



Jacob's Ladder Receives 3-Year, \$500,000 Grant in Partnership with HealthLinc for Early Years Initiative

VALPARAISO, IN—Jacob's Ladder Pediatric Rehab Center, in partnership with HealthLinc, has received a 3-year, \$500,000 grant from Early Years Initiative to support [Strong Beginnings](#). This program, sponsored by the Early Learning Initiative through generous Eli Lilly support, aims to improve milestone acquisition in newborn to toddler patients. Jacob's Ladder and HealthLinc will offer regular developmental clinics at well-child checks for patients 0 to 3.

Strong Beginnings helps families and providers track and support children's developmental milestones with accessible, consistent screenings. These screenings create a detailed milestone history, enabling early detection and timely support to foster a child's growth and development.

The Jacob's Ladder therapists will use the developmental screening tool, ASQ-3, and others (language, hearing, vision, reflex maturation, sleep/breathing quality, etc.) to identify infants and toddlers displaying signs of substandard quality growth markers and subsequently provide parent training, home program activities and referrals to community organizations and services to assist with helping the child stay on track with their peers.

"Jacob's Ladder is thrilled to partner with HealthLinc to provide our Strong Beginnings milestone screenings during pediatric well-child visits," states Mariann Frigo, executive director of Jacob's Ladder Pediatric Rehab Center. "The CDC reports one in six children are diagnosed with some type of delay, and the Strong Beginnings screenings are a preventative program to help infants and toddlers stay on track through parent training, sequential screenings and collaborative programs with HealthLinc pediatric specialists. Thanks to a grant through the Early Years Initiative, this three-year program will track and report the success of helping our little ones stay on track."

"At HealthLinc, we believe every child deserves a strong start to a healthy and thriving future. Through screenings, parent coaching and hands-on guidance, our dedicated team is committed to identifying and addressing the precursors to milestone challenges, empowering parents and helping children stay on track," states Melissa Mitchell, HealthLinc CEO. The extended visits with pediatricians will include vaccines, developmental milestone screenings, hands-on coaching for milestone activities at home, 'Food as Medicine,' 'Prescription for Play,' parent coaching, lactation and feeding techniques, safe infant positioning and more.

"Together with Jacobs Ladder, we're creating a foundation for lifelong health and success in our youngest community members," declares Mitchell.

Strong Beginnings screenings are available for newborns through three-year-old children. For more information about the Jacob's Ladder and HealthLinc Strong Beginnings program, contact Mariann Frigo at Mariann.Frigo@jacobskids.org or Jodie Wexelberg at jwexelberg@healthlincchc.org.