

Raising a Healthy Child:

A Family's Guide to Local Resources
for Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers



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Dear Families,

The Arc of Evansville, Deaconess Women's Hospital, and St. Mary's Hospital for Women & Children have partnered with the Welborn Baptist Foundation to develop and distribute a resource guide for families.

This resource guide, "Raising a Healthy Child: A Family's Guide to Local Resources for Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers," provides information to families about a variety of resources for parents of infants and young children that are available in the local community. In addition, the resource guide includes information about state and national organizations that can be helpful to families. Also included are resources that can be accessed online at any time using the Internet, as well as general guidance on common questions and concerns parents often have after they leave the hospital.

The resource guide has a great deal of information about services and supports for children with developmental disabilities or developmental delays. While many families will never need these types of services, the resource guide will be distributed to all families who deliver a baby at Deaconess Women's Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital for Women & Children between April 2014 and September 2014. **Receiving this resource guide does not mean your child has a disability or is expected to have a developmental delay. In fact, we believe all families, even those with a typically developing child, will find helpful information in the resource guide.**

The Welborn Baptist Foundation is generously supporting this resource guide with a grant to Evansville ARC. The resource guide is part of the Welborn Baptist Foundation's initiative to support early childhood development.

Families who receive this resource guide will be asked to participate in three brief surveys over the next nine months to give feedback on the value of the information contained in the resource guide. Your feedback will provide critical information that will help us identify changes that need to be made to make the resource guide more useful to families and will help us determine if the resource guide should continue to be distributed.

We hope you find this resource guide, "Raising a Healthy Child: A Family's Guide to Local Resources for Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers," helpful and look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,



Deidra R. Conner
President
The Arc of Evansville



Christina Ryan
CEO
Deaconess Women's Hospital



Keith Jewell
President
St. Mary's Health

1. Where do I go to find more about how I can make sure my baby gets the care and support he/she needs to grow and develop to the best of his/her ability?



Your baby's doctor is a great resource for you and your baby - and as a general rule, your baby's doctor is the first person to contact when you have questions about your baby's health and development. Do not be afraid to ask for a referral to another specialist or consult some of the resources provided in this packet.

Health Care Services – Your baby's doctor can provide well-baby visits, information about developmental milestones, nutrition and feeding, and also refer you to other healthcare providers. Ask your baby's doctor about his/her experience with children with disabilities and his/her opinion of supporting children with disabilities.

In addition, there are many State and Federal programs and services for children and adults with disabilities, and services are available right away – even for infants.

Early Intervention – Early intervention services are very important for a baby born with or later diagnosed with a disability or a developmental delay. Research has shown that early intervention services help infants and toddlers learn critical skills. With early intervention services, children who have disabilities or developmental delays may “catch-up” in their development and be on-track with their “typically developing” peers by the time they reach school-age.

First Steps is a program offered by the State of Indiana that provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or for children who are “at risk” of delays in the future because of their diagnoses. Services can begin at birth and can continue until the child's third birthday. The fees for First Steps services vary depending on your income and family size.

Examples of the types of early intervention services your child may receive from First Steps include: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Communication Training (for children with hearing impairment), Developmental Therapy, Family Education & Training, Vision Services, Nutrition Services, and a variety of other services.

For more information about First Steps:

- Call the Southern Indiana First Steps System Point of Entry at 1-800-941-2450
- Visit <http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs> and locate “First Steps” under “Programs & Services”

Families may request a screening to determine if their child qualifies for early intervention services; however, a physician's referral is required for physical therapy.

Note: See information provided on page 12 regarding services available after your child reaches his/her third birthday.

