



How CRCSN Helps Families

WHAT IS CRCSN?

Colorado Responds to Children with Special Needs (CRCSN) is the birth defects monitoring and prevention program at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. CRCSN began operating in 1989 under the guidance of an advisory board of parents, physicians, advocates and representatives from state agencies.

WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES OF CRCSN?

- ❖ To monitor the occurrence of birth defects
- ❖ To help prevent disabilities by connecting children and families with early intervention services in their home communities
- ❖ To develop a statewide database of young children with birth defects, developmental disabilities, or selected conditions that put children at risk for developmental delay
- ❖ To provide accurate counts of children with special needs to other programs and agencies
- ❖ To provide information to researchers with the goal of preventing birth defects and developmental delays in the future

WHO IS IN CRCSN?

To be included in CRCSN, a child must be a Colorado resident under three years old and diagnosed with an eligible condition. These conditions include selected medical diagnoses, medical risk factors for developmental delay and two maternal risk factors (maternal age less than 16 years or no prenatal visits in combination with less than a high school diploma). About 6,500 children or 12% of births in Colorado each year are identified because they meet CRCSN eligibility criteria.

HOW DO COMMUNITIES USE CRCSN?

CRCSN collaborates with community agencies such as public health departments, community nursing services or early childhood programs to connect families with services in their own communities. A representative such as a public health nurse or an experienced parent calls or visits the family. Most families with young children are not aware of the resources available to them and must search out services on a hit or miss basis. The services may include:

- ❖ Developmental evaluation
- ❖ Early intervention programs
- ❖ Physical and speech therapy

- ❖ Public health nursing
- ❖ Specialty medical care
- ❖ Nutrition services
- ❖ Parenting classes
- ❖ Parent support groups
- ❖ Financial assistance

HOW ARE FAMILIES HELPED BY CRCSN?

Families relate that they find the contact with the local representative to be valuable. CRCSN called 237 families who had been contacted by a local representative. Of those, 65% said that they learned about available services or resources, and 40% said that talking to the local representative helped their child or their family.

To quote the parents:

“Nice to know somebody out there is there for us and is following up with us.”

“The representative made us aware of programs offered and available to us. They

always call to make sure that we’re doing OK and continually remind us that they are available if we need anything.”

“They have taught our child many things and helped us understand our son better.”

“The representative referred parents to First Steps and child is receiving monthly visits.”

“They gave me information on what to do, where to go, and listened to us about the way we felt.”

“Representative helped mother get information about Child Find which did developmental screening and hearing tests on child.”

HOW IS THE PRIVACY OF FAMILIES PROTECTED?

The confidentiality of information collected for CRCSN is protected by Colorado state law and by strict procedures.

- ❖ CRCSN is completely confidential.
- ❖ Parents are in charge. Parents control whether information about their child is shared with service providers.

For more information contact:

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Colorado Department
 of Public Health
 and Environment

For more information on healthy pregnancies or birth defects contact the

March of Dimes

888-663-4637

e-mail: resourcecenter@modimes.org

website: www.modimes.org