

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities



**Learn the Signs. Act Early.**

It's time to change how we  
view a child's growth



**Learn the Signs. Act Early.**



# Mission

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**Every child reaches his or her  
full potential**

**Learn the Signs. Act Early.**

# Research

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- **Formative Research**

- Focus groups with parents
- Interviews with health care professionals and child care providers

- **Pre-testing**

- Interviews with parents and health care professionals

- **Baseline Surveys**

- *HealthStyles* survey

- 6,175 interviews (487 with parents of a child under age four)

- *DocStyles* survey

- 525 interviews (251 with family or general practitioners; 274 with pediatricians)

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# Formative Research Results

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- **HCPs looking for materials to educate parents in efficient manner using direct, informational materials**
  - Do not cause undue alarm
  - Provide resources for E.I. services, additional information
- **Parents want direct, informational materials**
  - Convey importance of issues, but not through fear or blame
  - Connect desire to track growth/development to understanding of full range of developmental milestones

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# Survey Research Results

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## **Autism is seen as important...**

- 68% of parents said autism is a “very important” or “important” health issue

## **But not well understood...**

- 55% of parents do not know early warning signs

## **Even by health care professionals...**

- Less than one-third (27%) of HCPs believe their colleagues are well-informed about developmental disorders
- 42% do not know autism can be diagnosed as early as 18 months

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# Objectives

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- Increase **AWARENESS** of developmental milestones and early warning signs
- Increase **KNOWLEDGE** of the benefits of early action and E.I. service system
- Increase parent-provider **DIALOGUE** on the topic of developmental milestones and disorders
- Increase **EARLY ACTION** on childhood developmental disorders

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# Target Audiences

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- **Child health care providers (HCPs)**
  - Pediatricians, family physicians, physician's assistants, nurses
- **Parents of young children**
  - Ages 4 and younger
- **Child care providers**
  - Day care workers, Head Start, Early Head Start, Pre-school and Pre-K teachers

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# Outreach to HCPs

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## Phase 1: Raise Awareness (in progress)

- E-card and matte release
- National conferences
- Publication of *DocStyles* and *HealthStyles* articles
- Health Care Professional Resource Kits

a 4-year-old with autism  
was once a 3-year-old  
with autism was once a  
2-year-old with autism...

Autism can often be recognized at 18 months or earlier. An upcoming campaign from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will help parents identify possible developmental delays and encourage them to discuss their concerns with their child's physician or other health care professional.

To prepare the health care community for this increase in awareness, CDC and its partners will equip providers with information and materials to support the needs of their patients who may show signs of a developmental delay.

[For more information ►](#)



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# Outreach to HCPs (cont.)

- **HCP Resource Kit encourages conversation between physicians and parents**
  - “How to Talk to Your Doctor” informational cards
  - Office posters
  - Fact sheet series on milestones, developmental disorders and resources



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# Outreach to HCPs (cont.)

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- **Progress (October '04 - May '05):**
  - Reached 2.8 million providers via e-card and matte release
  - Reached nearly 44,000 providers through conferences
  - Distributed over 10,000 Resource Kits

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# Outreach to Parents

## Complete or Ongoing (11/04-5/05)

- Coverage in parenting and other popular media
- PSAs for TV, radio, and print
- High-profile launch event
- Mother's Day event with celebrity spokesmom
- Long-lead media tour
- Satellite media tour
- Autism Awareness Month radio news release (English & Spanish)
- Parent Resource Kit



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# Outreach to Parents (cont.)

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## Coming Soon (6/05-9/05):

- Publication of *DocStyles and HealthStyles* articles
- Long-lead interviews with celebrity spokesmom
- Outreach to Dads through Fox Sports and NASCAR

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# Outreach to Parents (cont.)

