



Parents Knowledge About Motor Development:

This survey examines the knowledge, perceptions, and comfort level of parents when it comes to identifying developmental delays in their children. While it is clear that parents are good observers and reporters of their child's development, more needs to be done to encourage early and regular discussions between parents and their children's physicians about developmental milestones. Such discussions would provide important evaluative information to the physician and offer the parents an opportunity to anticipate future milestones. Such an interchange of knowledge and information could facilitate routine early identification of motor delays, and thereby more effective treatment.

The sample consisted of 544 parents from the Chicago area survey and 423 parents from the National survey. Table 4 presents the demographics for each of these two groups.

The survey explored parents' knowledge about "normal" child developmental milestones. The survey presented five drawings of a small child demonstrating a new skill (e.g. sitting, standing). These drawings were taken from the Pathways Awareness Foundation brochure entitled "Assure the Best for Your Baby's Physical Development," which was approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics and National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners. Table 1a presents the scenarios shown to parents and the recommended age by Pathways Awareness Foundation by which a child should achieve the skill shown in the scenario. Parents were asked two questions for each scenario: at what age a child should develop the skill and at what age of the child would the parent seek help if the child did not achieve the skill. Examples 1-5. Table 1b and 1c present these findings.

For the scenario of a child being able to push up on his or her arms and hold his or her head up, an early-age skill, about 46% of parents reported that this skill should be achieved by the age of three months or sooner. Pathways indicates that this is the proper age at which the skill should be achieved (Table 1a). The remaining parents believed the skill should be attained later. About 11% of parents indicated that they would seek help if the child did not achieve the skill by three months; the remaining parents would wait longer to seek help.

A higher proportion of parents expected to see later skills achieved within the Pathways guidelines (Table 1a). For milestones achieved before the first year of life, fewer than 50% of parents would seek help if their child did not achieve the milestone according to the Pathways guidelines. For milestones achieved later (12 months of age or later), about 60%-65% parents would seek help if the milestone was not met according to the Pathways guidelines. (Table 1c)

In general, parents report that they would talk to their pediatrician/family physician about their concerns later than what is optimal. The younger the child, the less likely the parent would seek help promptly. In the most extreme case, concerning a motor milestone for three months of age, fewer than 11% of parents will seek help promptly. Of those parents who did seek help, over 50% were referred to a physician specialist or a non-physician specialist right away. (Table 3)

Over 50% of parents considered their health care professional (Pediatrician/Family Physician/Non-Physician Specialist) as the most reliable source of child health information if they had any concerns regarding their child. (Table 2)

Table 1a
Pathways Awareness Foundation guidelines

Skill presented in scenario	Pathways guidelines for achieving skill
Child pushes up on arms and holds head up	by 3 months
Child sits with support, holding head up and with a straight back	by 6 months
Child sits without support, with arms free to reach	by 8 months
And grasp	by 12 months
Child pulls to a stand	by 15 months
Child walks independently	by 15 months

Table 2
Parents consider the most reliable source of child health information if they had a concern:

	CHDL Survey	National Survey
Pediatrician/Family Physician/Specialist	55%	50%
Child care books or Magazine	14%	4%
Internet websites	8%	25%
Daycare providers	3%	2%
Friend or relatives	10%	17%
Other	10%	2%

Table 1b
Percent of Parents Recognizing Milestones

	CHDL Survey	National Survey
3 Month		
Child pushes up on arms and holds head up	56%	36%
6 Month		
Child sits with support, holding head up and with a straight back	85%	55%
9 Month		
Child sits without support, with arms free to reach and grasp	84%	78%
12 Month		
Child pulls to a stand	98%	91%
15 Month		
Child walks independently	97%	90%

Table 3
53 of the parents let us know that they discussed concerns about their child's motor skills with their child's physician. Parent was advised to:

Talk to a physician specialist or non-physician specialist right away	56%
Wait and see if problem continued/Get some more information	40%
Physician told parent there was no problem/normal development	4%

