

RECOGNIZING & PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SHOWING DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

A handbook for parents, guardians, and caregivers



*discover
what's inside...*

Part of CBI Health Group

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Making a difference in the daily lives of families by providing support and treatment all under one roof.

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INTRODUCTION

Monarch House has created this handbook as a resource for parents, guardians, and caregivers of infants and young children.

At Monarch House, we understand the important role parents and caregivers have in the early detection of developmental delays. The research is clear that early intervention is beneficial. The earlier a concern is identified the sooner treatment can start.

This handbook outlines the steps you can take in identifying developmental concerns and provides guidance for next steps.

ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

DEFINITIONS

Developmental delay refers to the lack or lateness of a child meeting their early milestones, such as sitting, walking, or talking.

A developmental delay can be caused by biological or environmental factors and can improve greatly with early intervention and supports.

Motor skills are complex body movements. Gross motor movements include behaviours such as crawling, sitting, walking, and jumping which use the large muscles and body parts. Fine motor skills include behaviours such as eating, talking, picking things up, colouring, building items, and dressing and involve smaller muscles and body parts (e.g., tongue, lips, fingers, and hands).

Communication is the use and understanding of language (either through speech, gestures, or behaviour) and occurs between at least two people. Communication includes language skills such as asking questions, naming items, listening to spoken language, and having a conversation with another person.

In this handbook, difficulty or delay means that age-appropriate skills are either limited or entirely missing.



Charts of typical developmental milestones can be found at:

For toddlers at 18 months of age
(Nipissing Developmental Screen):

http://www.ndds.ca/images/stories/brochure/g_18m_eng_cdn_sample.pdf

For developmental milestones from 1 month to 6 years of age
(eNDDS, Nipissing Developmental Screen):

<http://www.endds.com/>

WHAT TO LOOK FOR: EARLY WARNING SIGNS

● Behaviour concerns:

- Easily upset when routines change
- Has difficulty paying attention to an activity compared to other children his/her age
- Picky-behaviours involving food, eating, or clothing (e.g., only eats a couple of things or won't wear specific clothing, etc)

● Difficulty with communication:

- Uses less words than other children his/her age
- Loss of speech or language skills (i.e., had words but they disappeared)
- Does not understand simple instructions without extra gestures or support
- Uses few or no gestures (e.g., pointing, waving hi/bye, etc.)

● Motor concerns:

- Difficulty playing on playground equipment
- Seems to be more clumsy than other children
- Difficulty using utensils and tools (e.g., spoon, paint brush, etc.)
- Uses one side of the body much more often than the other
- Walking and/or sitting seems awkward
- Slow to develop fluid movements for walking and running

● Self-care delays:

- Bed time and sleeping patterns are not consistent
- Feeding issues (e.g., picky eater, doesn't chew food)
- Difficulty with toilet training milestones
- Dressing issues (e.g., won't wear specific clothes or complains about the feel of the clothes)

● Difficulty with social/interaction skills:

- Avoids making eye contact
- Has difficulty looking at item when asked (i.e., joint attention)
- Does not start or continue interactions
- Does not share interests/objects with others
- Does not respond when called by name

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING CLINIC FOR CHILDREN BIRTH-6 YEARS OLD

This monthly clinic is a free of charge, drop-in service for parents to address questions and/or concerns regarding their child's development. The clinic is run by a qualified team of professionals, including behaviour analysts, speech-language pathologists, and occupational therapists who will be available to provide brief consultation in the areas of behaviour, speech, language, pre-literacy skills, and motor development. The results of the screening will be discussed with parents and are meant to indicate which areas are following typical development and others which should be monitored more closely.

Fees: Free of charge

February 25, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
March 31, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
April 28, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
May 26, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
June 30, 2016	3:30pm to 5:30pm	4 to 6 years old
July 28, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
August 25, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
September 29, 2016	3:30pm to 5:30pm	4 to 6 years old
October 27, 2016	9:30am to 11:30am	Birth to 3 years old
November 24, 2016	3:30pm to 5:30pm	4 to 6 years old

ASSESSMENT FOR DIAGNOSIS

If you have concerns about your child's early development, our Paediatrician and Neonatologist, Dr. Dockrill, can provide valuable feedback and recommendations for your child with a referral from a family physician.

STRATEGIES FOR CAREGIVERS

Supporting **communication, social, and play skills** through the use of activities that support interaction and basic communication. These activities should be fun – if you or your child are becoming frustrated, stop and try again another time.

