

# Campaign Connections

Learn the Signs. Act Early.



A CDC Campaign to Raise Awareness of Childhood Development

December 2006

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**Dr. José Cordero,**

Past Director of NCBDDD

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## Q & A with Dr. José Cordero, Past Director of NCBDDD

### His thoughts on "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign

**D**r. José F. Cordero is a former Assistant Surgeon General of the Public Health Service and recently retired Director of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and



Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta.

A native of Puerto Rico and a pediatrician, Dr. Cordero has 27 years of experience

at CDC and extensive public health expertise in the fields of birth defects, developmental disabilities, infant and child health, immunizations, and efforts to promote the health of children and adults with disabilities throughout the lifespan. Upon his retirement, Dr. Cordero joined the academic team at the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus, and he remains a strong advocate for the Center's work with developmental disabilities.

**T**he campaign remains a highlight of Dr. Cordero's years at CDC, and he recently answered some questions for *Campaign Connections*,

providing his perspective and thoughts on the importance of increasing awareness of developmental milestones and the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign.

**Q** In your experience as a pediatrician, why is it important for health care professionals to be knowledgeable about and monitor developmental milestones?

**A** It is important for health care professionals to understand all aspects of childhood development, including social, cognitive, and emotional milestones – in addition to physical attributes like height and weight. If a child has a developmental delay and it is identified early, there is more opportunity for early intervention to help the child reach his or her full potential.

**Q** What are some benefits of regular dialogue and discussion between parents and health care professionals about a child's developmental milestones?

**A** By discussing a child's development regularly with health care professionals, parents build a trusting relationship with them. Developing a good relationship with

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your child's doctor will allow you to speak more openly about your child's development, including any suspected problems. Also, a doctor has access to information that you might not have and can work with you to figure out the best ways to better help your child.

**Q** What would be your top two pieces of advice for parents as they monitor their child's development?

**A** First, parents need to understand the full scope of the developmental milestones their child should be reaching. A child's first word is a precious moment, just like the first smile, reacting to your voice, engaging in play with you, and imitating others. Second, if parents suspect a delay, it is important that they talk to their child's doctor. A doctor will be able to screen for any developmental problems and point parents toward the best ways to help their child.

**Q** As the campaign reaches out to child care providers, what do you see as the benefit of this group working with health care professionals and parents to identify delays?

**A** Child care providers spend a significant amount of time with children in their care. They have the opportunity to see children play and interact with others and can observe the child's social, emotional, and cognitive development. They are also trusted resources for parents, providing information about how the child is progressing. With the materials and resources the campaign has developed, we can give them the tools they need to help educate parents.

**Q** What effects do you think grassroots and national partners have in supporting this campaign and the overall work of NCBDDD?

**A** The "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign is national in scope, with a primary goal of raising awareness among millions of health care professionals, child care providers, and parents with messaging and information. Partners and champions can make personal connections and help extend the campaign's reach into local communities. By creating these connections, the campaign and the center can have a greater impact on lives.

**Q** From your experience as a pediatrician, what do you recommend as effective ways for champions to reach health care professionals with campaign messages?

**A** A good place to start is to take the campaign kits to health care professionals in your area and encourage them to use these kits in their practice. The materials provide health care professionals with information about developmental milestones to help educate parents. I would also suggest that you share the campaign website with doctors and nurses, letting them know that the materials are accessible online for easy printing and distribution as they are talking to parents.

### Campaign Update: What's Going On?

#### Campaign Launches Child Care Provider Materials

**N**ew campaign materials designed specifically for child care providers were unveiled at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) annual conference November 8-11. Extensive research was conducted on the design

and content of the new materials, along with pre-testing and evaluation. This new Child Care Provider Resource Kit includes a CD-ROM with fact sheets about developmental milestones and developmental delays, a list of resources, tips on talking with parents about child development, and a developmental milestones checklist template. The kit also contains flyers, growth charts, and posters to be used in the classroom. Kits can be ordered on the campaign website. Get yours today!



<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/ccp/ordermaterials.html>

Thanks to the tremendous response from you, our campaign champions, Child Care Provider Outreach Week, held Nov. 13-17, was a tremendous success with more than 60 partners and champions registered from 24 states across the country. With your commitment and dedication, campaign messages are reaching more child care providers, health care professionals, and parents!

#### Health Care Professionals: Conference Season Wraps Up

With winter around the corner, the conference season for health care professionals is winding down. This year, the campaign reached more than 35,000 health care professionals through conference outreach.

Campaign representatives have attended the following conferences:

- Society of Pediatric Nurses
- Pediatric Academy Society
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Nursing

Additionally, campaign materials were sent to the following conferences:

- National Association of Nurse Practitioners
- National Black Nurses Association
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses

### **Customizable Template Materials Now Available**

Raising awareness of your organization and childhood development has now become easier than ever. Template versions of the campaign poster and flyer have been posted online. Now you can add your organization's name, address, phone number, and website to "Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials. Check them out!

