Early Head Start and Head Start
Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Implementation Manual

Indiana Head Start leaders, teachers, and coordinators have helped to design this model of implementing LTSAE in Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

A. Overview
1. What is *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* (LTSAE)?

   LTSAE is a program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to improve early identification of children with developmental disabilities so that children and families can be connected to services as early as possible. LTSAE offers free, research-based materials for monitoring of developmental milestones. Materials are designed for parents and tested to make sure they are clear, engaging and helpful.

   LTSAE assists Early Head Start and Head Start (EHS/HS) programs with meeting performance standards. Using LTSAE materials can
   - **Engage families** in learning about and tracking their child's development at home, so they are aware of what milestones to expect
   - Support ongoing two-way communication between parents and teachers and/ or coordinators
   - Complement and support developmental screening
   - Provide guidance on how to discuss developmental concerns with parents and co-workers
   - Aid in early identification of children with developmental delays or disabilities
   - Help fulfil the requirement that at least 10 percent of enrolled children have a disability

   LTSAE's training and resources can also support professional development of teachers and staff by enhancing their observations and knowledge of developmental milestones. Further, this program can promote better communication between staff and parents regarding their child's development.

2. What do we mean by Developmental Monitoring?

   Developmental Monitoring is an ongoing process beginning at birth that involves:
   - Ongoing observation of *developmental milestones* (e.g., the ways a child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves) by parents and teachers

- Documentation of the child's development using an *objective checklist* of typical developmental milestones
- Sharing observations with parents routinely
- Sharing concerns with parents
- Guiding parents to resources and services if there is a concern. These resources include:
  - The child's doctor
  - Early Intervention Program (ages 0-3)
  - Early Childhood Special Education (ages 3-5)

3. Why are Indiana Early Head Start and Head Start programs using these materials?

- Provides free, easy to understand materials about child development
- Supports family engagement activities
- Gives teachers and staff tools to engage families in understanding developmental milestones
- Helps programs meet EHS standards: Standard 1302 Subpart F: Additional Services for Children with Disabilities (1302.60, 1302.61, 1302.62 and 1302.63) See https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-subpart-f-additional-services-children-disabilities.

B. Implementing the LTSAE materials in Early Head Start and Head Start settings (see details about LTSAE materials below)

1. Plan an implementation strategy as a leadership team
   a. Review the Orientation/Training PowerPoint and discuss how to share this with the rest of the teachers and staff
   b. Complete the Watch Me Grow one hour webinar training available at www.cdc.gov/actearly.
   c. Schedule onsite orientation for staff
      1) Direct program staff to complete the Watch Me Grow one hour webinar training available at www.cdc.gov/actearly, and collect the training certificate for personnel file prior to training session
      2) Present Training session and share modified policies/procedures with an implementation timeline.
         a) Use the PowerPoint to help guide the Implementation Training Session
         b) Use the narrated PowerPoint for teachers and staff unable to attend or who join the team after the Implementation Training Session
         c) Request technical assistance on the best way to provide this orientation to your team
2. Provide all families LTSAE materials at enrollment including:
   a. Milestones Moment booklet
   b. Growth Chart
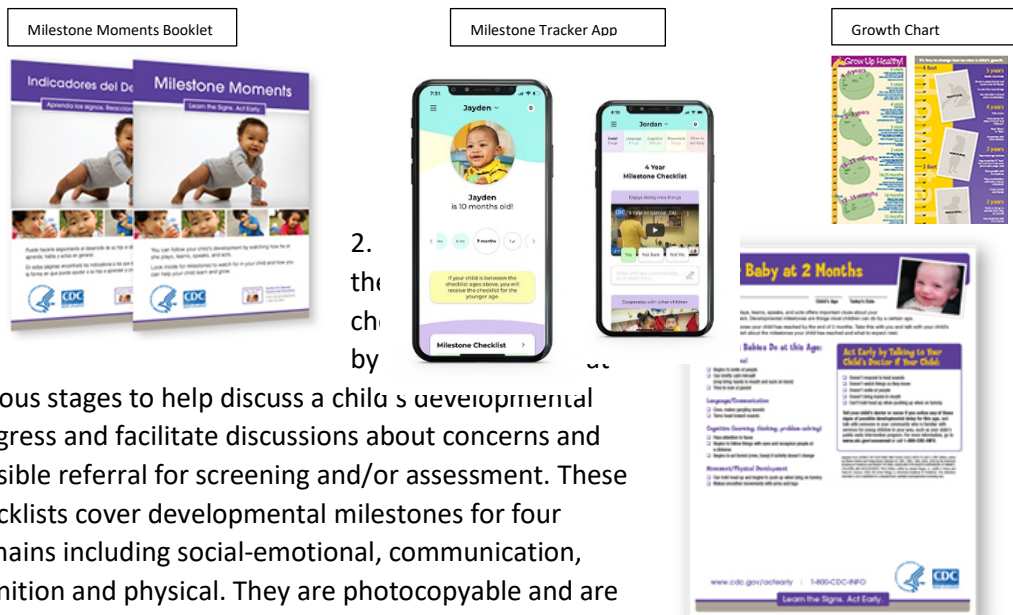   c. Milestone Tracker App – information flyer on how to access

