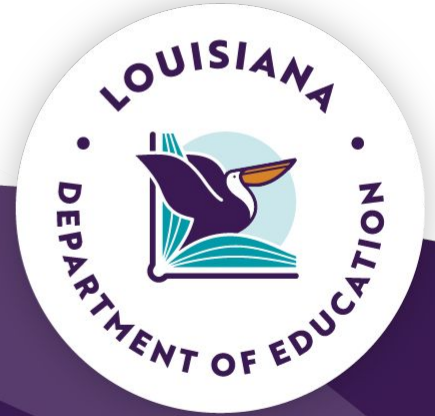
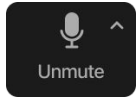


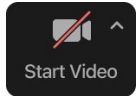
Understanding Child Development and Monitoring in Early Childhood



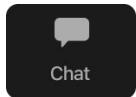
Zoom Meeting Preparation



- Please make sure your phone or computer is muted to minimize background noise.
 - To do this, hover over the bottom left-hand side of your screen and click “Mute.”



- Please make sure you have turned off your camera to save bandwidth and prevent any connectivity issues.
 - To do this, hover over the bottom left-hand side of your screen and click “Stop Video.”



- Please submit questions during the presentation in the “Chat” function located on the bottom of your screen.

If you require an interpreter or have other accessibility needs for future LDOE meetings, please contact LDOEcommunications@la.gov.



Agenda

- Understanding Early Child Development
- Developmental Monitoring and Screening
- Learn the Signs. Act Early.
- Resources
- Closing



Objectives

- Participants will have a better understanding of the importance of understanding child development.
- Participants will learn the difference between developmental monitoring and developmental screening.
- Participants will learn about Learn the Signs. Act Early. resources.





Understanding Early Child Development

Early Child Development

- Early childhood experiences during the first five years have a significant impact on child development outcomes later in life.
- Understanding what happens during these stages of development allows programs, school systems, and families to meet a child's needs effectively.
- When developmental and learning needs are identified early and accurately, and children receive timely, appropriate and effective support, interventions and specialized services aligned to their needs, learning is accelerated, skill gaps are closed, and children achieve at higher levels.



Understanding How Children Develop

It is important that educators understand appropriate early child development to be able to support the healthy growth and development of the children in their care throughout key developmental intervals.

How does understanding child development improve child outcomes?

When educators are able to identify children earlier who may benefit from specialized support:

- early intervention is more effective.
- families are able to better support their child's needs.
- a child's developmental path improves.



Stages of Development

Early child development includes the way that a child grows, changes, and develops skills. During each stage of development, children reach different developmental milestones that provide caregivers with an idea of how a child should be progressing in each stage.

The stages of development include:

- Newborn (0-3 months)
- Infant (3-12 months)
- Toddler (1-3 years)
- Preschooler (3-4 years)
- School Age (4-5 years)



Helping Educators Understand Child Development

While not all children will reach developmental milestones at the same time, it's important for all caregivers to understand the critical milestone that children are expected to achieve.

Early Educators/ Childcare Providers:

- Identify early warning signs of suspected delay
- Build self-efficacy to talk with families about development
- Aid in monitoring development

Parent/Educator/Provider Tip:

- The [Ages & Stages Questionnaires®](#), Third Edition (ASQ®-3) is used by pediatricians and early educators. In addition, EarlySteps, Louisiana's program for infants and toddlers with disabilities, also uses the Ages & Stages Questionnaire in their screening process. The questionnaire are family-friendly, easy to use, and helps create the snapshot needed to celebrate milestones and identify delays in development.



Helping Families Understand Child Development

While not all children will reach developmental milestones at the same time, it's important to understand the critical milestone that children are expected to achieve.

Families of young children need to:

- know that developmental milestones exist and how to monitor their child's development
- know the early warning signs of delay and importance of acting early
- feel confident about discussions with childcare and health care providers

Parent/Educator/Provider Tip:

How can educators help families find out more about child development?