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/partners/templatematerials.html>

### **Campaign Participates in Two New Podcasts**

Last issue, we told you about the growing popularity of podcasts and how the campaign has taken advantage of this new communication vehicle. CDC autism expert Dr. Marshalyn Yeargin-Allsopp was interviewed for "101 Uses for Baby Wipes," a podcast targeting fathers

and addressing children's issues. Listen now here: [http://graywebsite.com/articles/CDC\\_allso.mp3](http://graywebsite.com/articles/CDC_allso.mp3). This podcast was the most downloaded interview on the site for the year! Two more podcasts have also featured the campaign:

- Campaign spokesperson Eva La Rue was featured on MommyCast.com, which has almost 300,000 downloads per month. La Rue discussed the campaign and how it can make a difference in children's lives. Download the podcast here: <http://mommycast.com/2006/05/12/mommycast-show-85-eva-larue/>.
- Campaign champion Sofía Quezada was featured on "101 Uses for Baby Wipes," which has an audience of nearly 20,000 listeners per episode. Check out the podcast here: <http://101usesforbabywipes.blogspot.com/2006/04/episode-137-for-sunday-april-30th-2006.html>.

### **Goodyear Blimp Flies Campaign Messages Over NASCAR's Coca-Cola 600**

The Goodyear airship, displaying the campaign website and phone number, flew over Charlotte, North Carolina for NASCAR's Coca-Cola 600 race Memorial Day weekend. A crowd of 270,000 racing fans were in attendance - the biggest racing weekend of the year. The Coca-Cola 600 is second only to the Indianapolis 500 in attendance.

### **Campaign Continues To Achieve Success**

Thanks to the tremendous support from partners and champions like you, the campaign continues to achieve success. Here are few highlights from the year:

- Printed materials continued to be in high demand. Nearly 18,200 kits were ordered, including 8,244 Parent Resource Kits and 5,682 Health Care Professional Resource Kits.
- The campaign continued outreach to encourage placement of Public Service Announcements (PSAs), resulting in television PSAs airing in 49 markets with 838 placements.
- The campaign website also experienced a significant increase in activity. Here are some highlights:
  - More than 140,500 new users visited the site.
  - More than 670,000 pages were viewed.
  - More than 28,300 materials were downloaded from the site.

### **And the Winner is...**

Over the past several months, the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign has been nominated for numerous awards for its impact on raising awareness of childhood development among parents, health care professionals, and child care providers. Congratulations; your support as partners and champions plays a critical role in the campaign's success!

Take a look at the awards the campaign has won:

- 2006 HHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service
- 2006 PRSA Silver Anvil Award in the Public Service Campaign category for Government
- 2006 *PRWeek* Awards Finalist for Best Use of Research
- 2006 SABRE Awards Finalist in the category of Social Marketing for Government Agencies
- 2006 Communicator Awards Award of Distinction for the a PSA campaign

## Reaching Out...

### Reaching Out to Non-traditional Audiences: Campaign's Newest Endeavor

To continue broadening its reach to parents, health care professionals, and child care providers across the country, the campaign is embarking on dedicated outreach to several nontraditional target audiences.

With the help of campaign partners, we have been successful over the past year in reaching more mainstream audiences. Now we are focusing efforts on African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic, and Native American audiences to continue building awareness of childhood development in as many spheres as possible.

So far, the campaign has secured 17 placements in organizational publications and distributed nearly 2,000 campaign materials to grassroots organizations' members. Through this outreach, the campaign has partnered with 25 well-known organizations, including:

- Junior League
- National Urban League
- YMCA
- League of United Latin American Citizens
- Mommy & Me Association

## SPOTLIGHT ON:

### Theresa Diaz Campaign Champion, Texas

As a mother of two and former teacher, Theresa Diaz is familiar with children's developmental milestones. Before her son was a year old, Theresa began to notice signs of developmental delay.



Theresa and son Merced playing in his sandbox.

"I knew something was wrong with Merced. After the first 10 months, he lost language progression," said Theresa.

"Even though I suspected a problem, Merced was 2½ years old before he was officially diagnosed with autism."

Read Theresa's complete story here: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/partners/partnerarchives/spotlight\\_TheresaDiaz.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/partners/partnerarchives/spotlight_TheresaDiaz.html)

### Have an inspiring story to tell?

If you or someone you know has an inspiring story to tell as a result of becoming involved in the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign, please send it to [actearly@cdc.gov](mailto:actearly@cdc.gov). We're always looking for success stories to share with partners and campaign champions throughout the country, and we want to hear from you!

## Kudos to You!

### Special thanks to:

- Campaign champions Dianne Burdette and Ritamaire Giosa for distributing pilot campaign materials to child care providers in their local area.
- Campaign champion Sofia Quezada for participating in an interview discussing the campaign on the "101 Uses for Baby Wipes" podcast.

## Want to get involved?

If you are looking for ways to get more involved with the campaign, be sure to visit the Partner section of the website ([www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly)) and check out our "How to Get Involved" page for ideas. You'll find ideas and tools to help you reach out to your communities, friends, and family to help them learn the signs and act early.

### Contact Us

Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention  
"Learn the Signs. Act Early."

E-mail:  
[actearly@cdc.gov](mailto:actearly@cdc.gov)

Web Address:  
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