3. Modify teacher/parent conference and home visit checklists to include:
   a. Provide family with a copy of the age appropriate LTSAE milestone checklist and review with them. Document discussion and refer any questions/concerns about development to appropriate individual.
   b. Ask family if they have downloaded the free LTSAE Milestone Tracker app and what they have noticed about their child's development. Document discussion and refer any questions/concerns about development to appropriate individual.
4. Modify program policy regarding screening to include:
   a. When a screening outcome results in a referral for additional assessment, provide the family a copy of the age appropriate LTSAE Milestone Checklist. Document discussion and refer any questions/concerns about development to appropriate individual.
5. Hang posters promoting the LTSAE materials and tracker app and the Growth Chart in prominent locations to encourage discussion by families and staff.
6. Include information about the LTSAE materials in family engagement activities. See the appendix for a list of suggested program ideas.
7. Provide a copy of *Baby's Busy* Day at the child's 1st birthday, *Where is Bear?* at the child's 2nd birthday or completion of the program year and a copy of *Amazing Me: It's Busy Being Three* at the child's 3rd birthday or completion of the program year.

C. Implementing the LTSAE materials in Home-based programs (see details about LTSAE materials below)

1. Provide the Kickoff Orientation/Training program for management team - a 1 hour or less orientation/training program to present processes and materials to staff
   a. Complete the Watch Me Grow one hour webinar training available at www.cdc.gov/actearly.
   b. Direct program staff to complete the Watch Me Grow one hour webinar training available at www.cdc.gov/actearly, and collect the training certificate for personnel file.
2. Provide all families LTSAE materials at enrollment including:
   a. Milestones Moment booklet
   b. Growth Chart
   c. Milestone Tracker App – information flyer on how to access
3. Modify teacher policy and home visit checklist to include:
   a. Talk with parents about their child's developmental milestones using a copy of the age appropriate LTSAE milestone checklist. Document discussion and refer any questions/concerns about development to appropriate individual.
   b. Ask family if they have downloaded the free LTSAE Milestone Tracker app and what they have noticed about their child's development. Document discussion and refer any questions/concerns about development to appropriate individual.
4. Include information about the LTSAE materials in family engagement activities. See the appendix for a list of suggested program ideas.

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D. LTSAE Materials (see images below)
   1. Offered as set at enrollment/ beginning of program year.
      a. **Milestone Moments Booklet** - this booklet provides information about children's developmental milestones across four domains from age 2 months through 5 years.
      b. **Milestone Tracker App – information flyer on how to access** – the free app provides a mechanism to track a child's development from age 2 months through 5 years.
      c. **Growth Chart** – this chart provides information about child development in the form of a growth chart. The back has physical development growth charts for both boys and girls. The front has space for parents to document vaccinations.

Milestone Moments Booklet

Milestone Tracker App

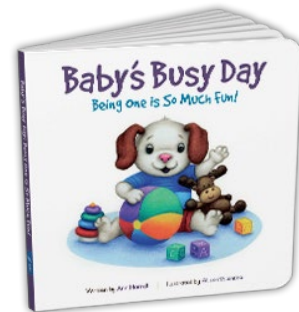Growth Chart

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various stages to help discuss a child's developmental progress and facilitate discussions about concerns and possible referral for screening and/or assessment. These checklists cover developmental milestones for four domains including social-emotional, communication, cognition and physical. They are photocopyable and are in both English and Spanish.

