



For Child Care Providers:

Approaching Families When You Have Concerns about Child Development

Child Care providers have opportunities to observe children over a period of time in a variety of activities. Sometimes a provider is the first to suspect that a child may be delayed in development and may need extra help. What should a provider do if there are concerns about a child's development?

Here are some suggestions:

1. Learning more about child development and about developmental milestones will help you observe children. You can obtain free Developmental Brochures that have information on milestones for children by visiting www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis and to find your local Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program call 1-800-628-5115.
2. Observe the child carefully and write down notes (documentation) on what you see and hear. Specific examples of the child's activities are useful in identifying areas of development that may need attention.
3. Listen to parents. Parents may also have concerns. As you listen to parents they may describe a frustrating morning or talk about a problem they are having. It is important to build communication with parents over time.
4. Talk to the center director, provide your documentation, and ask for input. The director can observe the child and collect additional information.
5. With the director, arrange a meeting time with parents when no children are present and when the parents are not rushed. Tell the parents you want to discuss their child's development with them.
6. Start the meeting by discussing positive things about the child. Share your specific concerns with the parents and ask what they are seeing at home. Discuss strategies used at the center to help the child and ask for additional ideas from the parents.
7. Explain the child care program would benefit by assistance from an outside source regarding how to best meet the child's needs.
8. Share information about available services. Help parents call ECI if the child is under three. For children over three, help parents call the local school district. Encourage parents to discuss concerns with the child's doctor.
9. If parents are not ready to call ECI or the school district, be patient, keep documenting and meet again in a month.

ECI Program Name & Telephone: _____

ECI Contact Name: _____