



What is Early Stages?

Early Stages is a DC Public Schools diagnostic center that serves children 3 through 5 years old. We help identify any delays that your child may have and we arrange services to address them. These services are free and available to all families that live in DC.

We can serve any child who goes to a DC public school, is home-schooled or has not yet entered the school system, and we can serve some charter schools. Please call us if your child attends a charter school. We will help you find the right person to talk to. Also, if your child is in a DC private school or a preschool program in a DC childcare center, we can work with you, even if you live outside DC.



When should I call Early Stages Center?

If you are concerned about how your 3 through 5-year-old is developing, trust your instincts and contact us. Common areas of concern include how a child is walking, talking, playing, learning, or behaving. Our staff will work with you and your child to determine if further evaluation is needed.

What services can Early Stages provide?

All children referred to Early Stages will receive a developmental screening. If necessary, a child will receive a more in-depth evaluation and services for a diagnosed delay. Early Stages can recommend specialized instruction, speech/language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychological services, and behavioral support services. If your child needs these services, they will be provided free of charge.

What happens if my child needs an evaluation?

Your family is first assigned to a Family Care Coordinator. This person's role is to help you through the entire process. They will contact you before the evaluation to make sure you understand everything that will happen and answer any questions you have along the way. They will be available to you directly by cell phone until the process is completed.

On the day of your visit, your child will work with an evaluation team. The team uses play activities to evaluate your child. They take the time to help your child feel comfortable and you will be able to watch the whole evaluation.



Who decides what services my child will receive?

You and members of the evaluation and education staff will make all decisions together as a team. This team determines the type of services your child needs and the right school site at which to receive them. The Family Care Coordinator can help you look at possible schools and classrooms and will make sure all paperwork gets to the school.

Where are the Early Stages Centers?

The Early Stages Center at the Walker Jones Education Campus is located at 1125 New Jersey Avenue NW. Free parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The 96 bus stops right in front, and the nearest Metrorail stops are Union Station on the red line and the Mt. Vernon Square-7th Street Convention Center stop on the green and yellow lines. The Early Stages Center at Minnesota Avenue (opening summer 2011) is located at 4058 Minnesota Avenue NE, right next to the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station on the orange line, which is served by several bus routes.



How does a family get started with Early Stages?

1. You can contact the center directly.
2. Another person who knows your child may also contact the center with a concern (e.g., a child care provider, teacher, doctor, or family member). In these cases, we will contact you. We can only begin the process with your permission.
3. If your child is already involved with the DC Early Intervention Program, your case manager will refer your child for testing if needed.

What is the best way to contact the Center?

The best way is the way that is easiest for you!

- Phone: 202-698-8037
- Fax: 202-654-6079
- Email: referral@earlystagesdc.org
- Online Form: www.earlystagesdc.org
- Or stop by one of our centers in person

We know that you want what's best for your child; so do we. Our goal is to help you provide a strong foundation so your child enters school ready to learn and succeed.



1125 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001
phone: 202-698-8037
fax: 202-535-1008



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