Health Related Services – Several programs are offered in the State of Indiana to help children with severe or chronic medical conditions. Each program has its own criteria to qualify for services. These include:

- **Children’s Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)** - a program to help Indiana children ages birth to 21 years old with severe chronic medical conditions. CSHCS helps pay for treatment related to the child’s condition. Autism is also a condition that may qualify a child for services from CSHCS. Families who apply for CSHCS must also apply for Medicaid; however, they do not need to be eligible for Medicaid to be eligible for CSHCS. Families must meet income guidelines to qualify for this program. Call 1-800-475-1355 for more information.
- **Hoosier Healthwise for Children** - a health insurance program offered by the State of Indiana for children ages birth through age 18 years old. Families must meet income and resource guidelines to qualify for this program. Call 1-800-889-9949 for more information.
- **Medicaid** - provides health insurance to eligible persons with a disability who meet income and asset eligibility requirements. You can learn more about the Medicaid program and the eligibility requirements by calling or visiting the local office of the Division of Family Resources.

Vanderburgh County Division of Family Resources

711 John Street, Suite C
Evansville, IN 47713
Telephone/Fax Number: 1-800-403-0864

Warrick County Division of Family Resources

911 W. Main Street
Boonville, IN 47601
Telephone/Fax Number: 1-800-403-0864

Posey County Division of Family Resources

1809 N. Main Street, Suite B
Mount Vernon, IN 47620
Telephone/Fax Number: 1-800-403-0864



Social Security – Children younger than age 18 who have disabilities may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) from the Social Security Administration. Children must meet the Social Security’s definition of “disability.” In addition, the child’s income and resources must fall within the Social Security eligibility limits. Income and resources of family members living in the child’s household are also considered to determine SSI eligibility for children. For disability purposes in the SSI program, a child becomes an adult at age 18 and different rules are utilized when deciding if an adult qualifies for SSI disability payments. In addition, adults who have a disability that began before they became 22 years old may qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). You can learn more about SSI and SSDI by calling or visiting the local Social Security Office.

Social Security Administration
2300 N. Green River Road
Evansville, IN 47715
Telephone: 1-877-768-5679
TTY: 1-812-424-7894
www.ssa.gov/disability

Child Care Providers - Even though Indiana state law requires all licensed child care providers to accommodate children with disabilities, you will want to be careful to select the right caregiver, making certain your child’s needs will be met. As you visit child care providers, ask questions about how much experience the program has serving children with disabilities, and what types of accommodations they have made for children with disabilities. As a parent of a child with disabilities, you will want to make certain you are comfortable with your child care provider and you will want to be sure the child care provider is comfortable working with you and your child.

Some child care providers specialize in serving children with disabilities and have a long history in working with children with disabilities. These child care facilities provide fully inclusive programs where children with and without disabilities are learning and playing together in the same classrooms. Two child care facilities in Southwest Indiana specialize in serving children with special needs in a fully inclusive environment. They are:

- **The Child Life Center** – a program of The Arc of Evansville, accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a state-licensed child care facility with a Level 4 Paths to Quality Rating (a quality rating and improvement system for child care in the State of Indiana, with Level 4 being the highest rating), located at 615 W. Virginia Street, Evansville, IN. Call 812-428-5433.
- **Milestones Child Development Center** – a state-licensed facility with a Level 3 Paths to Quality Rating by the State of Indiana. Located at 621 S. Cullen Avenue, Evansville, IN. Call 812-474-2244.



For assistance in finding child care providers, contact 4C of Southern Indiana – a non-profit child care resource and referral agency serving parents, children and child care providers in the Tri-State. 4C provides free referrals to legally operating child care providers, parenting classes, a lending library, and child development training and consultation. Call 812-423-4008 or go to www.child-care.org.

If you need help paying for child care, contact 4C of Southern Indiana to learn more about the eligibility requirements to receive financial assistance for child care. Call 812-423-4008 or go to www.child-care.org.

More information about the Paths to Quality Rating System and participating child care providers can be found at: www.childcareindiana.org.

More information about licensed child care providers can be found at: www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/.

