



It takes a village to raise a child

The sooner that families identify any special needs a child may have, the sooner work can begin to help the child overcome these needs and become the successful individual they can be.

Although early intervention is extremely important, intervention at any age can be helpful. The following is a list of resources in New Hanover County for families who have children with special needs. This list may not be all inclusive, and other resources may exist to help you.

Please feel free to call your local Smart Start for further information on how to

access these resources, or if you can't find what you are looking for.

Many children with developmental delays are not being identified as early as possible. As a result, these children must wait to get the help they need to do well in social and educational settings (for example, in school).

In the United States, about 13% of children 3 to 17 years of age have a developmental or behavioral disability such as [autism](#), [intellectual disability\[PDF - 279 KB\]](#) and [attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder1](#). In addition, many children have delays in language or other areas that can affect school readiness. However, fewer than half of children with developmental delays are identified before starting school², by which time significant delays already might have occurred and opportunities for treatment might have been missed. (CDC 2015)

Developmental Milestones – All Ages

- Skills such as taking a first step, smiling for the first time, and waving “bye bye” are called developmental milestones. Learn about these milestones here and to see if your child is meeting these milestones within anticipated time frames.
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/>

Screenings

Well-child visits allow doctors and nurses to have regular contact with children to assess your child's health and development through periodic developmental screening. Developmental screening is a short assessment to determine if a child is learning basic skills when he or she is expected to, or if there are delays. Developmental screening can also be done by other professionals in health care, community, or school settings.

The doctor might ask you some questions or talk and play with the child during an examination to see how he or she plays, learns, speaks, behaves, and moves. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of a problem.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for developmental delays and disabilities during regular well-child doctor visits at:

- 9 months
- 18 months
- 24 or 30 months

Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for developmental delays due to preterm birth, low birthweight, or other reasons.

If your child's doctor does not routinely check your child with this type of developmental screening and you have concerns, you should ask that it be done.

Developmental Assessments

You or a doctor may request additional screenings or assessments for your child. The following two organizations conduct these screenings free of charge for New Hanover County families and offer interventions for children should they qualify:

- **CDSA** (Children's Developmental Services Agency) – For children Birth to 36 months
 - The CDSA provides supports and services to children up to three years who have disabilities or delays in one or more areas of development. If your child qualifies for services, he/she will receive an IFSP (an Individual Family Service Plan.) This is a written document that, among other things, outlines the early intervention services that your child and family will receive. One guiding principal of the *IFSP* is that the family is a child's greatest resource, that a young child's needs are closely tied to the needs of his or her family.
 - (910) 251-5817
 - <http://www.bearly.nc.gov/index.php/contact/cdsa>
- **New Hanover County Schools Preschool Services** – For children 36 months through 5 years
 - (910) 251-6185 ext. 2300
 - Once your child is 36 months old, parents will work with educators to develop an IEP (Individual Education Plan) to help the child be successful in school. An IEP describes the goals the team sets for a child during the school year, as well as any special support needed to help achieve them. All children on **IEPs** have been identified as having a disability and therefore cannot be discriminated against because of their disability under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section **504**). All students with **IEPs** and all students on **504** plans are covered by this civil rights legislation.
 - [Http://www.nhcs.net](http://www.nhcs.net)
 - <http://www.nhcs.net/sped/>

Health Insurance

Health insurance may cover costs associated with your child's physical and behavioral needs.

- NC Healthy Start Foundation - All Ages
Health Check (Medicaid) and NC Health Choice for Children programs provide free or low cost health insurance to children and teens who qualify.

Health Check (Medicaid) is North Carolina's Medicaid program for children. NC Health Choice is health insurance for children of working families who don't qualify for Health Check (Medicaid) but who may not be able to afford private insurance. The programs are funded by a combination of federal, state and county governments.

For further information about health insurance and how to apply, contact the following organizations.

- <http://www.nchealthystart.org/>
- Health Insurance application information
<http://www.nchealthystart.org/public/childhealth/index.htm>
- For the uninsured: Cape Fear HealthNet capefearhealthnet.org

New Hanover County DSS (Department of Social Services) – All Ages

Social Services provides assistance that helps individuals and families - particularly children - achieve physical, mental and emotional wellness. It encompasses a broad range of services, including health care, welfare, social work, counseling, adoption and foster services. Social services intervenes at the request of heads of households or upon observing alarming situations within the home.

- Health Insurance Assistance – All Ages
- Transportation Assistance – All Ages
- Innovations (previously known as CAP) - All Ages
 - Now available in all 100 counties, the Innovations Program waives certain NC Medicaid requirements to furnish an array of home and community based services
 - New Hanover County http://www2.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local/dir_newh.htm
 - For information about other county's DSS contact information – go to www2.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local

New Hanover County Health Department - All Ages

A **health department** or **health** ministry is a part of government which focuses on issues related to the general **health** of the citizenry.

- CC4C – Ages 0-5
Also known as **Care Coordination for Children**, CC4C is a program focused on improving the quality of care for children while containing costs. This position provides formal care management to at-risk children aged birth to age 5 and assists the families of children served to understand and access quality,

coordinated, and effective health care. Responsibilities include assessing risk factors, developing a plan of care with the family and child, education, advocacy and collaboration with the Primary Care Provider. There is no cost to the family for this service.

