood district or County Office of Education can help you find out if the child qualifies for Special Education services. These services are confidential and do not cost anything. To use these services, parents must sign an agreement to have their child tested. They must agree to have the child receive Special Education.

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# Developmental



## For Children Ages 3-5

## Knowing When to Get Help

The following list includes a sample of behaviors that suggest a 3-5 year old child may need further evaluation. **All children exhibit some of these behaviors SOME of the time; they are only cause for concern if MANY of the red flags occur MOST of the time.** Children develop at their own pace. It is important to look for patterns, frequency, intensity and duration of behaviors when deciding if any behavior might signal an underlying problem.

## Language Development Red Flags

- ▶ Excessive drooling
- ▶ Doesn't respond to own name
- ▶ Repeats non-communicative phrases
- ▶ Excessive use of jargon
- ▶ Persistent use of fixed topics or themes in conversation
- ▶ Speech can not be understood more than 50% of the time
- ▶ Talks to self with no intent to communicate
- ▶ Takes a long time to respond or is unresponsive when spoken to
- ▶ Confused by simple directions
- ▶ Echoes or repeats questions and directions
- ▶ Unable to express anger and frustration
- ▶ Displays a limited range of interests
- ▶ Has difficulty participating in group activities
- ▶ Difficulty naming common objects
- ▶ Speaks in only 1-3 word phrases

## Self Help

- ▶ Not fully potty trained or feeding self by four years of age
- ▶ Can't pull-up pants, put on shoes
- ▶ Cannot tolerate clothes; removes them consistently



## Play Behavior Red Flags

- ▶ Displays no interest in age appropriate toys
- ▶ Shows little or no interest in exploring environment
- ▶ Engages in repetitive activities
- ▶ Lack of imitation of peers or adults
- ▶ Repeatedly disrupts or destroys another child's play activity
- ▶ Play is repetitive and lacks creativity
- ▶ Does not engage in imaginative dramatic play
- ▶ Does not play cooperatively with other children
- ▶ Avoids interacting with other children even when approached
- ▶ Tries to control play of others
- ▶ Impulsive; hits; bites; runs away



## Cognitive Development Red Flags

- ▶ Stares blankly for long periods of time
- ▶ Resists change
- ▶ Resists adult's attempts to teach
- ▶ Difficulty focusing and attending for more than a few minutes
- ▶ Does not count to 3
- ▶ Unable to participate in group activities
- ▶ Unable to match colors and shapes
- ▶ Consistently fails to complete tasks
- ▶ Has difficulty tolerating transition and interruptions in daily routine
- ▶ Slow to process information
- ▶ Does not enjoy picture books
- ▶ Can not tolerate learning or problem solving that is not quick and easy
- ▶ Can not complete age appropriate puzzles

## Gross and Fine Motor Development Red Flags

- ▶ One side of the body is more coordinated
- ▶ Walks on toes most of the time
- ▶ Reacts strongly to the feel of certain substances or textures
- ▶ Displays constant motion
- ▶ Runs stiffly, frequently falls
- ▶ Can not jump off floor with both feet
- ▶ Unable to throw a ball overhand or catch a big ball
- ▶ Does not alternate feet when climbing stairs
- ▶ Unable to copy circles or lines
- ▶ Can not turn small knobs
- ▶ Unable to pick up small objects with pincer grasp
- ▶ Can not string beads
- ▶ Has difficulty with simple interlocking puzzles
- ▶ Can not cut on a line (by 4 years)
- ▶ Uses a fist grip with pen
- ▶ Scribbles, does not make representational drawings (by 4 years)

## Social Development Red Flags

- ▶ Unaware of others
- ▶ Can not calm down after a tantrum
- ▶ Excessively aggressive
- ▶ Shows no awareness when intruded upon
- ▶ No joint attention
- ▶ No eye contact
- ▶ Self-stimulates (flaps hands, spins, rocks)
- ▶ Disregard for limits or rules
- ▶ Unprovoked physical aggression
- ▶ Shows inappropriate affect with someone who is hurt
- ▶ Indiscriminately shows all adults affection or shies away from adults
- ▶ Hurts animals
- ▶ Unable to share or take turns
- ▶ Unable to join others in play