2. What does the phrase “developmental milestones” mean and how can I learn more about this?



Developmental milestones are indicators of progress for your baby. The milestones are things that a child will “typically do” at certain ages. Keep in mind, every baby is unique and no two children develop exactly the same way at exactly the same time, but it is important for families to be aware of some of the basic developmental milestones to ensure your child is progressing at a reasonable pace. If you have been told your baby will have developmental delays or your baby may be at risk for developmental delays, it is important for you to look for developmental milestones and share information with your baby’s doctor about any delays you identify. This will allow you and your baby’s doctor to work together to get the resources your baby needs to continue to grow and develop. **Remember that you are the one who spends the most time with your baby and if you sense a problem, you have every reason to discuss your concerns with your baby’s doctor.**

Examples of Developmental Milestones:

- Birth to 3 months Babbles or coos when talked to
- 4 to 6 months Bears weight on legs
- 7 to 9 months Begins sitting up by self

Note: Additional Developmental Milestones can be found on page 14.

If you would like to participate in a developmental screening for your child, please contact The Arc of Evansville (812-428-5433) for a copy of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. This screening tool is designed to identify developmental delays as soon as possible so that parents may access services and resources for their child.

3. Why do some children have developmental delays?

Birth defects, genetic disorders, and developmental disabilities are common reasons why a child may be born with or later diagnosed with a disability or developmental delay. Infants and toddlers under three years of age who have disabilities require extra help (early intervention services) because:

- The child is experiencing a developmental delay in one or more of the following areas: cognitive development; physical development (including vision and hearing); communication development; and/or social or emotional development. Examples include: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Learning Disabilities, Vision Impairment, Hearing Impairment, and Cerebral Palsy; or
- The child has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that will probably result in a developmental delay and includes conditions such as: chromosomal abnormalities; genetic or congenital disorders; sensory impairments; inborn errors of metabolism; disorders affecting the development of the nervous system; congenital infections; severe attachment disorders; and/or disorders caused by prenatal exposure to toxic substances, including Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Examples include: Cleft Palate, Down Syndrome, and Spina Bifida.

Sources include: *The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities and Center for Disease Control & Prevention* www.cdc.gov



4. At this point, you may be asking yourself what you can do at home to help your child's growth and development. Activities that most encourage a child's brain to grow are those that he/she enjoys. Here are five key recommendations for new parents that will be beneficial to you and your child:

1. Understand and respond to your baby's needs

- You cannot spoil a baby, so go to him/her when he/she fusses or cries. By responding to your baby's cues, you teach him/her that you care about his/her needs and that he/she can trust you to read his/her signals. Ignoring cries can do harm by increasing stress levels. Remember to be patient. This is a learning process for both you and your baby.

2. Take care of yourself so you can care for your child

- Becoming a parent can be overwhelming and exhausting. Unless you take care of yourself, you will have a hard time taking care of your child. For this reason, it is important to seek support from friends, family or community organizations. Don't be afraid to ask for help for you or your child.

3. Talk, sing, read and write with your child

- Talk to your child about what you see and what you are doing. Listen as he/she communicates with coos, smiles, laughs and cries. Let your child hear your voice as much as possible.
- The newborn brain is especially interested in sound. You can form a deep emotional connection between you and your child by simply sharing the sound of your voice with him/her. Sounds are important to a newborn because they are the building blocks of speech and language.
- Provide your child picture books with simple objects or faces. Give him/her board or cloth books with pages that turn easily and won't tear. Offer him/her books with soft, rough or bumpy textures to touch and feel. Be sure to read to your child every day. Read books, labels and signs to help your child become familiar with sounds and letters.
- Play music and watch as your child bounces and babbles to the beat. Sing favorite songs and nursery rhymes over and over again.
- Encourage your child to hold soft toys or rattles, which help develop grasping skills. Play with puzzles that have oversized numbers and letters.
- Provide your child with opportunities to explore writing utensils such as crayons, chalk, pencils and markers. These experiences will assist in developing proper grasp and formation of shapes and symbols.