- PCM
Pregnancy Care Management is a program focused on improving birth outcomes by providing formal case management to at-risk, pregnant women. PCM serves as a means for achieving prenatal and postpartum wellness through advocacy, communication, education and identifying resources. Responsibilities include assessing risk factors, developing a plan of care with the patient and collaboration with the Prenatal Care Provider.
- WIC – **(Women, Infants and Children)** Pregnancy – 5th birthday
WIC is a supplemental nutritional program for women, infants and children up to 5 years of age who meet health and socio-economic eligibility requirements. WIC provides healthy food including milk, eggs, juice, fruits and vegetables, as well as nutritional information and breastfeeding promotion and support.
 - New Hanover County <http://health.nhcgov.com/>
 - For information about other counties, go to)
- Nurses provide basic care and case management at all New Hanover County schools. Mental health services by referral are available at select schools for moderate to severe behavioral and emotional problems. *Please call your child's school for your school nurse's contact information or with questions regarding your child's medical needs while attending school.*
- Mobile Dental Unit offers services including oral exams, cleanings, sealants, fluoride treatments, X-rays, fillings and extractions to children ages 3 to 18 without accessible or established dental care or insurance.

Mental Health Services

- Mental illness is defined as “collectively all diagnosable mental disorders” or “health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.” The following organizations are resources for accessing mental health services in New Hanover County.
- Trillium – Ages 3 and Up
 - Manages, coordinates, and monitors mental health, developmental disability and substance abuse services; little or no cost. Covers New Hanover, Brunswick, Pender, and Onslow County.
 - <http://www.ecbhlme.org/-en/for-individuals-families/>
- Eastpointe – Ages 3 and Up
 - Manages, coordinates, and monitors mental health, developmental disability and substance abuse services; little or no cost. Covers Bladen and Columbus County.
 - <http://www.eastpointe.net/>

- RHA Mobile Crisis Unit – All Ages
 - Intensive on-site intervention to people of all ages who are experiencing a crisis due to mental health disturbances, developmental disabilities, or addiction. Covers Pender, New Hanover, and Brunswick County.
 - <http://www.rhbehavioralhealth.org/uploads/general/MCM%20Brochure.pdf>

Service Coordination

Service Coordination is an advocacy agency supporting adults and children with developmental disabilities to get the services that allow them to fulfill their goals in life. The agency works with people with developmental disabilities who are receiving services.

Community Care of the Lower Cape Fear - All Ages

- Providing care management and patient support services for Medicaid and Health Check enrollees; no cost.
- <http://www.carelcf.org/about-us/contact-us/>
- [Trillium:](#)

Early Childhood Preschool Programs (Free for eligible families based on socio-economic needs or developmental needs)

Head Start – Ages 3-5

- Federally-funded program that supports low-income 3-4 year old children and their families by helping meet their emotional, social, health, nutrition, and psychological needs and ensuring they are better prepared for school
- No cost
- Administered by New Hanover County Schools (910) 254-4340
- <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov>

NC Pre-K

- State-funded program designed to provide high quality education experiences to enhance school readiness
- No cost
- Administered by New Hanover County Schools (910) 254-4340
- <https://www.nhcs.net/prek>

Autism Services

- TEACCH – All Ages - Delivers services to people with autism and their families, trains professionals & parents about autism and autistics; no cost.
<https://www.teacch.com/regional-centers/wilmington-teacch-center>
- Autism Society of North Carolina (Statewide network of affiliated programs for families of children with special needs; puts parents in touch with other parents; no cost.)
<http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/index.php/get-help/families/support-group-link>
- [Oasisnc](#) – School for children with mild autism www.oasisnc.org
- Exceptional Educators

Additional Disability Services

- Disability Rights
 - A team of attorneys, advocates, paralegals and support staff provide advocacy and legal services at no charge for people with disabilities across North Carolina.
 - <http://www.disabilityrightsn.org/>
- Easter Seals UCP
 - Statewide program that aims to create opportunities, promote individual choice, and change the lives of children and adults with disabilities by maximizing their individual attention to live, learn and work in their communities.
 - <http://www.easterseals.com/NCVA/>
- Family Support Network
 - A statewide network of affiliated programs for families of children with special needs; puts parents in touch with other parents; no cost.
 - <http://www.fsnn.org/>
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) Assistance
ECAC – Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center - All Ages
 - This is a training and information center that provides free information and assistance with educational issues to parents of children with disabilities. They offer a lending library, newsletter, and a Parent Info Line answered by parents. Telephone toll free 800.962.6817 or 704.892.1321.
 - <http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/Default.aspx>
- Family Support Network (FSN of Southeastern NC Inc.)
Families benefit from the help and support that other families can provide. Family Support Network can put you in touch with other parents with similar experiences, can provide a “listening ear,” help you become a volunteer Support Parent, and connect you to resources in your community.
Phone: (910) 792-6133 or Toll Free : (877) 749-7011
fsnsoutheastern@gmail.com
- Smart Start Behavior and Inclusion Support Services
SSBIS Staff will address child-specific issues in a classroom that address the need for social emotional education or may be related to special needs diagnosis. They will work to prevent the expulsion of children from child care and will work alongside families to navigate the early intervention system as appropriate.
Phone: (910) 815-3731
www.newhanoverkids.org

Parenting Information

- Smart Start of New Hanover County (call 815-3731 for more information)
 - Parents as Teachers – for children ages 0-36 months at time of enrollment
 - Triple P Level 4 Group – for parents referred by DSS
 - Motherread/Fatheread – specific groups offered to community agencies.
<http://www.newhanoverkids.org/services/family-support/parenting-classes-services/>

- Coastal Horizons Center

- Healthychildren.org – All Ages
 - General information related to child health or for more specific guidance on parenting issues, immunization information, and other health information.
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx>

- Prevent Child Abuse
 - Resources available to take action against child abuse.
 - <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/contact-us/emergency-contacts>

Do you have questions about your or your child's health?

Call your doctor's office or Vitaline at 910-815-5188 or 888-815-5188

Additional Questions about these resources?

Call your local Health Check Coordinator at: 910-763-0200