If the parent was advised to wait, they were advised to wait: Mean: 4.3 months, Median: 2 months

Table 1c
Percent of Parents Who Would Report A Concern Immediately

	CHDL Survey	National Survey
3 Month		
Child pushes up on arms and holds head up	16%	5%
6 Month		
Child sits with support, holding head up and with a straight back	43%	15%
9 Month		
Child sits without support, with arms free to reach and grasp	49%	43%
12 Month		
Child pulls to a stand	82%	50%
15 Month		
Child walks independently	70%	51%

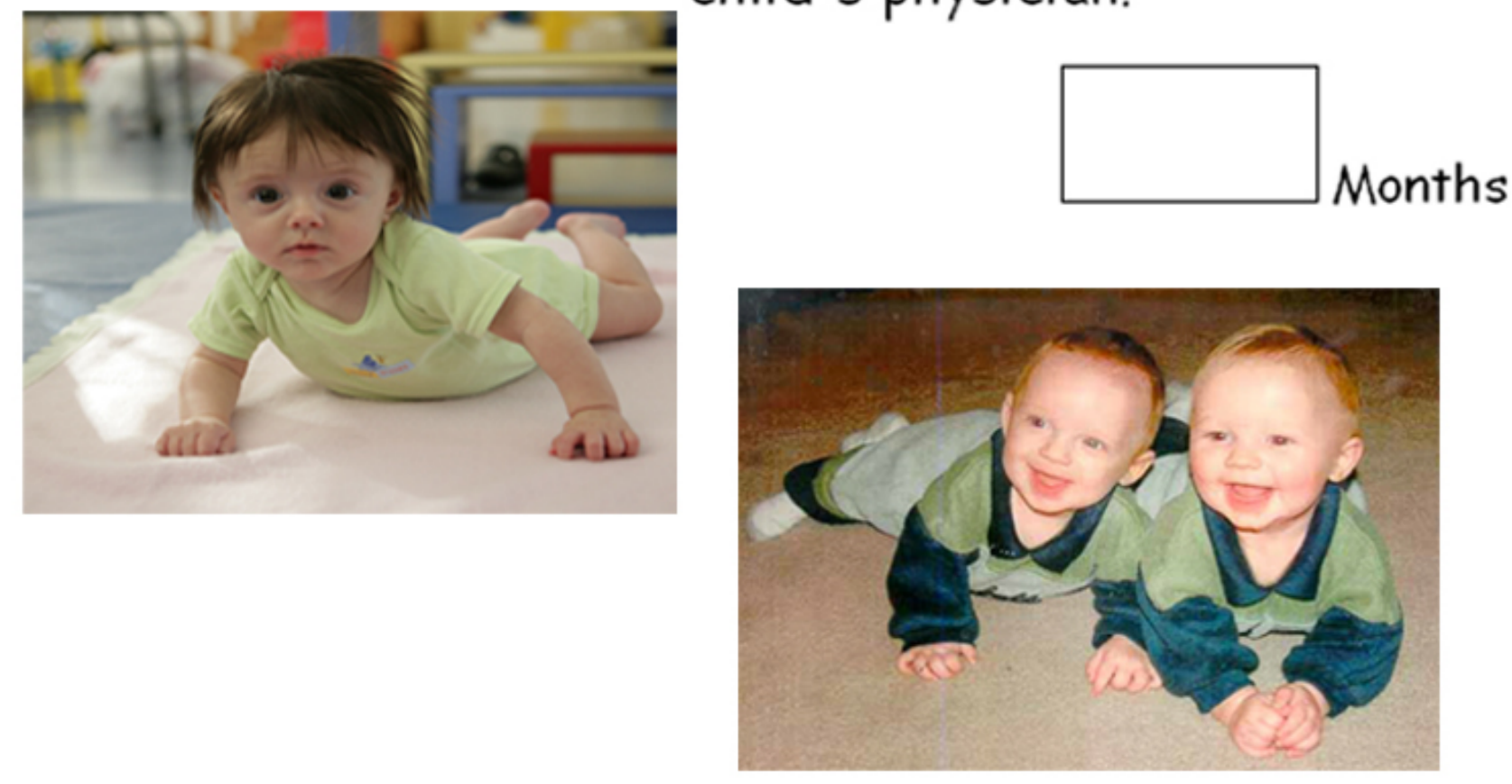
Table 4
Demographics

	CHDL Survey	National Survey
Parents Age	CHDL Survey Mean age 31.3	National Survey Average age range 25-34
Marital Status		
Married	65.7%	83%
Divorced/Widowed	2%	5%
Never Married	16.7%	12%
Did not answer	15.6%	
Housing Situation		
Own	45%	63%
Rent	37%	37%
Did not answer	18%	
Place of Residence		
West		22%
South		36%
Northeast		19%
Midwest	89%	23%
Did not answer	In Chicago 76%, Outside Chicago 13%, 11%	

Example 1
1a. IN YOUR OPINION, looking at EXAMPLE 1, at what age would you expect a baby to achieve this skill?



1b. If your child did not acquire this skill by that age, at what age would you consider it a big enough problem to mention to your child's physician?



Example 2
