

Children's Health Project

Factsheet

Background

- Unidentified developmental disabilities are a serious public health problem in the United States; when a child's developmental delay is identified late, the cost of future interventions go up, and the impacts on that child's ability to learn in the future are compromised.
- Research has shown that parents can be reliable sources of information about their children's development. Studies suggest that efforts can and should be made to encourage parents to take action if they suspect that their child could be showing signs of a developmental delay.

Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Since 2004, CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." (LTSAE) program has worked to empower parents to act if they have concerns about their child's development in an effort to improve the likelihood that children with developmental disabilities are identified and connected with appropriate services at the earliest age possible.

The campaign encourages parents to:

- Learn the signs of early childhood development
- Act early if there is a concern
- Talk to their doctor

Research Study

CDC has contracted with Westat to conduct a study of some campaign messages about acting early on developmental concerns. This research will explore the information needs, relevance and comprehension of campaign messages among parents.

This research will allow CDC to obtain structured feedback from parents on specific materials that include revised message or messages. We will conduct 4 focus groups with parents (2 in Maryland and 2 in Georgia and 40 intercept interviews with parents in clinic waiting rooms.

Study Criteria

A total of 6 clinics will be recruited to participate in the study. Clinics participating in the study should meet the following criteria:

- Serve predominately low income families

- Located in the metropolitan areas surrounding Atlanta, GA and Washington, DC/Maryland/Virginia.

Clinic Role

One representative from each of the 6 clinics will serve as the contact person for the study.

Parent Recruitment: The clinic representative will hang promotional posters and place handouts at the front desk. These materials will promote focus groups that we would like parents of your patients (ages 5 and younger) to take part in. Clinic staff will be provided with copies of this project factsheet so that they are prepared for potential questions they may receive from interested parents.

Data Collection

Focus Groups with Parents to gauge their reactions to the LSTAE materials embedded with revised messages. Parents interested in participating in focus groups will be instructed to contact Westat (via phone or email). Westat will be responsible for screening and scheduling parents into the groups. **Parents will receive \$40 for their participation in the 1-hour focus group.**

Intercept with Parents in clinic waiting rooms to assess parents' comprehension and perception of the messages and materials presented as well as their overall receptivity to the materials. **Parents who participate in these quick 15-minute interviews will receive a \$10 gift card to a local department store.**

This study is being sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Division of Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities). If you have questions about this research, contact the Westat Project Director, Erika Bonilla, at (301) 610-4879 or at erikabonilla@westat.com. You can also contact the CDC study director, Dr. Denise Levis, at (404) 498-0237 or igc1@cdc.gov.

If you have questions or complaints about the rights of study participants, please contact the Westat Institutional Review Board (IRB) hotline telephone number 1-888-920-7631.