4. Create a predictable world for your child

- Providing routines and expected responses give your child a sense that the world is a trustworthy place. It also teaches him/her that he/she can depend on you. If your child understands this, he/she will spend less energy fussing over his/her needs and more time learning. Routines can include basic activities like feeding and bathing. Be sure to incorporate talking, singing and reading into these routine activities.

5. Provide a warm and loving environment

- Helping your child feel safe and secure is the key to encouraging growth and development. A child who feels loved will have an easier time learning about the world around him/her. Therefore, make sure you interact with your child, providing love and affection.

Sources include: *United Way of Southwestern Indiana – Early Childhood Development Coalition* and www.bornlearning.org

Additional resources you may find helpful:

www.earlychildhoodswi.org

www.zerotothree.org

<http://families.naeyc.org>



5. Where can I go to find other families who have children with special needs or people who can help me connect with families who know what I'm going through and might be able to give me advice and support?



The Arc is an organization that has been in existence for 60 years and has 700 chapters across the United States providing services and supports to children and adults with disabilities (and supports for their families).

The Arc of Evansville (previously known as Evansville ARC) began in 1954 and provides direct services to children and adults with disabilities and also assists families with finding the resources they need - including connecting families with one another. The Arc of Evansville serves children as young as 6 weeks old and the oldest client is over 80 years old.

Contact The Arc of Evansville by phone at 812-428-5433 or via the "Contact Us" link on The Arc of Evansville's website: www.arcofevansville.org for more information about programs and services or for referrals to other families who are willing to be a resource to you and your family.

Several national, state and local advocacy and support organizations exist for individuals with disabilities and their families. Examples include:

- The Arc of Indiana – www.arcind.org; 1-800-382-9100
- The Arc of Evansville – www.arcofevansville.org; 812-428-5433
- Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center - www.in-sw.easterseals.com; 812-479-1411
- United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) - www.ucp.org; 1-800-872-5827
- S.M.I.L.E. on Down Syndrome (Evansville based); www.smileondownsyndrome.org; 812-449-4118
- Autism Society (National) - www.autism-society.org; 1-800-328-8476
- Autism Society of Indiana – www.inautism.org; 1-800-609-8449

6. Someone told me I need to sign up for the Medicaid Waiver Program for funding for my child with a disability. What is the Medicaid Waiver and how important is it for me to sign up for the Medicaid Waiver right now?

Medicaid is a jointly-funded, Federal and State Health Insurance Program for low-income people; however, the Medicaid Waiver Program is a special form of Medicaid in the State of Indiana. It allows Medicaid to pay for supports that allow adults with disabilities to live in their own homes or in community-based residential programs, and also provides services that support families caring for loved ones with disabilities who live at home. Family income and resources are not counted when determining Medicaid eligibility for children receiving Medicaid Waiver services.

In most cases, there are long waiting lists to get a Medicaid Waiver. It is important to apply and get on the waiting list as soon as possible. In recent years, close to 20,000 individuals in Indiana have been on the Medicaid Waiver Program waiting list and it has taken 10 years or longer before a Medicaid Waiver is awarded to an individual on the waiting list. Because of this lengthy waiting list, we encourage all parents of children with disabilities to sign up for the Medicaid Waiver immediately to ensure a Medicaid Waiver is available for your child when he/she reaches their teen years.

In addition, it is important to contact the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities in your region annually to verify that your child is still on the Medicaid Waiver Program waiting list.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities

District 7 which includes Vanderburgh, Warrick, Posey, Daviess, Dubois, Gibson, Greene, Knox, Martin, Perry, Pike, and Spencer Counties

700 E. Walnut Street
Evansville, IN 47713-2561
Phone: 812-423-8449
Toll Free: 1-877-218-3528
Toll Free Fax: 1-855-525-9375



7. If First Steps Services/Early Intervention Services end on my baby's third birthday, what happens next? Are other services available to me?

