

# What is a Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician?

If your child has a developmental, learning, or behavioral problem, a *Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician* has the training and expertise to evaluate and care for your child. Developmental-behavioral pediatricians possess training and experience to consider, in their assessments and treatments, the medical and psychosocial aspects of children's and adolescents' developmental and behavioral problems.

## What training do developmental-behavioral pediatricians have?

Developmental-behavioral pediatricians are medical doctors who have completed

- Four years of medical school
- Three years of residency training in pediatrics
- Board certification in pediatrics
- Additional subspecialty training in developmental-behavioral pediatrics

In 2002, the American Board of Pediatrics began certifying developmental-behavioral pediatricians via a comprehensive examination process. To determine whether a pediatrician is subspecialty board certified in developmental and behavioral pediatrics, go to [www.abp.org/ABPWebSite](http://www.abp.org/ABPWebSite) and scroll down to "Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics" under "Area of Certification."

**Developmental-behavioral pediatricians evaluate, counsel, and provide treatment for children, adolescents, and their families with a wide range of developmental and behavioral difficulties, including**

- Learning disorders including dyslexia, writing difficulties, math disorders, and other school-related learning problems
- Attention and behavioral disorders including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and associated conditions including oppositional-defiant behavior, conduct problems, depression, and anxiety disorders
- Tics, Tourette syndrome, and other habit disorders
- Regulatory disorders including sleep disorders, feeding problems, discipline difficulties, complicated toilet-training issues, enuresis (bedwetting), and encopresis (soiling)
- Developmental disabilities including cerebral palsy, spina bifida, mental retardation, autism spectrum disorders, and visual and hearing impairments
- Delayed development in speech, language, motor skills, and thinking ability
- Behavioral and developmental problems complicating the full range of pediatric chronic illnesses and disabling conditions (for example, genetic disorders, epilepsy, prematurity, diabetes, asthma, cancer)

## Where can I find a developmental-behavioral pediatrician?

Developmental-behavioral pediatricians practice in hospitals, major medical centers, clinics, private practice settings, rehabilitation centers, schools, and community centers.

Often a developmental-behavioral pediatrician works collaboratively with a team of professionals. This team may include a psychologist, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, neurodevelopmental disabilities pediatrician, child psychiatrist, child neurologist, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, educational diagnostician, or clinical social worker.

## Developmental-behavioral pediatricians work closely with parents, families, and schools.

Developmental-behavioral pediatricians understand that children's development and behavior happen first and foremost in the context of the family. They seek to understand the family's view of the problem and the effect of the child's problem on the family. Developmental-behavioral pediatricians advocate for their patients with developmental and behavioral problems by working closely with schools, preschools, and other agencies involved with developmental care and education.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

From your doctor