1c. IN YOUR OPINION, looking at EXAMPLE 2, at what age would you expect a baby to achieve this skill?



*Sits with support
*Holds head up
*Straight back

1d. If your child did not achieve this skill by that age, at what age would you consider it a big enough problem to mention to your child's physician?



Example 3
1e. IN YOUR OPINION, looking at EXAMPLE 3, at what age would you expect a baby to achieve this skill?



*Sits without support
*Arms free to reach and grasp

1f. If your child did not achieve this skill by that age, at what age would you consider it a big enough problem to mention to your child's physician?



Example 4
1g. IN YOUR OPINION, looking at EXAMPLE 4, at what age would you expect a baby to achieve this skill?

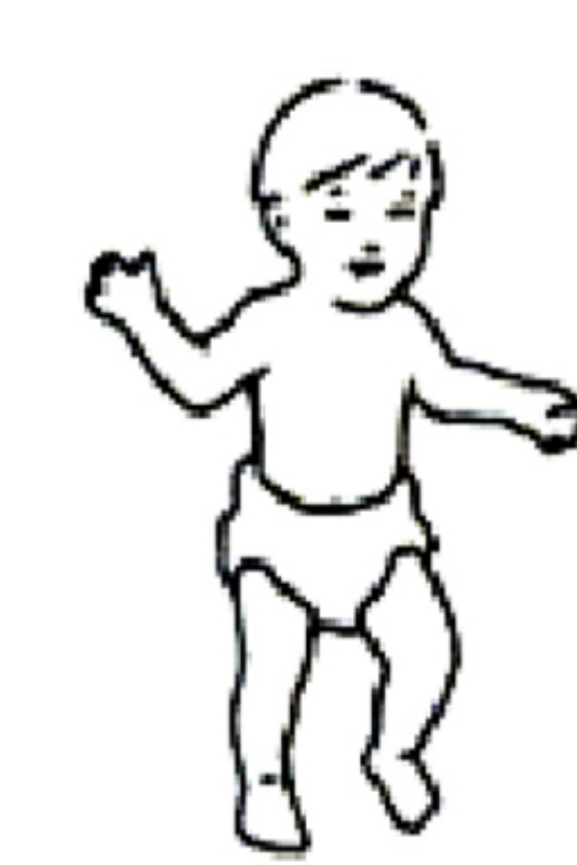


*Pull to stand

1h. If your child did not achieve this skill by that age, at what age would you consider it a big enough problem to mention to your child's physician?



Example 5
1i. IN YOUR OPINION, looking at EXAMPLE 5, at what age would you expect a baby to achieve this skill?



*Independent walking

1j. If your child did not achieve this skill by that age, at what age would you consider it a big enough problem to mention to your child's physician?

