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 benefit, 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 Cost 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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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.

**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.beearly.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).

How is early intervention funded?

Federal 15%
State 48%
Billing & Receipts 37%