- Building blocks, ball drop toys, push button toys – work on your child taking one turn and then you taking a turn. If it is difficult for your child to play with toys you can try playing a simple tickling or chase game: 1) Do a quick tickle or chase, 2) Stop and wait, 3) Encourage your child to communicate with you that they want you to do it again. Your child might communicate this by looking at you/making eye contact, using gestures, or saying words. Set small goals in what you expect from your child with each toy or game and then be consistent in expecting this of him/her every time.
- Play can help a child develop independence skills such as dressing, bathing, or feeding.
- Use a variety of toys to expand play skills in order to teach your child different ways to play with objects, introduce specific words about the objects or routines, and to encourage joint attention and communication. For example, play with a doll together (feed the baby, bathe the baby, and put the baby to bed) or use a pretend kitchen (take turns pretend cooking and then 'eat' what each other has made).
- Each day practice playing early finger games (e.g., This Little Piggy went to Market, Round and Round the Garden, etc.), singing songs (e.g., Baa Baa Black Sheep, Wheels on the Bus, Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Itsy Bitsy Spider, etc.), and saying nursery rhymes (e.g., Humpty Dumpty, Mary Had a Little Lamb, Jack be Nimble, etc.). Don't be afraid to help your child do the actions by moving their hands.
- Choose picture books or early children's storybooks to read with your child. This can be a great quiet activity providing shared enjoyment, the opportunity to practice turn-taking when flipping the pages, finding items on each page, naming the objects, and establishing a good bedtime routine.

Helpful tips:

- Choose activities and toys that allow turn taking
- Set small goals to work towards with your child
- Work play into daily routines such as dressing, bathing, and feeding to make them fun
- Expand play skills to help speech, language, and communication develop
- Engage in early finger play games, songs, and nursery rhymes
- Read to your child daily

INDEPENDENCE SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR

Supporting **Positive Behaviours & Independence Skills** through the use of structured environments, communication, and play. It is important that these activities are fun – if you or your child are becoming frustrated stop and try again another time.

- We can set our children up for success by keeping strong, predictable routines; children thrive in a structured environment. Develop routines for daily events such as meal times and bedtimes. This will help your child better understand what is expected of them (e.g., at meals we eat at the table and use utensils).
- Providing an environment free of distractions will help your child be more successful in completing tasks independently. By clearing toys and other distractions your child will be able to focus their attention more easily on your instructions and/or the task at hand.
- Look for the good behaviours you see your child doing and let him/her know what a terrific job he/she is doing. It is useful to teach appropriate behaviour rather than paying attention to the problem behaviour. For example, if your child is playing nicely with a little friend, try to use preventative strategies instead of waiting until a problem occurs by giving lots of praise and encouragement for playing so nicely together, sharing, and being a good friend.
- Children often use problem behaviour as a way of communicating their wants and needs. It is important to model the correct language for each specific situation as a way of increasing your child's communication skills.
- Exposing your child to different environments is very important to their development. Allow them to practice on different equipment at the park or gym to work on strengthening gross motor skills.
- When teaching your child life skills (i.e., putting on shoes, using a spoon, etc.), find time when you are not rushed so that you can allow the extra time needed to practice these skills.

Helpful tips:

- Play with your child and have fun
- Talk to your child while playing by labelling what you are doing
- Simplify your language to be a little ahead of where your child is in their development
- Set-up routines and structure for your child to make things more predictable
- Develop good habits by structuring nap times and bedtime - use consistent routines
- Model the behaviours you would like to see your child exhibit
- Catch your child being good – praise them for the behaviours you would like to see and ignore problem behaviours.

MONARCH HOUSE IS HERE TO HELP

Monarch House understands that supports and resources are important to parents and guardians of infants and young children. Please see below for a list of resources both online and in the community to assist you in accessing services for your child. There are many programs and professionals in your community to support your child and family. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's development, please do not hesitate to contact us at Monarch House. We are here to help.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS & RESOURCES

Ministry of Community and Social Services (Ontario) funding

- *Special Services At Home (SSAH)*
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/specialneeds/specialservices/index.aspx>
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/specialneeds/specialservices/SSAHApplication.pdf>
- *Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)*
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/specialneeds/disabilities/index.aspx>

Ministry of Health (Ontario) funding

- *Community Care Access Centres (CCAC)*
<http://healthcareathome.ca/mh/en/Getting-Care/Getting-Care-at-School/School-Health-Support-Services>

Local Programs/Agencies

- *Central West Specialized Developmental Services*
<http://www.cwsds.ca/>
- *ErinoakKids*
<http://www.erinoakkids.ca/>
- *Easter Seals*
<http://www.easterseals.org/services/>
- *March of Dimes*
<http://www.marchofdimes.ca/EN/programs/Pages/default.aspx>
- *Community Living Oakville* <http://www.oakcl.org/>
- *Community Living Mississauga* <http://www.clmiss.ca/>
- *Community Living Burlington* <http://www.clburlington.ca>
- *Community Living North Halton* <http://clnh.on.ca/>

Private Funding Sources for Treatment/Therapy Services

- *Jennifer Ashleigh Foundation*
<http://jenash.org/get-help-now/>
- *President's Choice Children's Charity*
http://www.presidentschoice.ca/en_CA/community/pccc/apply-for-funding.html

*Making a difference in the daily lives of
families by providing support and treatment
all under one roof.*



Part of CBI Health Group

OAKVILLE

1405 North Service Rd. East, Unit 103

Oakville ON, L6H 1A7

905.849.7993

info@monarchhouse.ca

www.monarchhouse.ca