



Illinois Early Learning Systems Fact Sheet

Early Intervention

Program Overview

The Early Intervention program in Illinois aims to assure that families who have infants and toddlers (birth to 36 months old) with diagnosed disabilities, developmental delays, or are at substantial risk of significant delays, receive the necessary resources and supports to help them maximize their child's development. The resources and supports provided with sensitivity and respect to the needs of the families.

What information is needed to apply?

A referral to the Child and Family Connections (CFC) office must be made to seek Early Intervention services. A family will be asked for basic identifying information including child's name, address, date of birth, and the contact information for the primary caregiver. Additionally, any information on the developmental or medical needs that would help to understand the reason for the referral is helpful and important.

What documents are needed?

Parents will be asked to sign a consent form to participate in the Early Intervention program.

Enrollment Process

To be eligible, children must be birth (0), 1 or 2 years old **AND**

Have at least **one** of the following:

- Physical or mental condition which typically results in developmental delay
- A developmental delay of 30% or greater in one or more of the following areas of development: cognitive, physical, communication, social or emotional, and adaptive;
- At risk of having substantial developmental delays based on the informed clinical opinions

If a delay or a concern in the child's development is identified, the family should be referred to the local Child and Family Connections office. The CFC office will make the first contact with the family, schedule an intake visit to explain the program, and ask for their consent to participate in the Early Intervention program. With the family's consent, an evaluation to determine eligibility for the Early Intervention program will be conducted. These evaluations and assessments are free of charge to the family.

The Early Intervention program has 45 days from the date of referral to determine eligibility for the program and to develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). If the child is determined eligible for Early Intervention, the team (including the family, service coordinator, and providers) will convene an Individualized Family Service Plan Meeting to identify any family concerns, priorities, and outcomes for the child. An Individualized Family Service Plan will be developed that will give the family a sense of the services provided and the frequency and duration of those services.



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Where can I find my local office?

You can find your local Child and Family Connection office by visiting the Illinois Department of Human Services website. The website has a locator that helps you find a Child and Family Connection Offices by county: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>

Resources for Families and Providers

For Families:

- The **Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse** offers general information on Early Intervention, resources, and a lending library for families. Visit the website at: <http://www.eiclearinghouse.org/>
 - Family Guide for Early Intervention services:
<http://eiclearinghouse.org/resources/public-awareness/the-guide/>

For Providers (child care providers, physicians, caseworkers, etc.):

- The **Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse** offers general information on Early Intervention, continuing education videos, public awareness materials, and general resources that support Early Intervention Providers and staff. Visit the website at: <http://www.eiclearinghouse.org/>
- **Illinois Department of Human Services' Early Intervention** website offers general information about Early Intervention and a locator function to search for a Child and Family Connections office: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=31889>
- **Early Intervention Training Program** provides Early Intervention practitioners with information about training opportunities in Illinois: <http://eitp.education.illinois.edu/>