



May 18, 2015

Dear Colleagues:

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month and the Office of Special Education Programs within the U.S. Department of Education and the Offices of Head Start and Child Care within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are partnering to join the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in celebrating this year's theme – "Early Intervention Counts." Not only does early intervention count, early screening counts too. Regular screenings help raise awareness of a child's development and identify any potential delays that could benefit from intervention. Just like hearing and vision screenings assure that children can hear and see clearly, developmental and behavioral screenings track a child's progress in areas such as communication, learning, social, or motor development.

Screening for health and development happens in a variety of programs and settings. We wanted to use this opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of screening children early and frequently and to highlight some of the Federal resources to help you in your work with young children and their families.

In celebration of Better Hearing and Speech Month, we are releasing:

- Celebrate With Us: May is Better Speech and Hearing Month--Promoting Early Developmental and Hearing Screening for Young Children, a resource document that highlights federal screening materials.
- Webinar series:
  - **Introduction to Evidence-Based Hearing Screening Practices for Children 0–3 Years of Age** will be held on **Thursday, May 21 at 3:00 pm** Eastern time. This 15-minute coffee break webinar will provide tips to help providers incorporate evidence-based hearing screening practices into their programs. The link for registration is here:  
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eayybi5s7da09fc9&llr=xcjxpbdbab>
  - **An Overview of Developmental Screening in Early Childhood Programs** will be held on **July 22, 2015**. This webinar will provide tips and strategies for improving screening in your programs. Registration information will follow soon.

With regular screenings, families, teachers, child care providers and other professionals can ensure that young children get the services and supports they need as early as possible to help them thrive alongside their peers. Combining the love and knowledge families have of their children with tools, guidance, and tips recommended by experts can make the most of the developmental support children receive.

We hope that you will join us to celebrate Better Hearing and Speech Month by participating in the webinars and using the resource document to support your everyday work.

Sincerely,

/s/

Melody Musgrove  
Director  
Office of Special Education Programs  
U.S. Department of Education

/s/

Blanca Enriquez  
Director  
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/s/

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