



CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS



South Health District offers a variety of programs dedicated to serving children and meeting their healthcare needs. From birth to age 21, there are options to serve children of all ages within our child health programs.

Your Child's Health Is Our Purpose



BABIES CAN'T WAIT

LOCAL / 229-245-6565
LONG DISTANCE / 800-247-6538

CHILDREN 1ST

LOCAL / 229-293-6286
LONG DISTANCE / 800-316-8044

CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES

LOCAL / 229-245-4310
LONG DISTANCE / 800-848-5728

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION

LOCAL / 229-293-6286
LONG DISTANCE / 800-316-8044

FIRST CARE

LOCAL / 229-293-6286
LONG DISTANCE / 800-316-8044

BABIES CAN'T WAIT

Babies Can't Wait (BCW) is Georgia's early intervention program which serves children ages birth to three, who have significant developmental delays, or may be at risk for delays due to a diagnosed medical condition. The program was created under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Anyone can make a referral. Enrollment in BCW program is voluntary. The program provides coaching based services to children and their families.

BCW starts by conducting a developmental evaluation to determine eligibility at no charge to families. If eligible and enrolled, service coordination is also provided quarterly with no family cost. Additional services may have a slight cost, depending on family size and income, based on Medicaid rates. Services are based upon the child's developmental needs and are coordinated among providers from both the public and private agencies. Prior to the child's third birthday, the family's service coordinator will discuss transition options with the family. The family then chooses what option(s) best meet their needs, which can include referral to the local preschool system, Head Start, community services, and private therapy and or preschool.

CHILDREN 1ST

Children 1st is the single point of entry for all DPH Child Health programs and services for children, birth - 5 years old. The program links eligible children to early intervention services, as well as other public health programs and community-based resources.

Children 1st staff conduct periodic in-home evaluations of children enrolled in the program and provide parents with general health care information.

Children 1st staff continue to monitor the child's health through contacts with primary care provider to assure that services are being provided over time.



CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES

Children's Medical Services (CMS), provides medical care for disabling conditions or chronic diseases in children from birth to the age of 21. CMS is funded through state and federal resources.

The Valdosta CMS office currently offers the following specialty clinics: orthopedic, endocrinology, cardiology, pulmonology, surgery, nephrology, genetics and hematology. The office also provides case management for children with hearing, vision, neurological and maxillofacial conditions.

The CMS staff actively works with primary care physicians to coordinate specialty care for the child, including case management and asthma education.

Eligibility for CMS is based on income, type of medical condition, and the age of the child (0-21). Medicaid and SSI recipients are eligible. Families with or without insurance are also eligible, but may be required to defray some cost depending on their income.

Physicians, health care providers, school staff, public health departments, social workers, or parents may refer children to CMS.

Once the referral is received, CMS staff will contact the family. After eligibility is determined, the child will be enrolled in the specialty services necessary for his/her situation. Some children are followed by local physicians with treatment coordinated by the nurse case managers of CMS. Other children may be enrolled in specialty services provided by physicians who come to Valdosta from the Children's Hospital of Georgia. The nurse case manager ensures that follow-up care is provided.

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program ensures that all Georgia babies are screened for hearing loss before 1 month of age. The screening is quick and painless. Early identification of infant hearing loss and early treatment helps babies develop language, communication, and brain development.

- All babies are screened before 1 month of age, preferably before leaving the hospital.
- If the baby does not pass the initial or outpatient re-screening, a diagnostic hearing evaluation is needed before 3 months of age. If hearing loss is detected, intervention and support services should be started by 6 months of age.

This 1-3-6 guideline was developed to give the baby the best possible time frame to be screened, diagnosed, and treated, if necessary. The earlier a baby is determined to have a hearing loss and begins receiving services, the more likely that speech, language, and social skills will reach their full potential.

FIRST CARE

First Care helps ensure that all premature, low birth weight, and medically fragile newborns in the state of Georgia have access to an informed public health nurse. First Care nurses monitor health and development through home visits, initiating interventions, and providing referrals as needed throughout the first year. The program's objective is to strengthen coordination of services between hospitals, pediatricians, and public health services so the program can ensure access to all available resources and services.

