



Family Engagement Newsletter

Supporting Your Child's Early Development

By Wendy Overturf

Parents are typically very interested in their child's growth and development. Development refers to how a child becomes able to do more complex things as they get older. Development is different than growth. Growth only refers to the child getting bigger in size. When talking about child development, it is connected to developing skills like:

- **Gross motor skills:** using large groups of muscles to sit, stand, walk, run, etc., keeping balance and changing positions.
- **Fine motor skills:** using hands to be able to eat, draw, dress, play, write, and do many other things.
- **Language skills:** speaking, using body language and gestures, communicating, and understanding what others say.
- **Cognitive skills:** thinking skills including learning, understanding, problem-solving, reasoning, and remembering.
- **Social skills:** interacting with others, having relationships with family, friends, and teachers, cooperating and responding to the feelings of others.

Developmental milestones are a helpful tool for both parents and pediatricians to get a general sense of how a child is developing. While they are not a perfect metric—not all children will meet all milestones at exactly the same time, by any means—they can be useful in spotting areas where a child may need more support. With a goal of making early identification of developmental delays easier, experts from The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently convened to update the checklist of developmental milestones for infants and toddlers. The [newly revised developmental milestones](#) are written in family-friendly language and identify the behaviors that 75% or more of children can be expected to exhibit at a certain age. Temporary delays are usually no cause for alarm, but an ongoing delay or multiple delays in reaching milestones can be a sign there may be challenges later in life.

If your child is not meeting one or more milestones, has lost skills they once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Early intervention is key for many children with delays or disabilities and has the potential to make a lifelong impact. Talk with your child's doctor, share your concerns, and ask about a developmental screening. Developmental screening is a brief, simple process used to answer the question, "Is this child's development typical for their age level?" If a child's developmental screening results indicate that they may have a delay in one or more areas of development, parents are notified that their child may need a comprehensive assessment to find out more about their individual needs.

If parents of infants and toddlers believe a more comprehensive assessment is needed, one option is to contact the [Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#). The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program serves families with children under the age of 3 who have delays or disabilities. An evaluation by your local county Birth to 3 Program will determine if the child is eligible for the program. Eligibility is based on **one** of the following:

- A developmental delay of at least 25% in one or more areas of development
- A physician-diagnosed condition with a high probability of developmental delay
- Atypical (unusual) development that negatively affects the child's overall development

Throughout the evaluation, parents and caregivers are involved. Their knowledge about the skills or abilities of the child, their health history, and general development will help determine if the child is eligible for the Birth to 3 Program. Knowing about the family's culture, beliefs, routines, and needs will also help the team understand the child.

If a child qualifies for the Birth to 3 Program, an Individualized Family Service Plan or IFSP will be developed. The services that are received—including in what way, how often, and how long—are based on the individual goals and outcomes of the child. The IFSP might include special education services, physical, occupational, and speech therapy, service coordination, and other services as determined necessary by the team.

(Note: If a parent or caregiver has concerns about the development of a child ages 3 and above, the local school district should be contacted to make a [referral](#) for an evaluation).

Statewide Events

Supporting Neurodiverse Students

[Social Communication - Modes and Language](#)

This four-session cohort is designed to support educators serving students with disability-related needs in the area of social communication. This cohort will not only touch on social communication skills of students with strong communication modes but also those who are emerging in a communication mode that is understood by all. No-cost virtual events. **Dates:** 3/3/2022, 3/10/2022, 3/17/2022, 3/24/2022, 3:30pm-4pm

[The Tourette Connect Conference](#)

Free event for service providers, providers, parents, adults and children in the Tourette Community. **Date:** April 2, 2022

Location: Best Western Hotel, Madison

[Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin Conference](#)

The biggest autism-related conference in Wisconsin. It is a place to gather, connect, belong. It is a place where autistic adults, parents and family members, and professionals come to share experiences and learn together.

Date: May 29-30, 2022

Location: Kalahari Resort & Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells, WI

[Circles of Life Conference-Save the Date](#)

Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for families who have children with disabilities and the providers and other professionals who support them. This is an event for the WHOLE family! There are separate sessions for teens with disabilities (Gathering of Youth), programming for siblings (Sibshop), and a Family Fun Night (Super Heroes).

Date: May 12-13, 2022

Location: Holiday Inn Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI. It will also be live streamed and recorded for those who prefer to participate virtually.

[Save the Date](#)

Endless Possibilities Conference 2022: Effective Family Engagement, Honoring Diversity for Successful Partnerships

Keynote: Lola Dada-Olley

A day of virtual training from experts on topics connected to special education for families of students with IEPs and the professionals who support them. This event is coordinated by WI FACETS, in collaboration with WI DPI and other family support/disability organizations.

