

# Concerned About a Child's Development?

*A quick guide for early childhood educators and parents — what to watch for, how to talk about it, and where to turn next.*



## Early Signs Worth a Closer Look (Ages 1–5)

Every child develops at their own pace — one sign alone doesn't mean a child has autism or a delay. But when several of these persist, a developmental screening is the right next step, and **earlier is always better**: early intervention works best in the preschool years.

- Little or no response to their name by 12 months
- Limited eye contact or shared smiles
- Few gestures — not pointing or waving by 12–14 months
- Delayed speech, or loss of words the child once used
- Little interest in other children; prefers to play alone
- Repetitive movements — hand flapping, rocking, spinning
- Lining up toys or intense focus on parts of objects
- Big distress with changes in routine or transitions
- Strong reactions to sounds, textures, or lights
- Limited pretend play or copying of others

## For Teachers: Raising a Concern with a Parent

You don't have to diagnose — and shouldn't. Your job is simply to share what you see and point toward a free screening. A gentle way to start:

*"I've noticed [child] isn't using many words yet / finds transitions really hard, and I wanted to share that with you. A free developmental screening could tell us more — many children qualify for helpful services, and checking early never hurts."*

Describe what you observe ("she doesn't respond when we call her name") rather than using labels, and offer the resources below so the parent leaves the conversation with a concrete next step.

## Free Next Steps for Families in Georgia

**Under age 3 — Babies Can't Wait (early intervention):** Georgia's free evaluation program for infants and toddlers. Gwinnett-area referrals: call Children 1st at **770-339-5048** or statewide **1-800-229-2038** • [dph.georgia.gov/babies-cant-wait](http://dph.georgia.gov/babies-cant-wait). Anyone — parent or teacher — can request an evaluation.

**Age 3 and up — your school district:** Request a free special education evaluation in writing from the district's special education office. A child does not need to be enrolled in public school to qualify.

**Any age — the child's pediatrician:** Parents can say: *"I'm concerned about my child's development. Can you do a screening, or refer us to someone who can?"* Pediatricians can refer for full evaluations and therapies.

## Questions at Any Stage? We're Happy to Help

**Applied Behavioral Approaches** is a BCBA-owned, clinic-based ABA therapy practice in Suwanee serving children ages 2.5–8. Whether a family is just starting to wonder, waiting on an evaluation, or has a new autism diagnosis, we're glad to answer questions, point families to the right resources, and — when the time comes — provide individualized early intervention ABA therapy in our small, close-knit clinic. Ask us for our free guide, *After Your Child's Autism Diagnosis: A Caregiver's Action Guide*.

**770-462-8550 • [www.appliedba.com](http://www.appliedba.com) • [info@appliedba.com](mailto:info@appliedba.com)**

2930 Horizon Park Drive, Suite D, Suwanee, GA 30024

*From first steps to next steps — we're here to guide your journey.*



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