- From birth to age 5, all children should reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak, act, and move. The [CDC's Developmental Milestones](#) are easy-to-use illustrated checklists.





Developmental Monitoring and Screening

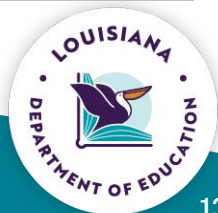
Meeting Milestones



- Developmental milestones have been determined by extensive research.
- These milestones help parents, teachers, and caregivers who work with children better understand what to expect.
- Knowing the expectations will help to identify any developmental delays or problems that may exist so that the child can receive the support they need to progress.

Developmental Monitoring vs. Screening

Developmental Monitoring	Developmental Screening
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Observational assessment to monitor growth and learning● Ongoing throughout the year● Informs instruction and next steps to meet age expectations/milestones● Supports appropriate activities for families at home● Completed by: teacher● Example Tool: <i>Teaching Strategies</i> GOLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Formal and brief screening process based on age● Administered at various age intervals● Informs the need for further screening based on a specific domain● Engages families in sharing information about how the child is developing● Completed by: pediatrician, teacher, family member● Example Tool: ASQ, Brigance, DIAL-R



Developmental Monitoring

Developmental Monitoring

- Developmental monitoring can be monitored by parents, grandparents, and caregivers to monitor child development to look for developmental milestones from birth through age 5.
- Developmental milestones can be tracked by using the [CDC Developmental Milestones checklists](#) at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 15 months, 1.5 years, 2 years, 2.5 years, 3 years, 4 years, and 5 years.
- Educators can also monitor child development through monitoring tools such as *Teaching Strategies GOLD* throughout the year to inform instruction and next steps to meet age expectations/milestones.



Developmental Screening

Developmental Screening

- Screening is done by the parent with the help of a healthcare provider, early childhood teacher, or other professionals to look for developmental milestones from birth through age 5.
- ASQ-3 screenings can be used to track child development at:
 - 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 8 months, 9 months, 10 months, 12 months, 14 months, 16 months, 18 months, 20 months, 22 months, 24 months, 27 months, 30 months, 33 months, 3 years, 3.5 years, 4 years, 4.5 years, and 5 years.

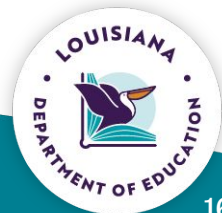


Missed Milestones

When a child begins to miss developmental milestones, it is important for them to receive early care and intervention right away. Early child development lays the foundation for the rest of a child's life and has a direct impact on kindergarten readiness. There are resources available that outline what to do when a child is missing developmental milestones.

Resources available include:

- [The Developmental Screening Guidebook](#)
A guide on how to support healthy growth and development of children throughout key developmental stages and how to identify children who may benefit from specialized support.
- [Early Childhood Transition Process](#)
A guide to help families of young children with disabilities navigate the system of special education from ages birth to 5.
- [Learn The Signs. Act Early.](#)
A federally mandated program of the CDC that encourages parents of child ages birth to 5 years to learn the signs of healthy development, monitor early developments, and act early on developmental concerns.





Learn the Signs. Act Early.

CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early.

- **Mission:** To improve early identification of developmental delays and disabilities by promoting developmental monitoring and screening so children and families can get the services and support they need.
- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." (LTSAE)** has **FREE** researched-based, parent-friendly resources on child development to help you boost family engagement and your own professional development.
- **Learn the signs** of healthy development (developmental milestones);
- **Monitor** every child's every development; and
- **Act early** on possible developmental concerns; talk with the doctor and ask for developmental screening

CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early.

- Health communication tools for developmental surveillance
- Evidence-informed
- Includes milestones **MOST** (>75%) children are expected to achieve by given ages
- Avoids the “wait and see” approach, and encourages screening as a possible next step
- Meets the needs of parents and professionals related to developmental monitoring



CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early. Checklists

- Free, printable checklists are available featuring developmental milestones by domain/area of development
- Open-ended questions
- Parent tips and activities to help the child learn and grow
- Guidance for what to do if there is a concern
- Early intervention information
- Reminders about well visits and screenings

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. Don't wait. If your child is not meeting one 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 ask about developmental screening. If you or the doctor are still concerned:

1. Ask for a referral to a specialist who can evaluate your child more; and
2. Call any local public elementary school for a free evaluation to find out if your child can get services to help.

