

## Possible Indications of disabling Conditions

### **For Parents:**

#### *The Child's Sight*

- The child's eyelids droop
- The child frequently complains that the eyes hurt
- The child's eyelids are red, watery, puffy and encrusted
- There is crossing of the eyes; one or both eyes may be affected
- At age 1, the child cannot focus on small objects in order to pick them up
- The child holds head in awkward or tilted positions when looking at something
- The child frequently rubs the eyes, as though they itch or hurt
- The child moves eyes excessively
- Pupils of eyes are of uneven size

#### *The Child's Hearing*

- The child talks very loudly, even shouts during normal conversations
- The child speaks very softly, almost in a whisper
- When called from another room, the child does not respond
- The child complains that one or both ears ache, or that a liquid "runs" from the ears
- At age 6 months, the child does not turn toward the sounds of voices or noises.
- When there is a sound, the child always turns the same ear in the direction of the sound

#### *The Child's Speech*

- At age 1, the child is unable to say such basic words as "Mama" and "Dada"
- At age 2, the child cannot give the names of toys or members of the family
- At age 3, the child is unable to repeat simple rhymes or common television musical jingles
- At age 4, the child speaks in sentence fragments, cannot say short, complete sentences
- At age 5, the child cannot be understood by people outside the immediate family, only by those "used" to child's speech habits

#### *The Child at Play*

- At age 1, the child is unable to play infant games, such as peek-a-boo
- At age 2-3, the child cannot imitate adults doing simple tasks
- At age 3, the child does not play alone with toys
- At age 4, the child is unable to play group games (such as hide-and-seek) or understand taking turns
- At age 5, the child cannot play simple games, express sympathy or concern, doesn't "show off" once in a while

#### *The Child Thinking*

- At age 1, the child does not respond to a call by looking directly at an adult, cannot figure out simple problems (finding objects hidden under a cup)
- At age 2, the child cannot identify body parts or match like objects, does not recognize self in mirror
- At age 3, the child cannot recognize own name or understand use of familiar objects
- At age 4, the child is unable to name colors, tell the action in a picture or count to 2
- At age 5, the child cannot make simple comparisons (which is prettier, heavier), count up to 4 or understand "yesterday", "today", or "tomorrow".

**The Child in Motion**

- At age 1, the child cannot sit without support, pull self to a standing position, reach for objects or pick up objects with a pincer grasp
- At age 2, the child is unable to walk alone, kick a large ball, scribble or build a tower with 2 or 3 blocks
- At age 3, the child cannot walk up or down stairs, pedal a tricycle, run without falling, turn the pages of a book, or draw a crossmark
- At age 4, the child cannot balance on one foot, jump from a bottom step, catch a bounced ball, close a fist and wiggle a thumb or trace a diamond shape
- At age 5, the child is unable to turn somersaults, pump him/herself on a swing, fold a paper triangle from a 4-inch square, print a few capital letters or cut with scissors on a straight line

**Distributed by:**

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Call: Penny Howerton, Coordinator of Special Education  
Or Kaye Cannon, Pre-School Facilitator

Write or call:

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PO Box 1831  
Rome, GA 30162-1831

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## Tips for Parents of Children with Disabilities

Every child with a disability has a unique level of functioning. It is important that a parent or guardian adjust the following instructions to fit each child's individual level of understanding.

- Parents need to be creative in teaching a child safety tips – children will retain an instruction better if it is explained and demonstrated. Using different settings to emphasize some rules is effective.
- All children should be able to communicate their name, address, including city and state, and phone number, including the area code. For non-verbal or severely impaired children, a card, tag, or inscribed bracelet can be used. However, there should be an understanding that identification only be shown to an authorized adult.
- Do not place names or any other identification on the outside of books, clothes, or other personal items, as this is a way of letting strangers approach children with personal information.
- Teach your children never to admit to anyone over the phone that they are home alone, never to answer the door when home alone, and to call the police or a neighbor if someone tries to get into the house.
- Teach your children that a stranger is someone you and they don't know. A "bad" stranger asks children to go with them, offers them candy or presents, or asks them to keep a "secret".
- Children should know they have a right to say "No". They do not have to obey strangers.
- Your children should know that adults rarely ask children for directions, and it is best to ignore people who do. If a person calls them to a car, they should never go near it.
- Children in wheelchairs should refuse unnecessary requests to assist them with a polite, but firm statement that they can manage without assistance.
- Respect your child's reluctance to be with someone. Some disabled children may not be able to verbalize why.
- If children are followed by someone in a car or on foot they should never go to a deserted place.
- Practice with your children what should be done in a variety of situations if they get separated from you. If you are shopping and become separated, your child should not look for you, but should go immediately to the nearest counter and ask for help. Always reinforce that they should not go to the parking lot without you.
- Never leave your child alone or in an unattended car.
- Know your child's friends and those responsible for supervising your child. Unsupervised children are vulnerable.
- Be sure that your children's school or day care center will not release them to anyone but you or someone designated by you. Set up a code word or signal with your children if you must send an unfamiliar adult to pick them up.
- Take photographs of your children at least yearly, and keep a copy of their fingerprints and dental records.

**Additional information available from:**     **ACTION**

Child Safety Program  
Washington, DC 20525 (800) 424-8867

*(Parent to Parent, Dec. 85)*

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