

Preface

This guide is divided into two separate parts: Part I, Child Development, provides an overview of how children develop, including the tasks they must accomplish, what's happening in the growing brain, typical characteristics and suggested behaviors for effective parenting, and indicators of possible developmental lags or trauma.

Part II, The Development of Language and Conceptual Abilities in Children, is presented in chart form. It describes (again by age group) what things the typical child might be expected to say or do at that age or stage, and what the typical child can be expected to know and how the child thinks and interacts with the world, along with suggestions for caseworker and caregiver responses. Along with the previous information, appropriate cautions are also listed for each age group, as well as behaviors that may signal possible developmental problems and/or trauma in a child.

This guide is intended to be useful and beneficial for caseworkers (child welfare professionals and others who provide services to children and families) and caregivers (birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, kin, and others who meet the daily needs of children) as they strive to understand and support the development of children.

We hope that it will continue to be a valuable resource for yet another generation of children and youth.

