



# The "Red Flag"

## Early Intervention Referral Guide for children 0 – 5 years



### How to use this resource:

This resource is a tool to help you to determine whether a child may have developmental delays. It will allow you to refer early before the child begins to struggle to achieve tasks usually managed by children of the same age.

**Step 1** - Find the child's age across the top of the table below.

**Step 2** - Read through the list and identify if the child is demonstrating any of the Red Flags at their age level.

**Step 3** - If the child is between age levels (e.g. 2 yrs 5 months) check the lower age level for Red Flags (ie. 2 yrs)

### When to be concerned?

One or more Red Flags (in any area) is a sign of delayed development.

#### Who to go to?

##### Parents:

If you have concerns about your child's development, please contact your Family Doctor or Child Health Nurse (1300 366 039).

##### Health Professionals:

If you have screened and identified any Red Flags, please contact your local Child Development Service.

### Who helps with these Red Flags?

Children aged 0 – 5 years who have a developmental concern, may benefit from the services from any of the following:

- Paediatrician
- Speech Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Social Worker
- Psychologist.

### Local Child Development Service

Child Development Program

Ph: 3335 8888 Fax: 3335 8869

**Please note:** Waiting times apply and can be indicated at Intake.

**Parents** - It is advisable to call your Doctor or Child Health Nurse before calling this number.



Developed by  
**Child Development Program**  
**Children's Health Services**  
 in conjunction with GP partners

## RED FLAG REFERRAL GUIDELINES

	6 MONTHS	9 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	2 YEARS	3 YEARS	4 YEARS	5 YEARS	RED FLAGS AT ANY AGE
<p><b>Social/Emotional</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not smile or squeal in response to people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not sharing enjoyment with others using eye contact or facial expression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not notice someone new</li> <li>Does not play early turn taking games (e.g. peekaboo, rolling a ball)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lacks interest in playing and interacting with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When playing with toys tends to bang, drop, or throw them rather than use them for their purpose (e.g. cuddle doll, build blocks)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No interest in pretend play or other children</li> <li>Difficulties in noticing and understanding feelings in themselves and others (e.g. happy, sad)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unwilling/ unable to play cooperatively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play is different than their friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not achieving indicated developmental milestones</li> <li>Strong parent concerns</li> </ul>
<b>LACK OF OR LIMITED EYE CONTACT</b>									
<p><b>Communication</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not starting to babble (e.g. adah; oogoo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No gestures (e.g. pointing, showing, waving)</li> <li>Not using 2 part babble (e.g. gaga, arma)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No babbled phrases that sound like talking</li> <li>No response to familiar words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No clear words</li> <li>Cannot understand short requests eg. 'Where is the ball?'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not have at least 50 words</li> <li>Not putting words together eg. 'push car'</li> <li>Most of what is said is not easily understood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech difficult to understand</li> <li>Not using simple sentences e.g. big car go</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech difficult to understand</li> <li>Unable to follow directions with 2 steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty telling a parent what is wrong</li> <li>Cannot answer questions in a simple conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant loss of skills</li> <li>Lack of response to sound or visual stimuli</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fine Motor and Cognition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not reaching for and holding (grasping) toys</li> <li>Hands frequently clenched</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to hold and/or release toys</li> <li>Cannot move toy from one hand to another</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Majority of nutrition still liquid/puree</li> <li>Cannot chew solid food</li> <li>Unable to pick up small items using index finger and thumb</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not holding or scribbling with a crayon</li> <li>Does not attempt to tower blocks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No interest in self care skills eg. feeding, dressing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty helping with self care skills (e.g. feeding, dressing)</li> <li>Difficulty manipulating small objects e.g. threading beads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not toilet trained by day</li> <li>Unable to draw lines and circles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns from teacher about school readiness</li> <li>Not independent with eating and dressing</li> <li>Cannot draw simple pictures (e.g. stick person)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor interaction with adults or other children</li> <li>Difference between right and left sides of body in strength, movement or tone</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gross Motor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not rolling</li> <li>Not holding head and shoulders up when on tummy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not sitting without support</li> <li>Not moving eg. creeping or crawling motion</li> <li>Does not take weight well on legs when held by an adult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not crawling or bottom shuffling</li> <li>Not pulling to stand</li> <li>Not standing holding on to furniture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not attempting to walk without support</li> <li>Not standing alone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to run</li> <li>Unable to use stairs holding on</li> <li>Unable to throw a ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not running well</li> <li>Cannot walk up and down stairs</li> <li>Cannot kick or throw a ball</li> <li>Cannot jump with 2 feet together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot pedal a tricycle</li> <li>Cannot catch, throw or kick a ball</li> <li>Cannot balance well standing on one leg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awkward when walking, running, climbing and using stairs</li> <li>Ball skills are very different to their peers</li> <li>Unable to hop 5 times on each foot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loose and floppy movements (low tone) or stiff and tense (high tone)</li> </ul>

Parents - If there are Red Flags call your Family Doctor or Child Health Nurse

Professionals - REFER EARLY – DO NOT WAIT

Last revised April 2010.

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