Strategies 2.0

When parents have a strong understanding of how their children will grow and develop over time and are able to implement positive parenting practices to help support their child's development, they are more equipped to respond effectively to their children's needs. Current research emphasizes that a parent's ability to consistently meet a child's needs at each stage of development is crucial to foster a secure parent-child attachment. This bond allows children to develop trust, self-confidence, and feelings of safety that in turn support their child's future well-being (CSSP, n.d.).

It is unrealistic to expect a parent to know all there is to know about parenting. Thus, all parents could benefit from increased knowledge and up-to-date information on:
- Children's developmental phases (emotional, social, cognitive, linguistic, and physical)
- Circumstances that affect healthy development
- Signs of developmental delay or difference
- Cultural factors impacting parenting strategies
- Disciplinary practices that positively shape children's behavior (CSSP, n.d.)

MiLESTONES AT 4 MONTHS
- ☑ Begins to babble
- ☑ Responds to affection

MiLESTONES AT 6 MONTHS
- ☑ Likes to play with others
- ☑ Responds to own name

MiLESTONES AT 9 MONTHS
- ☑ Has favorite toys
- ☑ Understands "no"

MiLESTONES AT 1 YEAR
- ☑ Tries to say words you say
- ☑ Waves "bye-bye"

MiLESTONES AT 2 YEARS
- ☑ Begins to run
- ☑ Begins to sort shapes, colors

MiLESTONES AT 3 YEARS
- ☑ Knows name and age
- ☑ Climbs and runs well

Get free milestone checklists for these ages and more at **www.cdc.gov/Milestones** or by calling 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

Learn the Signs. Act Early. Developed in partnership by the University of Missouri and the US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Enhanced knowledge of parenting strategies and child development is especially important as a protective factor against child abuse and neglect. Understanding what children can and cannot reasonably do at various developmental stages, and being able to effectively respond to and guide appropriate behavior, can decrease the likelihood of unrealistic expectations, frustration, and overwhelm among parents, all of which may heighten child maltreatment risk (McMillin et al., 2016).

One recent study found that a low level of child development knowledge among mothers was associated with low parental empathy, or difficulty understanding children's feelings and needs that in turn limits nurturing behaviors (McMillin et al., 2016). Mothers with lower knowledge in this area were also more likely to engage in family role reversal, or expecting children to enact parenting behaviors,

such as providing emotional support, before they were developmentally able to do so, resulting in impatience and reactivity when these expectations were not met (McMillin et al., 2016).

A recent meta-analysis found that various primary and secondary interventions focused on parental education and skills training were effective at preventing or reducing child abuse and neglect (Van der Put et al., 2018). Examples of programs using these interventions include:

- HealthyFamiliesAmerica.org—A home visiting program for parents with young children.
- TripleP-parenting.com—A research-backed parent training program.
- NurseFamilyPartnership.org—A home visiting program for first-time moms and their children.

Across interventions, it is important to focus on teaching parents and other caregivers what to expect as children develop, how to meet children's needs as they move through developmental stages, how parents and caregivers' own experiences of being parented have affected their development and current parenting styles, and how to discipline children to effectively guide appropriate behavior and encourage positive outcomes (CSSP, n.d.). Assistance in this area may be especially important for parents of children with developmental differences or delays, whose development may be less predictable or occurring with different timing than that of other children, presenting additional challenges for parents (McMillin et al., 2016).

Take Action

1) Connect parents and caregivers to effective parent education, home visiting programs, and other related resources in your community.

2) Learn about developmental milestones and positive parenting techniques and share this information with the families you work with. Model appropriate expectations and effective discipline practices to help parents and caregivers better understand how to meet their children's needs.

3) Enroll in Strategies 2.0 trainings to learn more about supporting parents in enhancing knowledge of parenting and child development. Find out more at StrategiesCA.org/trainings

Resources

CDC Parent Information—An online resource from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with information on child development, positive parenting, and health for children of all ages: cdc.gov/parents

Milestone Moments—A booklet from First 5 California about developmental milestones, signs of delay, and ways to encourage healthy development: first5california.com/pdf/MilestoneMomentsBooklet_English.pdf

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Strategies 2.0

Strategies 2.0 is a multi-dimensional initiative to help professionals & organizations make a bigger impact.

We train, support, and link professionals & organizations together to more effectively support families as well as build power to advance equity and opportunity in our communities.