

This brochure tells you how you can help identify children and youth with special needs. If you are concerned about a child or youth you know, here are three options:

1. Contact your local school district's special education coordinator.

2. Fill out the contact card on the opposite side of this brochure and mail it to the Illinois State Board of Education.

3. Call 1-800-323-GROW.

Important Phone Numbers

For more information or to refer a child or youth whom you feel may need special help, please call:

1-800-323-GROW

(1-800-323-4769)

Voice and TTY

For child development articles, books, videos and other materials in English and Spanish, please call:

Illinois Early Childhood Intervention Clearinghouse
1-800-852-4302

*The Sooner We Start,
The Farther They'll Go*



Look What I Can Do

Early Intervention For Young Children With Developmental Delays

This publication is part of Look What I Can Do, a public awareness campaign of the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education

To order Public Awareness materials
call 1-800-851-6197



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**Helping Children and Youth
with Special Needs**

Linking families
to special services

The importance of identifying children with special needs

Families say that

no two children are the same -- each one is unique. That's exactly right. And that's why it's sometimes hard to tell when you should be concerned about differences between children or youth of the same age. Most of the time, these differences are nothing to worry about. But for one child in 10, the differences can be related to a special need. That's when schools and early intervention programs can help. *The Sooner We Start, The Farther They'll Go.*

Early intervention and special education programs can identify children and youth ages birth to 21 years who are "not exactly the same" as others of the same age. These children may have difficulty walking, talking or hearing. Or, there may be behavioral issues to address. Whatever the concern, the earlier a special need is identified, the better the chance that a child or youth can be helped.

To identify children who may have special learning needs, the Illinois State Board of Education, together with the public schools and Early Intervention Local Interagency Councils throughout the state, sponsors a free service that

links children and youth and their families to early intervention and special education programs and services in Illinois.

How to Identify a Child with Special Needs

If you think a child or youth you know needs special help, please call 1-800-323-GROW. Families, health care providers, child care professionals, teachers, friends...anyone who is concerned about a child's growth and development is urged to call. You can also contact the local school district and ask for the special education coordinator or mail the "contact card" attached to this brochure to the Illinois State Board of Education. Free testing can be arranged to determine if there is a need for special services.

If a Special Need is Identified

If a developmental or special learning need exists, the family, along with an early intervention service provider or local public school district, will design a program that is best for the child or youth. This may include an Early Intervention Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that outlines the supports and services a family will receive, an Individual Education Program (IEP) specifically for the child or other recommended action. No matter what course is taken, the family will have a central role in the decision-making process and will be put in touch with specialists and educators who can help the family make a difference for their child.

Contact Card

I think _____ needs special help.

He/she is _____ years old.

I am concerned about this child because: _____

Adult(s) with whom the child or youth lives: _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number () _____

Language spoken at home _____

Your name _____

Phone number () _____

Your relationship to the child or youth _____

Mail card to: Illinois State Board of Education,
100 North First Street, Springfield, IL 62777