



Early Learning Digest

Research-based information provided through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Education and the Working Family Resource Center

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What is Early Childhood Screening?

Many people are confused about why many states require young children to go through early childhood screening. Screening is not a test to see whether children are ready for school, it's not an intelligence test, and it's not about how parents do their job.

The goal of screening is to identify developmental problems early on so that children can get the help they need to be successful in school and in life. Doctors, nurses and early childhood teachers determine if children are developing well in their thinking, learning and talking skills and how their large and small muscles are growing.

During this screening, a nurse or early childhood teacher will look at how your child sees, hears, moves, plays, talks, learns and behaves. They will also help connect you to early childhood programs and community services that can help your child and family.

Contact your local Minnesota school district for more information about the Early Childhood Screening program. To obtain contact information, go to "Find a Program" at www.mnparentsknow.info.

For more information on early childhood screening, visit http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/ages3_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV_000399.

Baby Talk: The Foundation for Language

A baby's first words are music to a parent's ears. But how can you tell if your child's speech and language development are on track?

In order to learn language, babies must hear the sounds of language over and over, and they must hear it sound by sound. From the moment of birth, you can encourage your child's speech and language development. Talk to your baby, parrot your baby's sounds, intonations, and facial gestures. Read to your child. Sing songs together.



While every child learns to speak at his or her own pace, general milestones can serve as a guide to normal infant development. You can view the first two year's of milestones at the Mayo Clinic website, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/infant-development/AN01026>.

Talk to your child's doctor if your child hasn't mastered most of the speech and language milestones for his or her age or you're concerned about your child's development.

In the meantime, take opportunities riding in the car, shopping or walking to sing, rhyme, and talk with your baby. Your baby is learning the sounds necessary to say words!

For more information, visit http://www.parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/Newborn/topicsAZ/PKDEV_001238.

More Minnesota parenting help is only a phone call or click away! Call the FREE Parent Warmline 612.813.6336 (Twin Cities) or 1.866.916.4316 (Greater Minnesota) anytime, even on weekends.



Parent Warmline is a FREE telephone service sponsored by Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. The Warmline provides you with person-to-person support, practical advice and resources about parent-child relationships and the behavior and development of children from infants to teens.

Fussy ("Choosy") Eaters

Does your child refuse to eat anything green or get upset when food on their plate touches other food? Do they ask for an orange or a banana today but two days ago would only eat peanut butter sandwiches?

What seems like a difficult time to you now is a step toward learning how to be independent and make decisions. Preschool children grow at a slower rate than toddlers do, and most will be big eaters again when their bodies start to need more food for energy.

Effective Ways to Handle a "Choosy" Eater:

- Trust your child's appetite rather than force a child to eat everything on the plate. Forcing a child to eat may result in overeating.
- Set reasonable time limits for the start and end of a meal and then remove the plate quietly. What's reasonable depends on each child.
- Stay positive and do not use the words "picky eater." Children believe what you say and they hear.



- Serve food plain and do not let food touch if that is important to your child.
- Offer the same food to the whole family. Plan at least one food everyone will eat.
- Substitute a similar food - if a child does not like a certain food, such as sweet potatoes, offer squash.
- Provide just two or three choices - then, let your child decide what to eat.

For more information on fussy (choosy) eaters, visit http://parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/age3_5/topicsAZ/PKDEV_000405.

Good Enough Moms™ Podcasts

Mother-daughter co-hosts Marti and Erin Erickson invite you to explore with them the many facets of motherhood in today's world – from confronting the daily joys and struggles of helping kids grow up well, to balancing work and family, to considering the big questions of how society views and values mothers and mothering. They invite you to join the conversation at www.goodenoughmoms.com.



— EVERYDAY — 

Parent to Parent

Everyday Parent to Parent Forum is a bulletin board for Minnesota parents to ask questions or to share what they have learned. Join the discussion forum at www.MNParentsKnow.info.

Test Your Knowledge of Three-Year-Olds...

- T F 1) Most three-year-olds are able to hop on one foot.
- T F 2) Three-year-olds use words to talk about feelings.
- T F 3) Three-year-olds usually separate easily from parents.
- T F 4) Most three-year-olds are able to count to ten.

To see more developmental milestones for three-year-olds go to <http://parentsknow.state.mn.us/parentsknow/ChildDevelopment/3Years/index.htm?redirectNodId=Age3-5&redirectNodId=Age3-5>.

Answers: 1) T, 2) T, 3) T, 4) F



Trusted parenting information, resources and activities to help your children grow, develop and learn from birth through high school at www.MNParentsKnow.info.