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- **Progress (October '04 - May '05):**
  - Media coverage in national outlets: “Good Morning America,” “Newsweek,” “Child,” “Parenting,” “Parents,” MSNBC, CNBC, AP, NY Times, LA Times...reached 3.9 million people
  - PSA broadcast in Time’s Square 32 times per day for 30 days – pro bono!
  - Distributed over 10,000 health care professional resource kits and over 20,000 parent kits

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# Hispanic Outreach

- **Spanish language support**
  - **Materials**
  - **Call center**
  - **Web site in Spanish – [www.cdc.gov/pronto](http://www.cdc.gov/pronto)**
  - **Celebrity spokesmom**
  - **Partnership with Hispanic Radio Network**
  - **Media outreach (radio news release, satellite media tour, radio media tour, interviews, and radio PSA)**



4 años juega imaginándose que es "mamá" o "papá"  
calabera con otros niños

3 años mirar a actrices y comploteros de juguete  
decir oraciones de 4 a 5 palabras

2 años señalar un objeto o imagen si se le nombra  
interesarse más en otros niños

mirar cosas pequeñas que hacen los grandes (hablar en un teléfono de juguete)  
señalar objetos que le interesan

**Es hora de ver el crecimiento de los niños de una manera diferente.**

Es normal que mida la estatura y el peso de su hijo pero también debe medir otros tipos de crecimiento. Hable con su doctor o enfermera acerca de todos los aspectos del desarrollo su hijo.

1-800-CDC-INFO [www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly)

Aprenda Los Signos. Reaccione Pronto.



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# Outreach to Child Care Providers

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- **Early phases of planning child care outreach**
  - **Build relationships with leaders in the child care community**
  - **Better understand relevant issues in the day care/early education field**
  - **Strategize opportunities to share messaging broadly**

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# Child Care Providers (cont.)

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- **What is CDC trying to achieve?**
  - Help child care/early education providers in their efforts to identify children with developmental disorders and get them the services they need!
    - Identify existing efforts in the field
    - Build upon those
    - Find the value-added

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# Evaluation

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- **Process Measures**

- Health care provider kits distributed
- Parent resource kits distributed
- Bulk material orders
- Visitors to Web site (English & Spanish)
- Materials downloaded from Web site
- Phone calls to 1-800-CDC-INFO
- PSA activity
- News coverage
- Geographic distribution of news coverage & bulk material orders

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# Evaluation

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- **Outcome Measures**

- Increase practice of developmental monitoring in routine health care
- Child screened or referred as early as possible
- Child enters EI system as early as possible
- Parents and health care providers work together to assess and support healthy development of young children
- Partners reach health care providers and parents with campaign messages and materials

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# Resources

- **Web site**

**[www.cdc.gov/ActEarly](http://www.cdc.gov/ActEarly)**

- Over 122,000 unique visitors since launch
- Over 31,000 materials downloaded

- **Call center**

**1-800-CDC-INFO**

- Over 8,000 calls

The screenshot shows the CDC Act Early website in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The browser address bar displays <http://www.cdc.gov/nbddd/outreach/actearly/>. The website header includes the CDC logo, navigation links for 'CDC Home', 'Search', and 'Health Topics A-Z', and the main heading 'Learn the Signs. Act Early.' Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'NCBDDD Home', 'Act Early Home', 'Developmental Screening', 'Developmental Disabilities', 'ADHD', and 'Resources'. The main content area features a sidebar with 'Developmental Milestones' (3 Months, 7 Months, 1 Year, 2 Years, 3 Years, 4 Years, 5 Years), 'Fact Sheets' (Developmental Screening, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Vision Loss, Mental Retardation, Hearing Loss, ADHD), and 'Resources'. The main content area has the heading 'It's time to change how we view a child's growth.' and a sub-heading 'This chart will help you look for important developmental milestones. Just move your mouse over your child's age.' A large graphic shows a hand pointing to a chart with a child's face. The chart lists milestones for 5 years: 'Swings, climbs, hops, somersaults.', 'Says name and address.', 'Can count 10 or more objects.', and 'Likes to sing, dance and act.' To the right of the chart, a list of ages from 5 years down to 3 months is shown. At the bottom right, there is a link for 'Para materiales disponibles en español, haga clic aquí.'

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# Campaign Partners

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- **American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)**
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**
- **Autism Coalition**
- **Autism Society of America (ASA)**
- **Cure Autism Now (CAN)**
- **First Signs**
- **National Alliance for Autism Research (NAAR)**
- **Organization for Autism Research (OAR)**

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