For more on how to help your child, visit [cdc.gov/Concerned](https://www.cdc.gov/Concerned).

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

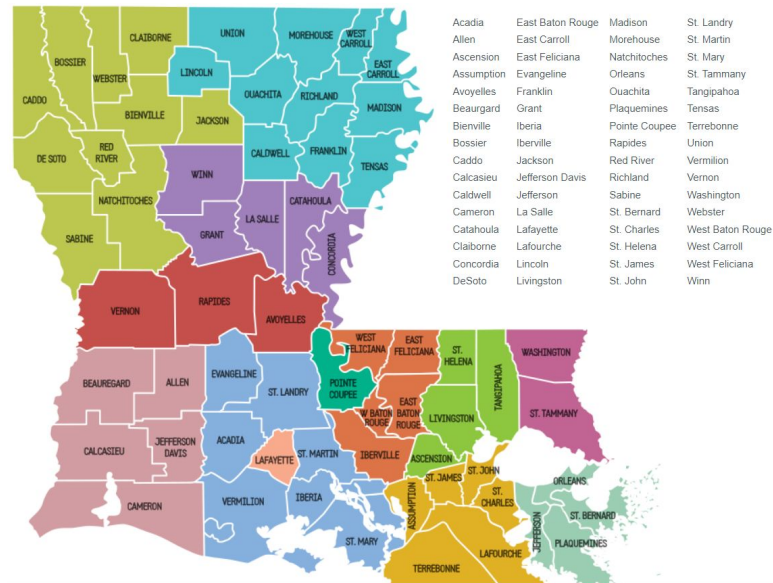
 Download CDC's free Milestone Tracker app

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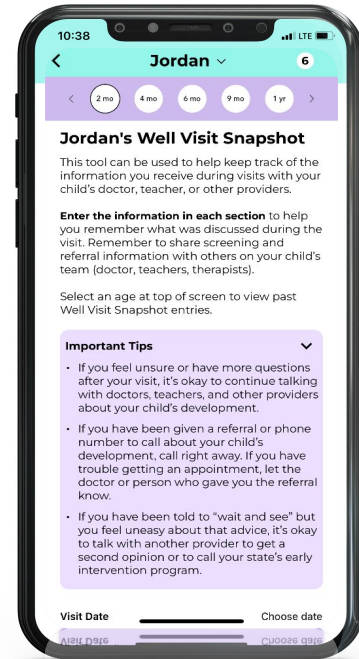
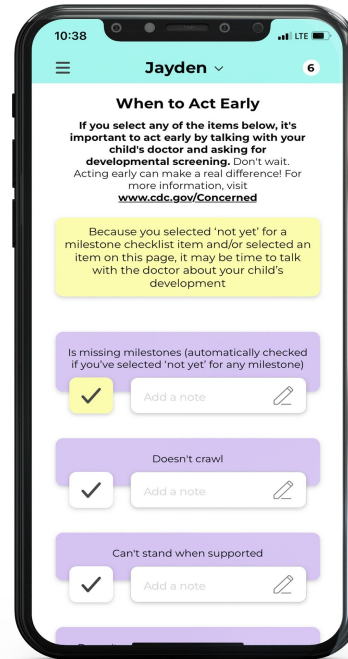
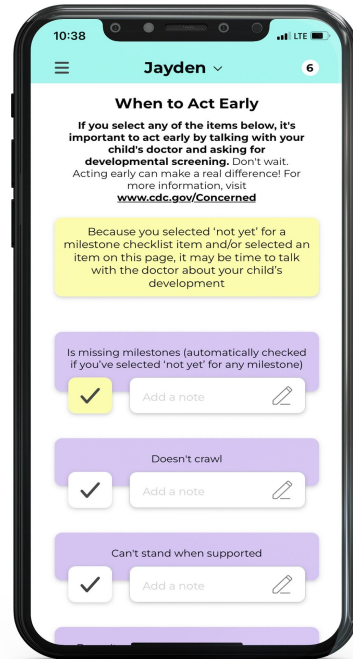
Louisiana Act Early Map

