



## Helping Children Succeed In School

(NAPSA)—The first five years of life are the years of learning that shape kids' futures, child care experts advise. That's why health screenings are so crucial to future success—and why many parents are pleased to learn about an easy and effective way to make sure their little ones are ready for school.

Free access to an online health screening for kids 5 and under is available from Easter Seals. Parents and caregivers can take the online health survey and share the results with a pediatrician or other health care provider at well-baby checkups and back-to-school doctor visits.

The screening takes about 20 minutes and can show whether kids are meeting their milestones and are developing on track.

### Why It's Important

More than a million children with unidentified delays and disabilities enter school every year. These health issues put them far behind their peers and have a lasting, negative effect on their ability to meet their full potential.

The good news: Kids with delays, disabilities and autism can make significant progress if they get support early in life.

Explains Dr. Patricia Wright, National Director of Autism Services, Easter Seals: "Thanks to the CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, the *Ages & Stages Questionnaires*® [ASQ] is now available on Easter Seals' Make the First Five Count website to make sure children are achieving their developmental milestones during the important first five years of life and are ready for kindergarten—and what to do if they're not." As the nation's largest nonprofit provider of early intervention ser-



**Raise your hand if your child is ready for school—an online test can help you tell.**

vices, Easter Seals knows what's possible when kids get the support they need...and what happens when they don't.

### What Else You Can Do

Regardless of how your youngsters develop, there are ways to help them develop a love of learning:

- Read to them. In young children, it nurtures an interest in language, words and communication.
- Play word games.
- Encourage children to write original stories and illustrate them with their own drawings.
- Show them the value of math by making connections to everyday life with "teachable math moments," from cutting slices of pizza to getting gas for the car.
- Praise your children's academic progress. Tell them that you are proud of their efforts. When students are confident in their abilities, they enjoy learning.

### Free Assessment Survey

To help ensure your child is school ready, you can visit [www.MaketheFirstFiveCount.org](http://www.MaketheFirstFiveCount.org).