Public schools are required to provide Early Childhood Special Education, at no cost to the family, to an eligible child with a disability beginning on the day of the child's third birthday.

If you have any concerns about your child's development, or know that your child has a disability, call your local public school and ask that your child be evaluated for Early Childhood Special Education.

If your child has been receiving early intervention services through First Steps, a plan should be put in place to help the child transition from First Steps to Early Childhood Special Education before his or her third birthday.

A child must be referred for an initial evaluation and found eligible for services before special education services can be provided.

A child may be eligible for Early Childhood Special Education if he or she has one or more of the following disabilities:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Cognitive Disability
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Language or Speech Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Other Health Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment



8. Are there other resources that might be helpful to me or my child?

Yes, there are many other resources available online, in the local community, and in the State of Indiana.

Examples include:

- **First Call for Help:** 2-1-1 – a community information & referral service of United Way of Southwestern Indiana that provides referrals to a wide-variety of community-based organizations based on the needs of the individual caller. Call 211; 1-800-639-9271 or go to www.unitedwayswi.org.
- **WIC** – serves pregnant, breast feeding, and postpartum women as well as infants and children up to age five. Services include nutrition education, feeding tips, breast feeding support, dietary assessments, vouchers for supplemental foods and formula. Participants must meet income and nutrition guidelines. WIC vouchers can be used at local grocery stores for cereal, juice, milk, cheese, eggs, peanut butter, and formula. Call 812-435-5701.
- **Bright Futures** – a national health promotion and disease prevention initiative that addresses children’s health needs. Bright Futures materials are available to health care professionals as well as family members. Information can be found on the Bright Futures website at <http://brightfutures.aap.org>.
- **Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC)** – provides information on disabilities – including early intervention, referral information, individual and family perspectives. Books, videos, and other materials are sent to families at no cost to the families. IIDC is affiliated with Indiana University. Call 1-800-437-7924 or go to www.iidc.indiana.edu.
- **About Special Kids (ASK)** – provides a place for families and professionals in Indiana to go to ask questions about children with special needs and to access information and resources about a variety of topics such as health insurance, special education, community resources, and medical homes. Call 1-800-964-4746 or go to www.aboutspecialkids.org.
- **Catholic Charities** – provides individual, marital, family, pregnancy, and school counseling. Call 812-423-5456 or go to www.charitiesevv.org.
- **Lampion Center** – provides counseling for children, adults, and families who are dealing with grief or loss or other challenges. Call 812-471-1776 or go to www.lampioncenter.com.

At Birth

Diagnosed physical or mental condition. The following are conditions that have a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay:

- (1) Chromosomal abnormalities or genetic disorder
- (2) Neurological disorder
- (3) Congenital malformation
- (4) Sensory impairment, including vision and hearing
- (5) Severe toxic exposure, including prenatal
- (6) Low birth weight (less than 1500 grams)
- (7) Neurological abnormalities in the newborn period

Birth - 3 months

- Moving arms & legs easily
- Holding head erect at 3 months
- Hands open more and reaching at 3 months
- Crying time decreases
- Looking at human face and environment by 3 months
- Begins smiling
- Babbles or coos when talked to
- Mouths hands
- Molds body and cuddles
- Draws attention in distress
- Responds to sounds

4 - 6 months

- Good head control in a variety of positions
- Prop on elbows when on belly
- Bears weight on legs
- Beginning to roll well
- Using both hands equally well
- Reaches and grasps toys well, mouths hands and toys
- Shakes rattles
- Likes rocking, swinging, has regular sleep patterns. Less colic (cranky) at this time
- Visually watches toys as they move
- Turns head to noise
- Laughs aloud and squeals
- Can find an object that has been hidden
- Enjoys frolic and social play

