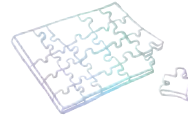


Research findings indicate that young children with disabilities or at-risk for delays often take longer than other children to learn the connection between something they do and a rewarding or interesting response from people or objects.

The early childhood practice described in this brochure is based on findings presented in a practice-based research synthesis conducted at the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development by M. D. Hutto (2003). Latency to learn in contingency studies of young children with disabilities or developmental delays. *Bridges*, 1(5). Visit www.researchtopractice.info to read or download the complete research synthesis and/or a user-friendly, illustrated summary, *Bottomlines*, 1(5). Printed copies are available from Winterberry Press (www.wbpress.com). All opinions expressed are those of the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division, funder of the work of the RTC (H324K010005).



Evidence-Based Practice Guides

Additional practice guides are available from the RTC for this and other important early childhood topics.

Related materials also are available as part of *Solutions* evidence-based tool kits.

Please see descriptions of these resources and information for ordering under "Products" at

www.researchtopractice.info

Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development
Center for Evidence-Based Practices
Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute
828-255-0470 ♦ 800-824-1182.

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Cornerpiece

Patience pays!

Whoa, there!

A child with disabilities or developmental delays often takes longer than other young children to learn that what he or she does can make something interesting happen

**An
Evidence-Based
Early Childhood
Intervention
Practice**

Take things slowly...

Allow plenty of time for a child with a disability or delay to realize that his or her behavior is making something happen



Mom knows it takes a little longer for her child with disabilities to learn the connection between her behavior and an interesting response.

What is the practice?

Children with disabilities or developmental delays often experience delays in learning the connection between what they do and what happens next. This delay is called a “latency to learn.”

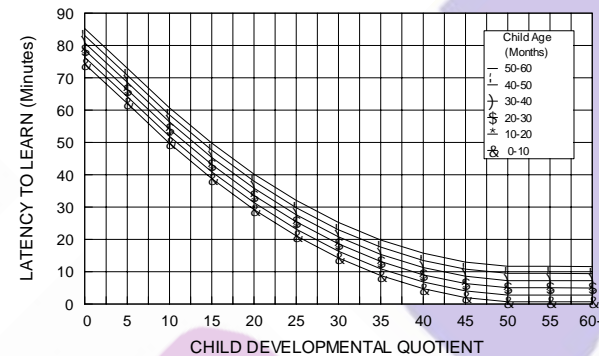
You can determine approximately how long a child with a disability or delay will take to learn the connection between his or her behavior and its consequences by using the simple steps described in this practice guide.

How do we do it?

Three things influence a child’s latency to learn: his type of disability, severity of disability, and chronological age.

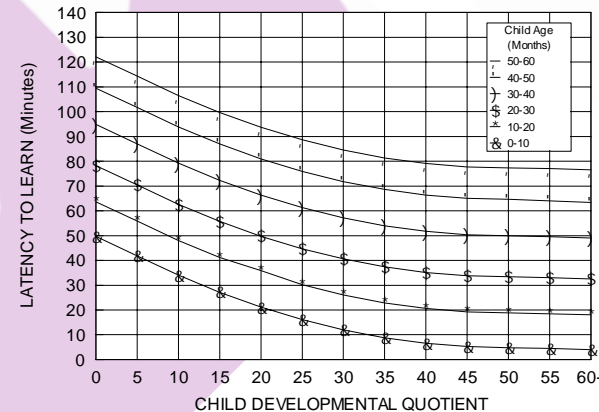
- 1 Decide the primary type of disability—physical or non-physical—and consult the corresponding chart from the two printed below.

LATENCY TO LEARN AMONG CHILDREN WITH NON-PHYSICAL DISABILITIES



Examples: general developmental delays, prematurity, failure to thrive, chromosomal abnormalities such as Down syndrome, and others.

LATENCY TO LEARN AMONG CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES



Examples: motor impairments, cerebral palsy, multiple disabilities including vision or hearing impairments, and others.

- 2 Calculate the child’s developmental quotient (DQ) and find the developmental quotient along the bottom line of the chart. To calculate the developmental quotient, divide the child’s functional developmental age (DA) by his chronological age (CA), then multiply the answer by 100. (DQ = DA/CA x 100).

- 3 Slide your finger from the DQ score up to the line that matches the child’s age in months.
- 4 Slide your finger to the left until it intersects the Latency to Learn line. It may take the child this long to learn the connection between his behavior and a rewarding event that follows it.

Take a look!

Here are two examples of how this practice guide’s charts can be used:



- If a child has a non-physical developmental delay, has a developmental quotient of 30, and is 25 months old, you would expect that the child might take 20 minutes to learn the connection between his or her behavior and what happens next.
- If a child has a delay related to a physical disability, has a developmental quotient of 20, and is 35 months old, you would expect the child might take 65 minutes to learn the connection between his or her behavior and its consequences.

Is it working?

Did you take into consideration the type of disability, severity of disability, and child’s age when choosing the chart to use?

Were you able to determine the approximate latency using the appropriate chart?

Did you allow enough time for the child to make the connection between his or her actions and the consequences?