

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ABSTRACT**

Implementation of "Balabharosa" Schemes for Early Identification of Developmental Delays, Neuro developmental Concerns and Physical Impairments in Children (0 - 5 Yrs) in Telangana State - Guidelines - Orders - Issued.

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DEPARTMENT FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN, DISABLED AND SENIOR
CITIZENS (PROG.II)

G.O.Rt.No.108,

Dated: 24.07.2025.

Read:

From the Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens and Transgender Persons, Hyderabad, Lr.No.SIII/830/2025, dt:09.04.2025.

ORDER:

In the reference 1st read above, the Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens and Transgender Persons, Hyderabad has stated that, a scheme titled "Balabharosa" is proposed to recognize the developmental delays in early childhood which is crucial to prevent emergence of disabilities in Children and to enable timely intervention for their overall development. The National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India have developed Systematic Milestone Assessment and Risk Testing (SmartCheck-42 Questionnaire) Tool which is aimed at comprehensive screening of all children in the age group of 0 - 5 years for early identification of developmental delays, neuro developmental disorders, physical impairments, Multi-Disciplinary intervention can be initiated on children identified as being at risk through this tool. She has enclosed the draft guidelines for conduct of screening, assessment and subsequent referrals to medical facilities, and requested to issue necessary orders for implementation of "Balabharosa scheme" across Telangana State for the benefit of children aged 0-5 years.

2. Government, after careful examination of the matter hereby accord permission for implementation of "Balabharosa scheme" across Telangana State for the benefit of children aged 0-5 years.

3. The Guidelines for "Balabharosa scheme" is annexed to this order.

4. The Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens and Transgender Persons, Hyderabad shall take necessary action accordingly.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF TELANGANA)

ANITA RAMACHANDRAN,
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.

To,
The Director,
Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities,
Senior Citizens and Transgender Persons, Hyderabad.

(P.T.O.)

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The Director, Women Development & Child Welfare, Hyderabad.
The Commissioner, Health and Family Welfare Department.
The Director, Public Health & Family Welfare.
All the District Collectors in the State.
All the DMHO in the State of Telangana.

Copy to:

The Health, Medical and Family Welfare Department.
Telangana Secretariat, Hyderabad.
OSD to Hon'ble C.M.
P.S. to Hon'ble Minister for W&CW.
P.S. to Hon'ble Minister for SC, ST, MW and DEPwD, SC & TGP.
P.A. to Secretary to Government, Dept., for WCD&SC.
SF/SC.

// FORWARDED :: BY ORDER //


SECTION OFFICER
RPS

ANNEXURE

G.O.Rt.No.108, Dept., for WCD & SC (PROG.II), dated:24-07-2025

Systematic Milestone Assessment and Risk Testing for Early Identification of Developmental Delays, Neuro developmental Concerns and Physical Impairments in Children (0 – 5 Yrs) and provide timely medical interventions to reduce the likelihood of disability

Title : Balabharosa

I. Background

Early childhood is a formative period where rapid growth occurs, and any setbacks in addressing developmental issues can have lasting repercussions. Timely identification of these delays is essential, as it allows for appropriate support and resources to be provided, which can greatly enhance a child's overall development. Early identification of disabilities in the age group of 0-5 years will facilitate necessary corrections, either surgical or Therapeutic and it will ensure children to lead disability free life or cope better with disability in their adulthood.

National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India developed an Early Identification of developmental delay Tool aimed at early identification of any disabilities under five years of age. The Ministry of WCD has also issued guidelines for identification of disabilities in children.

II. Objective: Comprehensive screening of all children in the age group of 0 – 5 years in Telangana State for early identification of developmental **delays**, neuro developmental disorders, physical impairments and providing timely intervention, support for the children/families promoting overall well-being of children in the State.

III. Systematic Milestone Assessment and Risk Testing (Smart Check-42 Tool): The Smart Check-42 is a systematic and user-friendly **screening** tool aimed at early identification of disabilities under five years of age. This tool is designed for grassroots-level workers, parents, and caregivers, ensuring that every child receives timely monitoring and intervention when necessary.

The Smart Check-42 tool consists of 42 structured questions, covering all critical domains of child development, including:

- Motor Development (Gross & Fine Motor)
- Speech & Language Skills
- Cognitive Abilities
- Social & Emotional Development
- Play & Adaptive Behavior
- Hearing & Vision Screening
- Behavioral Patterns & Neuro developmental Concerns
- Physical & Genetic Conditions

The tool follows a fail-one-referral model, meaning that if a child fails to meet even one milestone, further assessment is recommended for early diagnosis and intervention.

Features of the Tool

- ✓ Universal Accessibility – Designed for all children, without exclusions, regardless of background or condition.
- ✓ Easy Administration – Structured in a simple, easy-to-understand format to be used by Anganwadi centres and ASHA workers, parents, and volunteers with minimal training.
- ✓ Efficient Screening Process – The tool is designed to be quick and practical, ensuring early detection without over complicating the process.
- ✓ Referral System – If any concerns arise, children are referred to higher healthcare centres for further evaluation.