7 - 9 months

- On belly pushes up on arms
- Begins sitting up by self
- Pushes self into crawling
- Transfers toys from hand to hand
- Holding small items with finger-thumb opposition
- Holds a toy in each hand and bangs them together
- Turns head when name is called
- Shakes head "No - No"
- Says "da - da" "ba - ba" and "ma - ma"
- Eating stage 1 and 2 foods
- Vocalizes to mirror
- Imitates familiar gestures
- Plays with a toy for several minutes
- Stranger anxiety

10 – 12 months

- Crawling
- Pulling to stand
- Walking holding onto furniture
- Picking up small items using index finger & thumb & putting in mouth
- Eats stage 3 foods, crackers and soft foods
- Beginning to drink from sippy cup
- Points with index finger
- Beginning to place rings on stacker
- Uncovers hidden toy
- Places blocks into a container
- Stops activity when told “No No”
- Calls parent “ma ma” or “da da”
- Jabbers expressively
- 1 word other than ma ma or da da
- Follow a simple command like “Give me.”
- Holds more than 2 objects in a hand
- Explores toys to see how they work
- Repeats performance laughed at
- Imitates new gestures
- Moves to rhythms
- Simple play

13 – 15 months

- Walking
- Crawls up steps
- Stacking 2 or 3 blocks
- Scribbles with crayons
- Looks at pictures and books
- Points to get an object
- Looks when asked “Where’s the ball?”
- Imitates simple sounds
- Stranger anxiety
- Finger feeding soft table foods
- Holding and drinking from sippy cup
- Has 8 to 10 words
- Resists adult control
- Plays ball

16 – 18 months

- Walks upstairs
- Runs
- Throws ball overhand
- Scribbles well with crayon
- Stacks blocks 3 to 4 high
- Pretend play
- Points to 5 named body parts
- Clearly says 15 to 18 words
- Begins to use a spoon – very messy & will resort back to fingers
- Places only food in mouth
- Imitates adults – cleaning, etc.
- Picks up toys
- Temper tantrums are common
- Uses objects correctly – cup, spoon, brush
- Points to 5 to 7 pictures & matches objects
- Knows circle and square
- Understands most nouns
- Hugs and kisses parents
- Imitates adult behaviors



19 - 21 months

- Carries toys when walking
- Creeps backward down stairs
- Completes 3 piece shape sorter
- Speaks 20 – 25 words
- Names several familiar objects
- Follows 2 part familiar commands
- Helping with dressing/undressing
- Eating table food or toddler food
- Plays beside other children
- Matches sounds to animals
- Enjoys rough and tumble play

22 – 24 months

- Jumps in place
- Jumps off bottom step
- Completes 3 piece puzzle
- Stacks blocks 6 high
- Refers to self by name
- Has 50 words
- Spoon feeding with less mess
- Pretend play with dolls
- Initiates own play activities
- Shows a variety of emotions
- Desires control of others
- Comforts others in distress
- Identifies 6 body parts
- Sorts objects
- Remembers where objects belong

25 - 28 months

- Imitates scribbles
- Turns pages in a book one at a time
- Imitates lining up blocks for a train
- Has a vocabulary of 200 words
- Putting 2 words together
- Understands size differences
- Understands 2 prepositions “on” “in”
- Takes off clothes
- Identifies clothing for occasions
- Frustration tantrums peak
- Values own property
- Pretend play with not real props

28 – 33 months

- Stacks blocks 8 high
- Imitates making a cross
- Gives full name
- Matches shapes and colors
- Listens to stories
- Possessive of loved ones
- Aware of sex differences

34 – 36 months

- Walks up and down stairs upright
- Balances on 1 foot
- Copies a circle
- Cuts/snips with scissors
- Uses 3 word phrases
- Dresses self
- Plays group games
- Matches similar pictures
- Sorts shapes
- Plays house
- Identifies body parts with function
- Separates easily
- Obeys simple rules



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