

# HealthySteps Prevents Early Childhood Development Concerns by Better Connecting Families to Services



PEDIATRIC CARE • SUPPORTING • PARENTING  
A Program of ZERO TO THREE

## SEE HOW HEALTHYSTEPS SUPPORTS BABY LEO

Leo's dad brings him to his 18-month well-child visit. His pediatrician asks if Leo is speaking and what words he is using. Leo's dad shares that Leo speaks about 5 words...

### Without HealthySteps, Leo Struggles in School

After observation, the pediatrician documents the need to monitor Leo's language development and they plan to see each other again at the 2-year well-child visit.



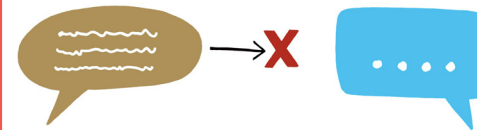
The family attends the 2-year well-child visit. Leo now speaks 8-10 single words. Leo's parents share that he gets frustrated easily and has frequent tantrums. The pediatrician refers Leo to Part C Early Intervention (EI) to address concerns with language and behavior. The family receives a piece of paper with information about the program.



Leo is evaluated by the public school system and qualifies for preschool with special education services, including speech therapy and behavior intervention. After preschool, Leo transitions to Kindergarten with an Individualized Education Program and remains in special education. Leo continues to experience problems with communication, behavior, learning, and social interactions throughout elementary school.



At the 3-year well-child visit, Leo's dad reports that he was recently contacted by EI, but they told him Leo would be referred to the public school system because Leo is too old to begin EI. Leo has still not received any intervention services; he continues to have language delays, and problems with behavior and social skills.



At the 30-month well-child visit Leo's dad reports that he was never contacted by the EI program. Leo's language has not progressed, and his behavior is worse with more severe and frequent tantrums at home and in child care. He is now biting and hitting his peers. The pediatrician makes another referral to EI.

## HealthySteps Prevents Early Childhood Development Concerns

Research demonstrates that social-emotional development is a foundational to school readiness and academic success and must be considered alongside early academic skills (e.g., mastery of ABCs and 1-2-3s). The HealthySteps Specialist (HS Specialist) supports families and their young children's social-emotional development and early learning, and connects families to high quality child care and key services in their community, such as EI.

EI services work, but only when children are identified as early as possible and successfully connected to services. HealthySteps helps connect all families to EI services by understanding family concerns and ensuring that the systems of care are well coordinated.

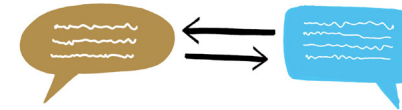
Explore HealthySteps outcomes at [healthysteps.org/the-evidence](https://healthysteps.org/the-evidence).

With  
HealthySteps,  
Leo is Ready  
for School

Due to concerns about language indicated on a developmental screener at 18 months, the pediatrician invites the HS Specialist into the room.



After talking with Leo's dad and further assessing his language, the team determines a referral to EI is needed. The HS Specialist and Leo's dad also discuss ways to incorporate reading and talking into everyday family routines and activities.



The HS Specialist calls EI to ensure Leo's family connected with them. She also calls the family and discusses their concerns about Leo being labeled and being involved in special education, particularly given their negative experiences in this system with their older child.

Leo continues on a healthy trajectory of growth and development.



He enters Kindergarten in a regular education classroom, and thrives throughout elementary school.

At the 3-year well-child visit, Leo's family shares how they participated in EI and how much more he is talking.



The team also reviews the EI report which shows significant improvement and age appropriate language skills. The family and the providers celebrate Leo's progress.

Leo's dad brings him to his 24-month and 30-month team-based well-child visits with the pediatrician and the HS Specialist. They review the Individualized Family Service Plan and reinforce the goals. The HS Specialist provides additional support and guidance to Leo's family about ways to promote communication, play, social interactions, and learning. She models some activities and strategies Leo's parents can try and provides printed resources with low-cost ways to promote early learning while at home.