



## What is a developmental delay?

Children develop very differently and have their own pace.

However, some children are significantly slower in their development or show noticeable difficulties in individual areas of development compared to other children their age.

Some children learn to walk, run or hop more slowly than others. Others are often insecure and clumsy with the movements of their arms, hands and fingers. **Occupational therapy (Ergotherapie)** or **physical therapy (Physiotherapie)** can help here.

Some children find it difficult to understand connections or to remember things. **Special education (Heilpädagogik)** can help here.

Some children have a pronunciation that is unclear or difficult to understand. Some children speak only a few sentences or in incomplete sentences. Other children have great difficulty understanding what is being said to them. **Speech therapy (Logopädie)** can help here.

You can find more information on multilingual language development here:



Some children find it difficult to perceive, correctly categorize and express their feelings. Others find it difficult to understand the rules of interaction with other people. Some children cannot concentrate well or are very restless. Other children are forgetful. Some children have many fears. Other children have strong outbursts of anger, often argue with other children or are often alone. Occupational therapy (**Ergotherapie**) or psychotherapy (**Psychotherapie**) can help here.

Sometimes a developmental delay is also referred to as a mental disorder.

It is very important to see a doctor or psychotherapist if you have a mental disorder. There is no reason to be ashamed. Many children and young people are affected.

Some children are only delayed in one area, while others are affected in several areas.

By visiting a paediatrician or an early intervention centre, special support can be provided for the child. This support is called **early intervention (Frühförderung)**.

## What is early intervention (Frühförderung)?

The early intervention professionals help the child to learn what is difficult for them. Parents are also given advice on how they can support their child. Specialists from various professions work together in early intervention programmes (doctors, psychologists, speech therapists).

Parents can come to the early intervention centre (Frühförderstelle). Or the early intervention team can come to the family's home or day care centre.

The support is free of charge for parents. The health insurance company (Krankenkasse) and the social services office (Sozialamt) pay for the support. Parents must submit an application for this. The people at the early intervention centre will help you with this. Children can receive early support for as long as they need it: From birth until they start school.

## What is a disability?

A developmental delay is not a disability.

Some people cannot do something at all or can do it worse than most other people their age. For example: impairments in seeing, hearing, thinking or walking. A disability is likely to last longer than 6 months.

## What can I do if my child has a developmental delay?

Take your child to the paediatrician. They will examine your child's hearing and vision. If the paediatrician is unsure about your child's condition, he/she will send you and your child to a specialized institution, for example a social paediatric centre (sozialpädiatrisches Zentrum SPZ). You can also take your child to an early intervention centre (Frühförderstelle). An initial diagnosis will be carried out there. A support plan will then be drawn up for your child.

In the case of certain impairments, your child is entitled to individual support at the day care centre. This is called integration assistance (Eingliederungshilfe). The social services office (Sozialamt) examines each case individually.

## Who can help if a developmental delay is suspected in my child?

- Your paediatricians
- Leuchtturm (Halle/Saale)
- Lebenstraum e.V. (Halle/Saale)
- Social Paediatric Centres (sozialpädiatrisches Zentrum) SPZ
- EmlSA (Migration und Inklusion in Sachsen – Anhalt) (EmlSA@lamsa.de)

### SPZ Magdeburg



### SPZ Dessau



### SPZ Halle



### What is speech therapy (Logopädie)?

Speech therapists practice speaking, swallowing and language with children. There are also exercises to do at home. You need to practice regularly with your child.

### What is physical therapy (Physiotherapie)?

Physical therapists use exercises to help children move their organs and muscles better or to relieve pain.

### What is occupational therapy (Ergotherapie)?

Occupational therapists use exercises for moving arms and legs, for the hands, for remembering or for relaxing.

### What is psychotherapy (Psychotherapie)?

Psychotherapists talk to children about their feelings (for example, fears and worries) and help them to deal with their feelings.

### What is special education (Heilpädagogik)?

Special education professionals work with games and exercises. This enables the children to process their behaviours better and find new ways of behaving. The child can better understand how to deal with their emotions.



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