

A PEATC

Do You Know....



Factsheet for Virginia's Parents Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers

What is Early Intervention?

Early intervention (EI) is a program authorized under the federal **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** to help infants and toddlers who have a developmental delay or disabilities. Sometimes, EI is referred to as **Part C**, the title of IDEA under which the program is authorized. The goal of early intervention is to **provide services and supports that will help your child develop skills that will help your child develop skills that will help him catch up** to other children his age. EI helps children age **birth through 2** (up to 3 years old) to reach their developmental milestones (walking, talking, eating, socialization, etc.). Research has shown that early intervention services lead to improved long-term outcomes.

Unlike most school-based services, **EI is a family-based program**. Families, working with their children and with professionals, are the core of the program. EI is required to be delivered in the child's **natural environment**, i.e., the child's home, daycare center, etc. Families and other caregivers are provided the supports they need to help the child learn now and in the future.

Is My Child Eligible for Early Intervention Services?

In Virginia, to be eligible for EI, your child must:

- Be between the ages of 0 and 3 (through age 2).
- Have a **developmental delay or difference** in:
 - ✓ Thinking, learning, and playing
 - ✓ Moving, seeing, and hearing
 - ✓ Understanding and using sounds, gestures, and words
 - ✓ Taking care of one's self such as eating and dressing
 - ✓ Developing social relationships

Some examples (not all inclusive) of **diagnosed conditions that will likely cause a delay** include: Down Syndrome, born at 29 weeks or younger, Spina Bifida, 28 days or more spent in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Cleft lip and/or Palate, Vision and/or /Hearing loss, Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Resources on Early Intervention

Infant & Toddler Connection

www.infantva.org

Call: 1-800-234-1448

The Arc of Virginia New Path

www.thearcofva.org/new-path-early-intervention

Learn the Signs, Act Early

www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/parents

Zero to Three: Early Connections Last a Lifetime

www.zerotothree.org

Center for Parent Information & Resources: Overview of Early Intervention

www.parentcenterhub.org/ei-overview

Virginia Family Special Education Connection: Infants & Toddlers

vafamilysped.org/infants-toddlers

What is Early Intervention Video

<https://bit.ly/2xeBsxC>

Contact Us:

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Hablamos Español

Factsheet for Virginia's Parents

How Do I Access Early Intervention Services?

If you have concerns about your child's development or need contact information for Early Intervention services, call the Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia at 1-800-234-1448 or visit www.infantva.org to find services in your city or county.

Early intervention services are provided to eligible families **regardless of ability to pay**. For those who can afford to participate in the cost of services, there is a **sliding fee scale**. Medicaid and other health insurance, including Tricare, pays for EI as well.

How are Services Delivered?

If your child is eligible for EI, he will be assigned a **service coordinator** (like a case manager), and an **Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP)** will be developed. The family is a key part of the IFSP team, and the IFSP includes your child's **agreed upon outcomes and the services and supports that will help your child achieve those outcomes**. The services and supports are **designed to fit into your family's regular routines and environments**, including home and community-based activities.

The **amount and frequency** of services depends on the child's and family needs. For example, your child may receive occupational therapy once a week because you are able to effectively work on these skills between sessions. But you may not feel as comfortable working on language development and request that speech therapy be delivered more frequently.

If you disagree with decisions by the IFSP team, you have the right to appeal through the following avenues: administrative complaint, mediation, or due process. Mediation and due process can be filed at the same time. If your child is receiving EI services through Medicaid, you also have the right to file an appeal with the Department of Medical Assistance Services. More information can be found in the *Notice of Child and Family Rights and Safeguards*.
<http://www.infantva.org/documents/3028eEI.pdf>

What Services are Available through EI?

- Assessment for Service Planning
- Audiology
- Counseling
- Developmental Services
- Evaluation for Eligibility
- Health
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychology
- Service Coordination
- Social Work
- Speech Language Pathology
- Transportation
- Vision
- Other entitled services

Transition planning is a required part of the IFSP development. In Virginia, transition can occur as early as age 2 but no later than your child's 3rd birthday. The IFSP team will inform you about the different options available to support your child's transition to preschool and other appropriate community services. Children who receive early intervention services are not guaranteed to receive preschool early childhood special education services (ECSE) under Part B of IDEA.

PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.

For more information about us, please contact:

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