IV. Target beneficiaries: 0 – 5 years children in Telangana State.

V. Coordination

The Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens & Transgender Persons, Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Medical Health & Family Welfare Department, National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Govt. of India will collaborate by aligning their goals, sharing resources, and developing effective strategies to ensure the successful implementation of project.

VI. Awareness and Training Programs:

- ✓ An online master training program focused on the utilization of the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (NIEPID) SmartCheck-42 tool will be conducted by a team of experts from NIEPID, Government of India. This training is intended for all the Supervisors, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Project, Women Development & Child Welfare Department (WD & CW) and Health, Medical & Family Welfare Department in the state.
- ✓ The ICDS Supervisors will be designated as Master Trainers, responsible for imparting further training to Anganwadi teachers / ASHA workers under their jurisdiction. These training programs aim to equip the participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively utilize the tool in their respective roles.

VII. IEC Materials

- ✓ The Department for Empowerment of PwDs, Senior Citizens & Transgender Persons will oversee developing, printing and distribution of the IEC material to District Welfare Officers. The District Welfare Officers of WCD & SC are responsible for further distribution of the IEC materials to Anganwadi Centers within their jurisdiction to effectively showcase the IEC materials in their Centres, thereby enhancing public awareness.

VIII. Screening of Children for early identification of developmental delays

- ✓ A mobile application app shall be developed to facilitate early identification and provide subsequent services

- ✓ Screening and early identification of children with developmental delays will be implemented across all 33 districts in the state. NIEPID SmartCheck-42 tool (questionnaire) will be made available to all Anganwadi Teachers for primary screening of the children.

Role of Anganwadi Teachers: The Anganwadi Teacher will screen all the children from 0 – 5 years with the NIEPID SmartCheck-42 tool in convergence with RBSK teams and Asha workers.

- ✓ The Anganwadi Teachers shall utilize the mobile application designed for this purpose for screening the children in convergence with Asha workers.
- ✓ Anganwadi Teachers are advised to carry adequate Smart Check-42 Tool forms while conducting screening of children on designated days. This precaution is necessary in the event that the mobile application experiences technical difficulties, such as network issues or other technical difficulties. The data gathered through these physical forms shall be entered into the mobile application at a later date, ensuring that no information is lost during the screening process.
- ✓ The District Welfare Officers of WCD & SC in coordination with ICDS Supervisors shall oversee the information is uploaded into the mobile app efficiently and correctly.

IX. Medical Assessment camps

- ✓ The District Collector is overall incharge of the Balabharosa scheme in the district.
- ✓ The District Welfare Officers of WCD & SC and District Medical and Health Officers shall assist the concerned District Collectors for successful implementation of the scheme in the District.
- ✓ The District Medical and Health Officer will take necessary steps to refer those children, as identified by Anganwadi Teachers, to suitable healthcare facilities for medical examination. These facilities may include Primary Health Centers, Urban Health Centers, or Community Health Centers, where qualified medical professionals will conduct thorough examination to assess the children's developmental needs and determine appropriate interventions.
- ✓ Early intervention camp shall be conducted in the concerned District Hospitals for the children flagged as at-risk during initial medical examination at PHC/UHC/CHC
- ✓ The District Medical and Health Officer, will coordinate with the District Hospitals to assign medical specialists for the early intervention camps at District Hospitals.
- ✓ The Children at risk cases and needs immediate attention shall be referred to appropriate medical and health institutions.
- ✓ Children who require surgical interventions will be referred to the appropriate District Hospitals or designated Government Hospitals / Multi-Speciality Hospital where the hospitals are equipped with the necessary facilities and expertise to handle such surgical corrections.

- ✓ Children requiring therapeutic interventions will be directed to District Early Intervention Centers, Bhavitha Centers, Neighbourhood centers and various National Institutes dedicated to rehabilitation in the state.
- ✓ Each District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO) will be provided with unique login credentials for the mobile application. Utilizing these credentials, the District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO) along with District Welfare Officer (DWO) will be responsible for updating the information regarding children who have been referred to medical institutions for necessary surgeries/therapies and the outcomes after these medical interventions. This process is essential for enhancing the monitoring capabilities at both the District and State levels, ensuring that the health and well-being of these vulnerable children are effectively tracked and managed ultimately leading to improved outcomes for the children in need of medical intervention.
- ✓ The Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens and Transgenders shall bear the cost associated with Printing of IEC Material, Transportation and compensation for parent's wage loss where necessary.

X. Appointment of Nodal Officers

- ✓ (2) Rehabilitation Therapists in Early Intervention from National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (NIEPID), Government of India will be responsible for training field-level officers on Smart Check-42 Tool.
- ✓ The concerned District Welfare Officers of Women, Children, Disabled & Senior Citizens will act as District Nodal Officer and shall coordinate with Officers from NIEPID-GoI, District Medical and Health Officers for successful implementation of this scheme.

**ANITA RAMACHANDRAN,
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.**

// ATTESTED //


SECTION OFFICER