- Google: Louisiana Act Early Map
- Website:
actearlymap.doe.Louisiana.gov

- QR Code:



CDC Learn the Signs. Act Early. Tracker App



CDC Learn Signs. Act Early. Tracker App

Help your child grow and thrive

Your child's early years are so very important. Tracking how your little one plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves helps you support their development.

Download CDC's free *Milestone Tracker* app to find fun and easy activities for each age.



Track & Share
Milestones

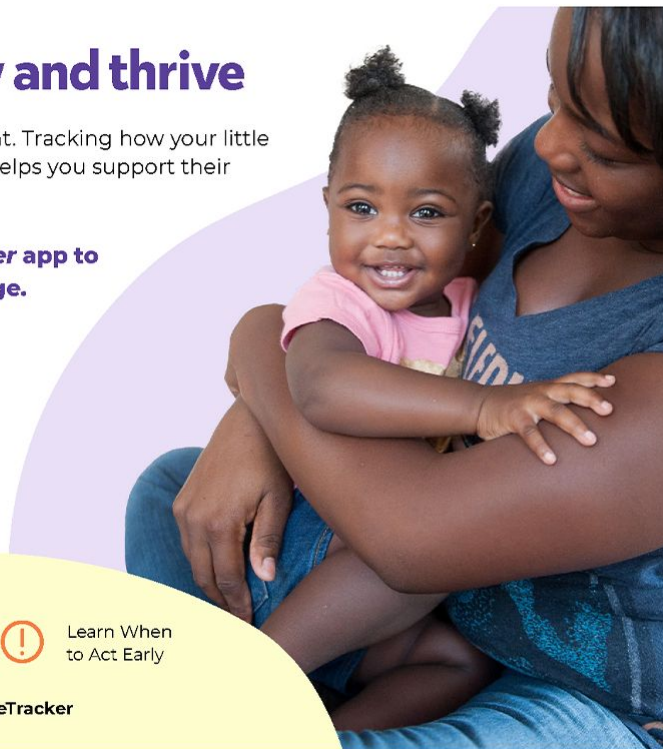


Get Tips &
Activities



Learn When
to Act Early

Learn more at cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker

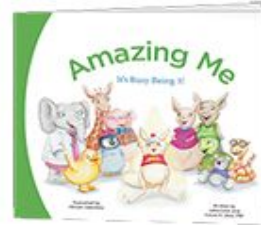
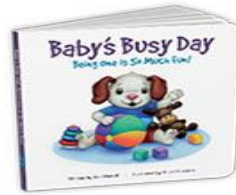


Milestone Moments



Milestones Matter!

Look inside for milestones to watch for in your child and tips for how you can help your child learn and grow from birth to age 5.



Help your baby learn and grow

As your baby's first teacher, you can help his or her learning and brain development. Try these simple tips and activities in a safe way. Talk with your baby's doctor and teachers if you have questions or for more ideas on how to help your baby's development.



