

Early Intervention Services



What are early intervention services?

Early intervention (EI) services are for infants and young children who:

- Have delays in their development
- Are at risk for delays in their development

EI services are offered in all states through a national law called IDEA. IDEA stands for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The EI program in the state of Georgia is called Babies Can't Wait (other states use different names).

Who may qualify for EI services?

Your child may qualify for EI services in their home state if he:

- Is birth to less than 3 years of age
- Has delays in his development
- Is at risk for delays in his development

What are delays in development?

A delay in development means:

- An infant or young child is not meeting milestones as expected.
- An infant or young child is at risk of not meeting milestones as expected based on his diagnosis.

What are some examples of milestones?

Milestones mean doing certain things in an average time as compared to other children the same age. Milestones include:

- Rolling over
- Sitting without support
- Pulling up to stand
- Cruising or walking
- Making vocal sounds and talking

What services are offered?

Your child may get services at your home or in a community setting. They are different from outpatient therapies. Your child may get:

- Speech therapy (ST)
- Language therapy
- Occupational therapy (OT)
- Physical therapy (PT)
- Play therapy (for development)

This handout contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

Who can refer my child for evaluation?

The following are some of the people who can refer a child for Early Intervention Services:

- Pediatrician
- Occupational therapist
- Physical therapist
- Speech therapist
- Other specialized medical provider
- Parent

What happens next?

Once your child has been referred, your state's EI program will:

- Contact you to get more information. They may schedule a time to evaluate your child.
- Share the evaluation results with you.
- Talk with you about services your child may get.
- Help your child move on to other types of services when he turns 3 years old (if needed).

Please visit these websites for more information:

- Center for Parent Information and Resources – parentcenterhub.org/repository/ei-overview/
- Special Education Guide – specialeducationguide.com/early-intervention/steps-in-early-intervention-idea-part-c/
- Georgia Department of Public Health – dph.georgia.gov/Babies-Cant-Wait

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