

# At-A-Glance

## What is Early Intervention?

Early intervention is a family-centered program for infants and toddlers with special needs, and their families.

Early intervention connects these families to supports and services to help children reach their maximum potential.

Early intervention supports and services help nurture the growth and development of children, birth to 3 years old.

North Carolina's early intervention program is called the Infant-Toddler Program.

## Why Does Early Intervention Matter?

Research on early development shows that the first three years are the most important time for learning in a child's life. For a child with or at established risk for developmental delay, beginning early intervention services improves a child's lifelong ability to develop and learn. Early intervention reaps immediate and long-term benefits for children and their families.

## The ABCs of Early Intervention

Early Intervention enhances **A** child's development.

*Children enrolled in the Infant-Toddler Program demonstrate improved social, learning, language, and behavioral skills.*

Families **B**enefit, too.

*Families report that early intervention services have helped them to know their rights, effectively communicate their children's needs, and help their children develop and learn.*

Early intervention is **C**ost effective.

*The cost of helping a child develop is less when intervention happens early, thus potentially preventing developmental problems that would require additional services later in life.*

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### Did You Know That in 2010...?

Census data showed **376,163** infants and toddlers (0-3 years of age) living in North Carolina.

Early intervention services were delivered to **5.2 percent** of North Carolina's population who are younger than three years old.

**19,523** infants and toddlers were enrolled in the Infant-Toddler Program.

Of the children served,

**52%** were White

**27%** were Black

**18%** were Hispanic

**64%** were boys

**36%** were girls

**20,488** infants and toddlers were referred to the Infant-Toddler Program.



The average age of the child at time of referral to the Infant-Toddler Program was **16** months.

### Top 5 Referral Sources to the Infant-Toddler Program

Physicians	<b>41%</b>
Parents/Caregivers	<b>15%</b>
Hospitals	<b>7%</b>
NICUs	<b>7%</b>
Local Public Health	<b>5%</b>

# How Does the NC Infant-Toddler Program (ITP) Work?

The Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) is the local lead agency that administers, supervises and monitors local activities for the ITP. There are 17 CDSAs in North Carolina serving all 100 counties.

Parents/caregivers, physicians and others can refer a child to the ITP if there are concerns about the child's development.

## The family's experience

*Families understand and know the needs of their children better than anyone else. Therefore, the ITP values and considers the role of the family as key to the success of early intervention.*

*After a referral is made, the CDSA will contact the family to discuss the child's medical and developmental history. Parents can decide at this point whether to proceed to the eligibility determination evaluation step for their child.*

*If the eligibility determination evaluation indicates that the child's developmental needs qualify him/her for the ITP, a service coordinator will convene a meeting for all members of the child's team, which includes the family, to develop an individualized family service plan (IFSP). The IFSP lists the early intervention services a child will need to grow and develop, as well as the services that the family will need to help the child grow and reach his/her full potential.*

*Services listed on the IFSP will begin no later than 30 days after the IFSP has been developed and signed by the family. Teamwork among families and service providers is important for planning early intervention supports and services.*

*Just as children and families grow and develop, so too will supports and services be routinely evaluated to ensure they meet the child's and the family's needs and choices.*

## Focus and Challenge

The ITP has four monitoring priorities and 13\* indicators by which the state measures the effectiveness of the program. The priorities are natural environments, child find, effective transition and general supervision.

The 13\* indicators are the cornerstones that ensure state and federal regulations are being met, and that infants, toddlers and their families are receiving high-quality early intervention services. Data on the program's performance in each of the 13 indicators is collected annually and the results are collected in the Annual Performance Report (APR), available from your CDSA or at [www.bearly.nc.gov](http://www.bearly.nc.gov).

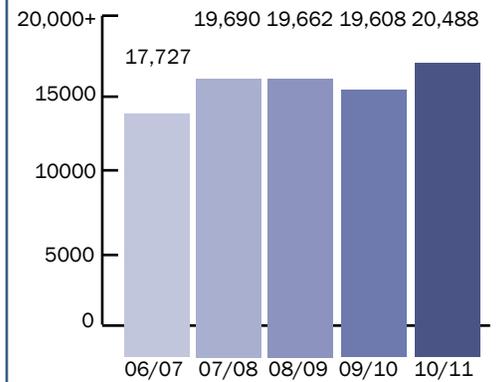
There is an ongoing commitment to identify, locate and evaluate all infants and toddlers in North Carolina who are in need of early intervention services.

\*The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funds the ITP. It has 14 indicators to measure Part C services effectiveness. One of the indicators is not applicable to North Carolina.

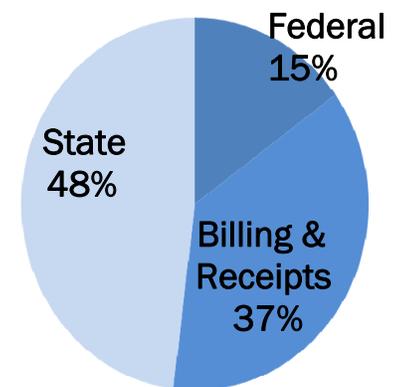
*All data, unless otherwise noted, reflect SFY10-11. Data sources include reports from the NC State Center for Health Statistics, Early Intervention Branch databases, and Health Information Systems (HIS).*

04-12

Numbers of Children under Age 3 Years Referred to ITP by state fiscal year (SFY)



How is early intervention funded?



## Your Local CDSA

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Raleigh, NC 27609

919-707-5520

[www.bearly.nc.gov](http://www.bearly.nc.gov)

