

# Observing Development in Young Children for Attorneys

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## Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children *at the* Center for Children, Families, and the Law



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- Learn child's history
- Develop a relationship with the child
- Observe caregivers
- Assess child's development
- Conduct independent investigation
- Promote permanency

## GAL Responsibilities for Young Children

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More young children are in foster care and they stay in longer.



### Why It Matters?

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- o 1/3 under 3 are behind in cognitive and language skills
- o 1/2 under 2 are at a high risk of developmental delay
- o 90-100% chance of delay



### Why It Matters

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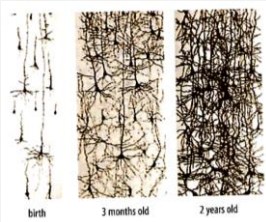
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### Why It matters



- o Most brain growth occurs before the age of 3
- o Brain growth is dependent on stimulation and experience

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### And last but not least...

- Early intervention makes a difference
- Rapid brain development + plasticity of the brain + stimulation and good relationships = positive outcomes




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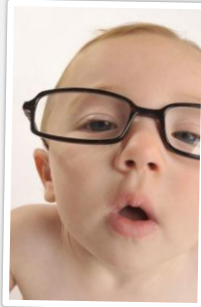
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Where do you find information on the child's development?




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### Sources of Information on Development

- ① Medical Records
- ② Talking with Child Care Providers
- ③ Interviewing the parents and foster parents
- ④ Observation




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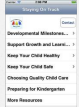
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## Findings



EDN App



Developmental Wheel



Zero to Three handout

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## So Now What?

- o Make sure a referral has been made to the Early Development Network
- o Make sure the information contained in the referral is accurate and thorough
- o Communicate with the court about the referral
- o Be an advocate for the child in the early intervention process
- o You can make a re-referral if new concerns arise or you feel like concerns were not addressed

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## Early Intervention

- o Nebraska Child Find (toll Free) at 1-888-806-6287
- o For more information on Nebraska Child Find for all children, please visit: <http://www.childfind.ne.gov>.

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