3. Tip Sheets - Tips for How to Help Your Child and How to Talk to the Doctor for families: used as needed by staff/Coordinator when talking about concerns and/or referrals. These pages are photocopiable and are in both English and Spanish.
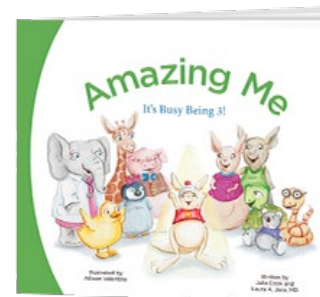
4. Books – Three books are available.
    a. *Baby's Busy Day - Being One is So Much Fun!* features Baby, a one-year-old puppy who is having a very busy day! Follow along as Mom, Dad, and Sis engage Baby throughout his day while encouraging his development along the way! As you read this fun story with your little one, keep an eye out for the paw prints to learn what one-year-old milestones to look for in your baby's development, and the hearts for tips on how you can help!

    b. *Where is Bear? A Terrific Tale of 2-Year-Olds* is for two-year-old children and their families. In this story, Tiger, Bird, Frog, Fox and Turtle are looking for Bear, and it's up to you to find him!

    c. *Amazing Me: It's Busy Being Three* was developed for three-year-old children and their families. In this story, an amazing kangaroo named Joey shows all the amazing things he can do now that he is three years old.

5. *Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns*, is a 4 module online training that introduces tools and best practices for monitoring the development of children and how to talk about it with their parents. This FREE training takes about 1 hour to complete and is online at https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/watchmetraining/index.html.

E. Keeping up to date with LTSAE
    1. Visit www.actearlyindiana.org for current information on resources in Indiana.

2. Follow ActEarlyIndiana on Facebook for up-to-date information; ask families to follow as well
3. Contact your LTSAE Ambassador for updates on materials, training and programs ideas. Stephan Viehweg can be reached at sviehweg@iu.edu and 317-944-0361.
4. To access the complete set of free materials to support program activities visit www.cdc.gov/actearly.
5. All materials are available in English and Spanish. Select materials have been translated into other languages as well. Contact your state Ambassador for translated materials.
6. For online resources visit the Indiana Head Start Association webpage at https://www.indianaheadstart.org/learnthesignactearly to download training and implementation resources.
7. Participate in ongoing regional and state discussions about the best ways to integrate the *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* materials into Indiana Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

Appendix: Family Engagement Ideas

Component/Idea	Materials needed	Implementation *Suggestions*
Provide families with a packet of LTSAE materials	• Milestones moment Booklet • App Flyer • Children's Books • Growth Chart • Milestones Checklist Sheet	Classroom or Home-based teachers can present caretakers with these materials during meetings early in the year. Opportunities to present families with these materials can be done: during parent engagement meetings, teacher-parent conferences, or before the first developmental screening. For sites that enroll students throughout the year, providing families with these materials during enrollment/intake would also be appropriate The Milestones Checklist may specifically be useful before or during screenings. An in-depth conversation about the caretakers' reports on the checklist can occur after the screening.
Display LTSAE materials at the center-based site.	• Milestones Matter Posters • Growth Charts	Place posters in the hallways of the center and the growth chart on the doorway of the classroom. If possible, demonstrate to caretakers how to use the growth chart, and encourage them to use it at home.
If applicable, home visitors can inquire about caretaker' use of the LTSAE materials in the home. If home visits are not applicable, center-based teachers can inquire during one-on-one meetings with caretaker	• Milestones moment Booklet • App Flyer/Milestones tracker app • Children's Books • Growth Chart • Milestones Checklist Sheet	Ask caretaker if they recall receiving the materials and if they use it. If caretaker are not using materials, it may be beneficial to demonstrate how they use it in the home. Inquire about any concerns are questions the care taker might have
Policy Council training	• Milestones moment Booklet	Present LTSAE materials to Policy Council.

	• App Flyer/Milestones tracker app • Children's Books • Growth Chart • Milestones Checklist Sheet • Training PowerPoint	Review policy changes with Policy Council. Encourage Policy Council members to download the app and follow ActEarlyIndiana on Facebook
Parent Meeting topics	• Milestones moment Booklet • App Flyer/Milestones tracker app • Children's Books • Growth Chart • Milestones Checklist Sheet • Training PowerPoint • ActEarlyIndiana Facebook page • www.actearlyindiana.org	Use LTSAE materials to support topics during Parent Meetings. Example: LTSAE children's books can be read aloud and discussed during a Literacy Night. Example: Do the development quiz together from the Training PowerPoint to discuss development and milestones. Example: Connect families to LTSAE through program website and social media

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U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Certificate of Completion

This Certificate is proudly presented to

in recognition of his/ her hardwork and dedication in completing
the Getting Started with LTSAE PowerPoint Training.

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Department Head

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Date