



What Happens When You Refer a Child through Help Me Grow

If you have concerns about your child's development, you can talk to your healthcare provider and use Help Me Grow to refer your child for help. A referral is a powerful tool to connect a child to services as early as possible, to help him/her learn and grow.



An online or phone referral gets sent directly to your local school district. Any adult can refer a child by filling out a [referral form](#) online at helpmegrowmn.org or by calling 1-866-693-4769 (GROW). The local school district will contact the child's parents to set up a developmental screening or evaluation. Parents can also contact the school district directly to make a referral or request an evaluation.

All referrals are confidential. This information is required when you make a referral:

- Child's name and age.
- Parent/guardian name, address and contact information.
- Your name, address and contact information, if you are not the child's parent or guardian.

Parents can expect these next steps after referring a child:

- An early childhood specialist from your local school district will contact you to talk about your child's development.
- This call will generally happen within seven to ten days of a referral.
- Follow-up phone calls for children ages three to five take place during the school year. This may delay the district's initial contact with you if a referral is made during the summer months.
- The call will help the early childhood specialist learn if your child needs a developmental screening or special education evaluation. A screening may be required before an evaluation. If your child hasn't had a screening, one will be scheduled before an evaluation.
- A team of qualified individuals will lead your child's evaluation if it's needed. This evaluation will determine if your child is eligible and needs services.

If your child is eligible for services, you can expect these next steps:

- Early childhood specialists and a service planning team will work with you to create a personalized service plan to support your child's development.
- If your child is age birth through two, the child's eligibility and service plan must be developed within 45 calendar days of the referral. The timeline for ages three to five is within 30 school days after receiving the parent's consent to evaluate their child.
- Services may include special instruction and services such as speech, physical or occupational therapy.
- Once a plan is in place, services will begin.
- Services may take place at home, a child care setting or school.

- Services are free to eligible children, regardless of income or immigration status.

For more information or to refer a child, visit helpmegrowmn.org.

Here is one family's experience with Early Intervention:

"Being a part of the Early Intervention Program has been the helping hand we needed to get our preemie triplets on track developmentally and helped to identify the additional needs of our son with more long term developmental delays. It's terrifying when your babies are born before they are ready to eat or breathe on their own—and to have an extra set of hands and eyes once they come home to make sure that their learning keeps moving forward and that any problems that linger are addressed is so reassuring. It is also of immeasurable value to have the first three years of service come to us. With infants and toddlers who are immunocompromised from their early beginnings, using services in a public setting would have been difficult or dangerous for us so having those services offered in our home while our boys got stronger saved us from potential additional hospital stays from illnesses their bodies wouldn't have been able to handle. The transition to preschool for two of our boys and Preschool Special Education for our third has been flawless and we feel surrounded by a team that is ready to keep our kids moving forward from where they are each day."

- Metro Parent