Early Intervention

HealthySteps®
PEDIATRIC CARE • SUPPORTING • PARENTING
A Program of ZERO TO THREE

The main goal of Early Intervention (EI) is to address delays in a child's development as early as possible. Young children usually catch up faster when delays are addressed early. Research shows that when EI is in place as early as possible, the outcomes for those children are better. These services are offered to families through a local state agency to support children who are at risk for delays or disabilities. EI helps young children with delays get ready for school.

HOW DO FAMILIES RECEIVE EI?

- Request an EI evaluation for your child to find out if they qualify for services. Your HealthySteps Specialist can help you with this and can explain how it works in your community.
- Your child will be evaluated at your home or a center nearby. This evaluation is free.
- The evaluation will show whether your child qualifies for services.
- Services can include speech–language therapy, occupational therapy (help with daily life activities), and physical therapy (help with gross motor activities like walking), as well as assistive technology (tools to help your child learn, move, etc.), and more.
- If your child qualifies for services, you can accept or reject them. If you want them, an EI service coordinator will be assigned.
- The coordinator will work with you to develop a plan for your child.
- The state agency has to complete the evaluation and plan in 45 days. This deadline ensures your child will receive services as soon as possible.

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- You and your service coordinator will review the plan every 6 months and update it each year.

IS THERE A COST?

There is *no charge* to find out if your child is eligible. In some states there may be fees to receive services on a sliding scale. However, a child cannot be denied services because their family is unable to pay.

DOES RECEIVING EI MEAN YOUR CHILD WILL ENTER SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Some families worry that taking part in EI will "label" their child. Information about your child's EI services are NOT shared with their school unless you want them to be. Children receive services for different lengths of time. It depends on their needs. Some children take part for a short time. Other children require follow-up special education services once they enter school. If your child qualifies for services past 3 years old, they will move from EI to special education. Your service coordinator helps your child with this move.

Reach out to your HealthySteps Specialist or primary care provider if you have not yet connected with EI and want to, or if you are not happy with services you are getting for your child now or want more services.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO

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