Date: August 5, 2022



At Home Learning Strategies



March 2, 2022-Read Across America Day

On this day, students, teachers, parents, and community members around the nation come together to read books and celebrate the joy of reading. The day was established by the National Education Association (NEA) in 1998 to help get kids excited about reading. The day occurs each year on the birthday of beloved children's book author Dr. Seuss, so a perfect way to celebrate is to read one his famous tales. Check out these online read-alouds to get started.

[Green Eggs and Ham](#) [The Cat in the Hat](#) [Hop on Pop](#) [Horton Hears a Who!](#)

Spread the joy with these titles in this [Read Across America booklist](#) about books and reading.

How Reading 20 Minutes a Day Can Help Your Child

- Early reading skills can affect children's academic success. Reading 20 minutes a day exposes kids to a vast quantity of words (1.8 million in each school year).
- Reading often helps to improve writing skills.
- Reading builds vocabulary.
- Reading improves academic performance. There is a strong correlation between a child's ability to read and academic performance because so much of schooling relies on the ability to read.
- Reading can strengthen family relationships. There is nothing quite like reading together as a family. It could involve flipping through picture books with your little ones or sitting in the same room with older kids while you are all reading.



March 13, 2022-Daylight Saving Time Begins

[What is Daylight Saving Time?](#) is an educational video that explains Daylight Saving Time and why we move clocks ahead one hour (in most states). This is also a great opportunity to practice time-telling skills with your child. Here is a [fun video](#) that can help your child learn how to tell the time on both digital and analog clocks.



March 17, 2022-St. Patrick's Day

Check out these free [St. Patrick's Day printables and activities for Kids](#).

March 20, 2022-Spring Equinox

This is the first day of spring. It is also a day where there is *almost* 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness because the sun is passing directly over the equator. This might be a great time to go outside for a walk and see if you and your child can spot any signs of spring. Get started with these ["signs of spring" prompts](#).



March 20-26, 2022-National Poison Prevention Week

This observance exists to highlight the risk of being poisoned by household products. Look under your kitchen sink or in your laundry room and make sure there is nothing poisonous there that might be attractive to young children, like colorful liquids. Also check out this [poison alert read aloud](#).



March 21, 2022-World Poetry Day

World Poetry Day is a time to appreciate and celebrate poets and poetry from around the world. This is a great opportunity to introduce your child to your favorite poetry or find some new poems to share. [Here](#) are a few children's poems to get you started.

[March Children's Activity Calendar](#)

March 26, 2022- Make Up Your Own Holiday Day

"Unofficial" holidays like this, celebrate, honor, and raise awareness of people, animals, history and more. Pick a cause you love and celebrate it! Use your imagination in deciding how to celebrate this most unique of holidays.



Kids can use [Google Logo Maker](#) to bring a made-up holiday to life.

Online Resources: Early Childhood

[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has a variety of resources related to early childhood education. It also has a link to a [webinar series](#) on inclusion and early childhood education. Additionally, if you are concerned about your child's development [this section](#) of the website has tips for parents because there are many immediate things you can do to help your child. It also has information on early intervention services.

[Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#)

The first three years are the most important building blocks of a child's future. The Birth to 3 Program is a federally-mandated Early Intervention program ([Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—IDEA](#)) to support families of children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three.

[Significant Developmental Delay \(SDD\)](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website has information related to SDD. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams may now consider identifying SDD as a disability category for children ages 3 through 9, for both initial and reevaluations. A section on frequently asked questions related to SDD is also included.

[Too Small to Fail](#)

Too Small to Fail aims to help parents and businesses take meaningful actions to improve the health and well-being of children ages zero to five, so that more of America's children are prepared to succeed in the 21st century. The website has an abundance of links to resources related to children from 0-5 years of age.

[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)

NAEYC is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with a focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for children from birth through age 8. The Association administers a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs, sponsors a variety of initiatives to improve professional preparation of early childhood educators, and produces a wide array of early childhood resources.

[ZERO TO THREE](#)

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to support the healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers and their families. This multidisciplinary organization advances its mission by informing, educating, and supporting adults who influence the lives of infants and toddlers.

[Wisconsin Head Start Association \(WHSA\)](#)

WHSA is a private not-for-profit membership organization representing over 16,000 young children and their families and over 4,000 staff composing the 62 Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin. WHSA provides a network for information, training, advocacy, support, and action for directors, parents, and staff of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin.

[Get Ready to Read](#)

It is critical to help young children be ready for school by working with them to develop early literacy and learning skills. Because strong reading skills form the basis for learning in all subjects, it is important to identify those who struggle with reading as early as possible. Children who have been read to at home come to school with important early literacy skills. This site has a rich variety of great information related to early literacy. The site also has videos and webinars of examples of how parents can promote literacy skills.



StoryWalk

An outdoor adventure in literacy for the whole family to enjoy.

