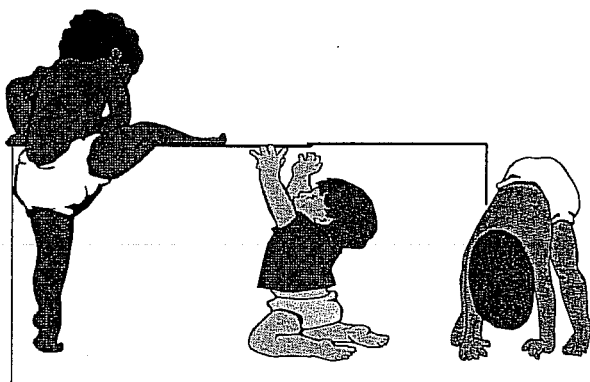


What is the "Early Intervention" (EI) Program?



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WHAT IS THE EARLY INTERVENTION (EI) PROGRAM?

The New York State Early Intervention Program is a family centered program that provides a wide variety of services to eligible infants and toddlers with special needs and their families.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES?

Any child from birth to three years of age who has a developmental delay, or has a physical or mental condition with a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay, is eligible to receive EI services.

Eligible children must exhibit significant delays in at least one of the following areas:

physical/motor: skills related to movement, such as crawling, walking, using hands and fingers, and eye-hand coordination

communication: skills related to understanding and using gestures and language

adaptive/self-help: skills related to independence, such as toileting, eating and dressing

cognitive: skills related to thinking/learning and interacting with the environment

social/emotional: skills related to getting along with others, such as awareness of others, ability to express feelings and imitating other children, or

have problems hearing or seeing, or have special health needs.

If your child is eligible, services must be provided at no cost to you.

HOW DO YOU MAKE A REFERRAL?

If you think that your child may have a developmental delay and may need early intervention services, you can make a referral to the NYC Early Intervention Program by calling:

(800) 577-BABY (2229)

Monday – Friday 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Others who can make a referral include:

- doctors, nurses and other clinicians
- child care/day care centers
- school teachers and/or administrators
- other social service programs

A referral can be made without parental consent **but** parental consent **is** required for all other aspects of the program, including: screening and/or evaluations, developing an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the provision of services. After a referral is made, an early intervention service coordinator will contact you. The service coordinator will assist you in becoming familiar with your rights and the EI service delivery system, scheduling appointments, etc.

THE SCREENING AND/OR EVALUATION

After the referral is made, a free screening and/or evaluation will be performed **WITH** your consent.

The **SCREENING** helps determine whether or not your child has developmental delays and what kind of evaluations are necessary.

The EVALUATION (which should be conducted by at least two professionals) determines whether or not your child needs early intervention services. The evaluation consists of a general developmental assessment of your child's abilities; a parent interview for you to voice your concerns about your child's delay(s); a review of your child's health/medical records; assessments by specialists in the areas that you are concerned about; and an assessment of assistive technology and transportation needs. The results of the evaluation help determine the kind of services your child may need.

You have a right to receive a full copy of all screening and/or evaluation results. If you are not satisfied with the results, you may request, in writing, a second evaluation.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP)

(An IFSP is a written plan which details what services a child and family needs, the goals and objectives of such services, and how and where those services will be provided.)

If it is determined that your child is eligible for services, you will be asked to attend an IFSP meeting. The meeting must be held no later than 45 days from the date of referral. It must occur at a time and place that is convenient for you.

WHO WILL BE PARTICIPATING AT THE MEETING?

- you, the parent
- your service coordinator
- an early intervention official
- an evaluator (or evaluators) who evaluated your child
- anyone else you choose to invite

(No other person(s) may be present without your consent)

WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

- assistive technology (equipment & services that are used to improve or maintain the abilities of a child to communicate, eat or move)
- family training and counseling, support groups
- nutritional planning
- nursing services
- occupational therapy
- physical therapy
- psychological services
- respite
- social work services
- special education
- speech therapy and audiology
- transportation
- vision Services

WHERE WILL THE SERVICES BE PROVIDED?

EI services **should** be provided in your child's natural environment – where it is most appropriate for your child and your family, such as:

- your home
- day care centers

- early intervention centers
- Head Start programs
- hospitals and/or clinics

SERVICE DELIVERY

Once the IFSP is developed, and YOU are in agreement, your child must begin immediately to receive all services listed on the IFSP. **DON'T FORGET-** You may withdraw your consent for all or part of EI services at any time.

YOUR DUE PROCESS RIGHTS:

If you have a disagreement at any stage of the process, you have the right to:

- ask for mediation
- request an impartial hearing
- file a systems complaint
- or do a combination of any or all of the above

Mediation is an informal process conducted by a person trained in helping people resolve their differences. If no agreement is reached, you can proceed to an impartial hearing.

An **Impartial Hearing** is a formal process conducted by an impartial hearing officer who makes a final decision in the dispute.

A **Systems Complaint** can be used when you want a situation to be investigated by the New York State Dept of Health. A systems complaint should not be used to resolve individual disputes such as a child's ineligibility.

Before exercising your rights, you may want to consult an attorney or trained advocate to help you decide what actions to take. During the process, the services you do agree on should be provided to you and your child.

YOUR CHILD'S RECORDS:

Your child's records include all written materials developed or used for the Early Intervention Program. Your child's records may include:

- information gathered as part of your child's referral
- screening and evaluation reports and summaries
- your IFSP and all documents related to the plan
- progress notes and other information about your child's and family's services prepared by the service provider and/or your service coordinator
- all records about complaints you may have filed
- all other records involving your child and family

All information in your child's records is confidential and can only be shared with others if you sign a release form.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARENT:

As a parent you have many important rights including:

- the right to be involved in all stages of the early intervention process
- the right to withhold or withdraw consent at any stage of the process

- the right to examine and get a copy of all records regarding your child and family
- the right to request that changes be made to your child's records if you feel that any information in your child's records is inaccurate, misleading, or violates your child's and family's privacy and rights.
- the right to have notices, results of screening and evaluations and services explained to you in your own language
- the right to use due process procedures to settle differences
- the right to have due process procedures conducted in your own language.
- the right to consult an advocate or attorney at any stage of the process

Important EI Phone Numbers and Addresses:

To make a referral in New York City, the number is:

EI Program

1-800-577-BABY (2229)
Monday – Friday; 9 – 5

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1-800-522-4369

For more information call **Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.**
at (212) 947-9779.