

# Getting ready for appointments to talk about your child's development

If you have any worries or want to better understand your child's development, you might decide to visit your doctor or another health professional.

These tips will help you to get ready for any appointments. They'll help you get ready to talk about what your family needs and get the best information and help possible for you and your child.



## Information to take to an appointment:

- ▶ Before the appointment, think about how your child behaves and copes with daily life. What do they do well, and what things and times are harder for them? It helps to think about these things and write them down before the appointment.
- ▶ You can ask your child's preschool to give you copies of written observations or developmental summaries.
- ▶ Your family or friends may have talked to you about something they noticed about your child. You might want to talk this through with another person.
- ▶ Think about what you and your family need to support your child, e.g.
  - Financial help
  - Information about therapy or other support
  - Connections to community support services and networks



## It's good to ask questions.

Here are some you can ask if you are told that your child may need help with their development:

- ▶ Where can I learn more about why my child needs help?
- ▶ What do I do next? Who should I talk to?
- ▶ If my child needs therapy (e.g. speech or occupational therapy) are there any Medicare plans that I can use to help me pay – how do I get these?
- ▶ Is there any funding we are eligible for?
- ▶ Where can I find more information about how to help my child?
- ▶ What help can I get now?
- ▶ What help do I need to apply for? How do I do this? What waiting lists should I put my child's name on?



## Who should go to an appointment?

- ▶ Sometimes you can take your child; other times the professional might just want to talk to you. Check before you confirm the appointment, so you can arrange childcare if you need it.
- ▶ You might want to take a family member, or a friend. It can help to have someone to talk things through afterwards.



## You know your child the best.

Here are some examples of questions you might be asked about your child:

- ▶ What is their general health like?
- ▶ Do they eat and sleep well?
- ▶ Self-help: How are they at looking after themselves – getting dressed, going to the toilet, feeding themselves?
- ▶ Physical: How is your child at moving such as climbing, running, balancing? How well do they use their hands to do things, e.g. drawing, opening containers?
- ▶ Social: How does your child play with other children?
- ▶ Communication: How does your child communicate? Do they use words or gesture with their hands or body? Do they listen and respond to other people when they are spoken to?
- ▶ Emotional: Does your child get very upset easily? Can they find it very hard to calm down? Do they sometimes show no reaction when you would expect them to? Can they be comforted by you or a close adult?
- ▶ Sensory: Does your child avoid any noises, tastes, textures or places? Does your child seem to really enjoy and need certain types of movement, textures, sounds?
- ▶ Cognitive-thinking: Does your child play with toys as you would expect them to? Is your child interested in and curious about their world?