- Teach your baby "wanted" behaviors. Show her what to do and use positive words or give her hugs and kisses when she does it. For example, if she pulls your pet's tail, teach her how to pet gently and give her a hug when she does it.
- Talk or sing to your baby about what you're doing. For example, "Mommy is washing your hands" or sing, "This is the way we wash our hands."
- Build on what your baby tries to say. If he says "ta," say "Yes, a truck," or if he says "truck," say "Yes, that's a big blue truck."
- Redirect your baby quickly and consistently by giving her a toy or moving her if she is getting into things you don't want her to get into. Save "no" for behaviors that are dangerous. When you say "no," say it firmly. Do not spank, yell, or give her long explanations.
- Give your baby safe places to explore. Baby-proof your home. For example, move sharp or breakable things out of reach. Lock away medicines, chemicals, and cleaning products. Save the Poison Help Line number, 800-222-1222, in all phones.
- Respond with words when your baby points. Babies point to ask for things. For example, say "You want the cup? Here is the cup. It's your cup." If he tries to say "cup," celebrate his attempt.
- Point to interesting things you see, such as a truck, bus, or animals. This will help your baby pay attention to what others are "showing" him through pointing.
- Limit screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) to video calling with loved ones. Screen time is not recommended for children younger than 2 years of age. Babies learn by talking, playing, and interacting with others.
- Give your baby water, breast milk, or plain milk. You don't need to give your baby juice, but if you do, give 4 ounces or less a day of 100% fruit juice. Do not give your baby other sugary beverages, such as fruit drinks, soda, sports drinks, or flavored milks.
- Help your baby get used to foods with different tastes and textures. Foods can be smooth, mashed, or finely chopped. Your baby might not like every food on the first try. Give your baby a chance to try foods again and again.
- Give your baby time to get to know a new caregiver. Bring a favorite toy, stuffed animal, or blanket to help comfort your baby.
- Give your baby pots and pans or a small musical instrument like a drum or cymbals. Encourage your baby to make noise.

To see more tips and activities download CDC's Milestone Tracker app.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

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



Learn the Signs. Act Early.



**Have
Questions
or Need
Support?**

Contact Us!

Julie Emory, MS

Pediatric Medical Home Coordinator

Julie.emory@la.gov

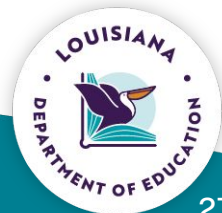
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Resources

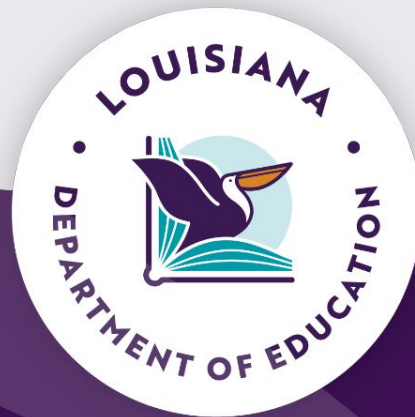


Early Identification and Developmental Screening Resources

- [Bureau of Health Developmental Screening Toolkit](#): Bureau of Family Health Developmental Screening Toolkit with tools to help create a plan, provide training, and utilize resources to implement developmental screening.
- [CDC Learn the Signs, Act Early](#) and [CDC Family Resources to Share](#): CDC resources that can be shared with families who have concerns about child development.
- [LDOE Early Childhood Developmental Screening Guidebook](#): Louisiana Department of Education guide intended to help program staff deepen their understanding of how children develop, regardless of their individual needs, and establish a comprehensive early identification system.



Closing

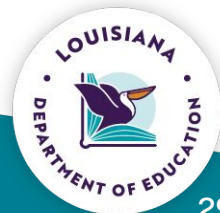


Closing

When educators and families have a better understanding of child development and what to do when those milestones aren't met, children are exposed to more targeted and high-quality learning experiences.

Next Steps:

- Reflect with your team:
 - What type of professional development is being provided surrounding early child development in your program?
 - In what ways are you connecting families to resources to help them understand appropriate child development?



Upcoming Webinar



Monthly Young Children with Disabilities Community of Practice

The early childhood strategy team conducts a monthly community of practice on various topics related to young children with disabilities. This month's session will focus on CLASS® observations for classrooms with Young Children with Disabilities.

Attendees can access the webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at 3 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91561982271>
- **Phone Number:** 1-312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID:** 915 6198 2271
- **Passcode:** 787411

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

Please contact Caitlyn.Robinson@la.gov with questions.

