

# The first five years of life really count.

They're incredible years of learning that shape kids' futures. Yet every year, more than a million young children with unidentified delays and disabilities enter school with learning and health issues that put them far behind their peers and have a lasting, negative effect on their ability to meet their full potential.

But when kids get the right treatment early in life, they're ready to learn alongside their peers and build lifelong skills. Known as early intervention services, these therapies work to strengthen kids physical, social, emotional and intellectual abilities well before kindergarten.

That's why Easter Seals created Make the First Five Count®, to engage parents around the importance of early identification and early intervention – because children only receive these services when parents follow their instincts and take action early if something doesn't feel quite right.



## MAKE THE FIRST FIVE COUNT®

Go to [MaketheFirstFiveCount.org](http://MaketheFirstFiveCount.org) to make sure your child is reaching his or her developmental milestones:

1. Take a simple, trusted online screening to monitor your child's development or identify any potential delays. Learn what every parent needs to know about child development and where to go for help.
2. Sign Easter Seals' petition to protect and grow funding for the Part C early intervention program of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – an essential way for all families to facilitate their child's development.
3. Share the message about the importance of early intervention with five family members or friends; and tell those five to pass it along to five more.
4. Speak out over Facebook and Twitter. Make sure all moms and dads are in the know.
5. Learn from other families experiences, read stories that count – Kyle, Ivy Joy, Conner, brothers Scott and Thomas, and sisters Chelsy and Rebeka are just a few.

### Early Intervention Counts for Kids



Kyle



Ivy Joy



Conner



Scott & Thomas



Chelsy & Rebeka

Courtesy of CVS Caremark, Easter Seals is offering the Ages & Stages Questionnaires® at [MaketheFirstFiveCount.org](http://MaketheFirstFiveCount.org), giving all parents free access to this valuable screening tool from Brookes Publishing.

Easter Seals is partnered with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., H.O.P.E. Health and Wellness Initiative in an effort to provide health outreach and prevention education to the members of National Baptist Convention churches throughout the country.





# Health Outreach Prevention Education

***“Building Healthy Communities - Congregation by Congregation”***

## Easter Seals *Make the First Five Count* Sunday “How To”

The National Baptist Convention has designated April 2012 as Easter Seals Awareness Month, specifically promoting “*Make the First Five Count* Sunday” on April 1, 2012. National Baptist Church congregations are asked to spread the word about the importance of early intervention and developmental delays on *Make the First Five Count* Sunday by:

- ◆ Downloading the *Make The First Five Count* Sunday Worship Guide Insert for distribution to your membership on Sunday, April 1, 2012.
- ◆ Distributing Easter Seals *Make the First Five Count* fact sheets to members of your congregation – asking them to share this important message with their family members and friends.
- ◆ Asking members of the congregation to join Easter Seals in our efforts to encourage Congress to not cut funding for Part C Early Intervention Programs by signing the *Make the First Five Count* petition at [MaketheFirstFiveCount.org](http://MaketheFirstFiveCount.org).
- ◆ Encouraging parents to complete the Ages & Stages Questionnaires® at [MaketheFirstFiveCount.org](http://MaketheFirstFiveCount.org) giving all parents free access to a valuable screening tool from Brookes Publishing.
- ◆ Encouraging members of your congregation to go to Easter Seals’ Website [[www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com)] to find the location closest to them where they can access Easter Seals screenings and services.

### **Speaking Point:**

The first five years of children’s lives are years of incredible learning that shape their futures. This, alone, is a reason to assure that all children have access to the resources they will need to learn and grow. Every year, millions of young children with unidentified disabilities and developmental delays enter school with learning and health issues that put them far behind their peers and have a lasting, negative effect on their ability to meet their full potential. Easter Seals strives to be part of the solution in this area. We serve more than 90,000 children each year through early intervention programs – using therapies that work to strengthen children’s physical, social, emotional, and intellectual abilities from infancy.

If you have any questions regarding this partnership or need additional information, contact:

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### **National Baptist Congress of Christian Education**

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Dr. Michael O Minor, NBC, USA National Director and National H.O.P.E. Coordinator