

## Supporting children with learning concerns

When patients present with learning concerns, there are many supports families can pursue. The below questions and information are intended to help identify which supports may be most appropriate for a given child.




### Top questions to ask families around reported learning concerns

- 1** What type of school does the child attend (public, private, homeschool, charter)?
- 2** What was the child's performance on any school-based standardized measures (MAP testing)?
- 3** Is the child receiving any intervention support?  
*If yes,*
  - In what subject?
  - What has the school shared about improvements?
  - How long have they been receiving support?
- 4** Does the child already have a 504 Plan, Individualized Education Plan, or Individual Service Plan?  
*If yes,*
  - Are the formal supports meant to address the learning concerns you currently have or are they meant to support your child for a different reason (anxiety, ADHD)?
  - Is the child improving with the support that has been provided?
- 5** What do you feel is missing from your child's support plan and/or what are you hoping may change regarding support for your child?
- 6** What do you believe an evaluation from the Center for Child Development will provide regarding learning concerns?

## Helping families formally request a school-based evaluation:

Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. A referral may be made by contacting the Director of Special Education for the home school district. A response is required within 15 business days following receipt of the written request. A sample letter to request an evaluation can be found here: [understood.org/en/articles/download-sample-letters-for-requesting-evaluations-and-reports](https://understood.org/en/articles/download-sample-letters-for-requesting-evaluations-and-reports).



The Center for Child Development (CCD) is an **evaluation clinic** serving children up to 18 years of age with developmental concerns. We also treat some children following their diagnoses.

## Physician referral

(may be required by insurance)

- **Internal referral via Children's Epic**  
Send an ambulatory referral to Center for Child Development (CCD).
- **External referral via Epic**  
Send to CHW MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH. Include Center for Child Development in the notes/comments.
- **Via fax**  
(414) 266-3735
- **Call the Mental and Behavioral Health Access Center**  
(414) 266-3339

## Helping families navigate the Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process in schools:

RTI/MTSS is an important support available to students in school settings. The academic interventions available through a school RTI/MTSS system are required to be evidence-based and are typically at an intensive level, which has the opportunity to prevent long-standing learning concerns for a large percentage of school-age children. It is not a process meant to delay access to special education but is instead a process to access necessary intervention much faster (prevention model) and sometimes even at a higher intensity than the special education programming can provide. Services are provided by interventionists, typically with specialized training in areas like reading or math. Many children make good progress with intensive interventions in place, suggesting that the learning concerns they are having are not likely a true learning disability and, therefore, do not require special education. Schools are typically determining students in need of RTI support through screening that occurs throughout the school year (data-based decision making). However, families can contact their teacher directly if they have concerns about the child's academic performance and feel that a Tier 2/3 intervention may be appropriate. This link has great parent-friendly questions to ask about the RTI/MTSS process, as it will vary by school and district [understood.org/en/articles/checklist-questions-to-ask-your-school-about-rti](https://understood.org/en/articles/checklist-questions-to-ask-your-school-about-rti).

Our website provides a wealth of resources to share with families to help them respond to their child's academic and developmental struggles. Visit [childrenswi.org/CCDresources](https://childrenswi.org/CCDresources).