StoryWalk® is a fun and innovative way for children and adults to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Laminated pages from a children's book are attached to wooden stakes, which are installed along an outdoor path. As you stroll down the trail, you are directed to the next page in the story.

The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

[Find A StoryWalk in Wisconsin](#) or do a search for "find a StoryWalk near me"



StoryWalk Resources

[Kellogg-Hubbard Library](#)

Information on StoryWalk history, FAQs and List of Storywalk books.

[Let's Move in Libraries—StoryWalks®](#)

A comprehensive, step-by-step guide with examples.

[Taking a Walk with the Library: StoryWalk®, Walking Book Clubs and More](#)

Free webinar archive

[Take a Hike: Building Literacy Skills through StoryWalk®](#) is an excellent, detailed planning guide from the Boston Children's Museum.

WI FACETS



Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS FREE workshops & webinars:

To register by phone: 877-374-0511

All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM
(unless otherwise noted)

[Child Outcomes: What Families Need to Know & How to Take a More Active Role in the Process](#)

Presenters: Nancy Fuhrman, DPI & Michelle Ogorek, EC consultant

Date: March 2, 2022

[WSEMS: Dispute Resolution Options](#)

Presenters: Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS & Nissan Bar-Lev, CESA 7

Date: March 7, 2022

[New Disability Criteria for Special Education Identification](#)

Presenters: Daniel Parker & Anita Castro, DPI

Date: March 9, 2022

[IEP 4: Reevaluación y Evaluaciones Educativas Independientes](#)

Date: March 10, 2022

Presenter: Nelsinia Ramos, WI FACETS
Si tiene preguntas sobre el taller, o necesita asistencia, llame al 414-374-4645 o por email a nramos@wifacets.org.

[Up to Me Series: Self-Stigma and Its Impact on You](#)

Presenters: Emily Jonesberg & Sharon Dossett, Rogers InHealth

Date: March 14, 2022, 12pm-12:30 pm

[The Impact of Trauma and Stress on Young Children and How to Help](#)

Presenter: Courtney Clark, Penfield Children's Center

Date: March 16, 2022

[Special Education Discipline Requirements](#)

Presenter: Eric Kestin, DPI

Date: March 23, 2022

[IEP 5: Redacción del IEP- Parte 1](#)

Presenter: Nelsinia Ramos, WI FACETS
Date: March 24, 2022

Si tiene preguntas sobre el taller, o necesita asistencia, llame al 414-374-4645 o por email a nramos@wifacets.org.

[Forgiveness & Its Role in Promoting Positive Mental Health](#)

Presenter: Tim Markle, Forgiveness Factor

Date: March 30, 2022



Provision of Early Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [[English](#) | [Español](#)]

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has issued new guidance interpreting the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in light of the many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The “frequently asked questions” section might be of particular interest to parents.

Early Childhood Virtual Mini-conference Series-Begins March 2, 2022

Do you have a child aged birth - 5 years old? Join us on Wednesday evenings on March 2, March 9, March 16 and March 23 from 5:30pm-7:30 pm for a series of workshops. These are offered at no cost. Early Childhood is a critical time in a child's development. These mini-conferences will highlight:

- The importance of social and emotional development in young children
- Resources and activities for families to support child development and early relational health
- Early Intervention services for children who may show signs of delay in their development
- The process of transitioning from Early Intervention to preschool

Live interpretation into Spanish will be available for all sessions.

Los talleres se interpretarán simultáneamente al español.

[Register for all sessions at this link](#)

- **Also be sure to check out the [Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Fifth Edition](#) and [Social and Emotional Learning Competencies \(wi.gov\)](#)**

Research to Read

The Benefit of Inclusion in Early Childhood Classrooms

Webb, T. (2021). The Benefit of Inclusion in Early Childhood Classrooms-A Literature Review

[Read Full Article](#)

The purpose of this literature review is to demonstrate the benefits of inclusion of students with disabilities in preschool classrooms and encourage educators to embrace this practice. The reviewed research suggests when inclusion is incorporated in preschool classroom settings, it benefits all children.

The literature also addressed how preservice teachers have limited to moderate experiences with students with disabilities. These experiences play into how new teachers accept inclusion practices in their classrooms and adapting materials to meet the needs of all students. Recommendations for the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices were provided to support inclusion in preschool classrooms.

The conclusion of this review includes recommendations of developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood settings and how it can be used to make inclusive preschool classrooms a place for all students to learn and grow.

Related Information

[A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood \(DEC\) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\) on Early Childhood Inclusion](#)

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family engagement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, contact: Wendy Overturf at woverturf@wifacets.org.*



Contributions to the Newsletter

Upcoming newsletter topics: April: Autism Spectrum Disorders
May: Mental Health
June: ADD/ADHD

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to woverturf@wifacets.org. If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

***The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter
can be found online at:***

[Newsletter | Serving Groups \(servingongroups.org\)](https://www.servingongroups.org)



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