Early Start Referral Guide

Early Start is a statewide interagency system of coordinated early intervention services for infants and toddlers with or at risk for disabilities or developmental delay and their families. Regional Centers are open and accepting referrals for Early Start during COVID-19. If you suspect that an infant or toddler has a developmental delay or atypical development then:







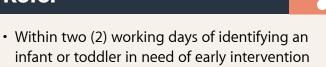
Screen



A child may be eligible for early intervention services if they:

- Show a developmental delay in one or more areas of cognitive, communication, social or emotional, adaptive, or physical and motor development, including vision or hearing;
- Have an established risk condition of known etiology, with a high probability of resulting in delayed development; or
- Are considered at high risk of having a substantial developmental disability due to a combination of biomedical risk factors that are diagnosed by qualified personnel.

Refer



services*, contact your local regional center to make a referral for Early Start services. See below or visit https:// www.dds.ca.gov/rc/lookup-rcs-bycounty



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• Within 45 days, the regional center or local educational agency will:

- Assign a Service Coordinator
- Obtain parental consent
- Schedule & complete evaluations
- Develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to support strengths and identify services
- Provide services in home or community setting
- Initiate a referral to the child's insurance to facilitate the evaluation process**.

Local Regional Center:

Get Involved



Collaborate with the family and Early Start partners to develop the IFSP by:

- Participating in IFSP meetings;
- · Providing information and input for the assessment team; and
- Referring the family to the local Early Start Family Resource Center for additional support. See below or visit https://frcnca. ora/aet-connected



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Local Family Resource Center:

See Results



Research*** suggests that:

- Children who participate in high-quality early intervention programs tend to have
- Less need for special education and other specialized services at kindergarten age;
- Greater than expected growth in social relationships, use of knowledge and skills, and skills for self-care; and
- Less risk for developing communication disorders.
- Parents who participate in high-quality early intervention programs report that they feel competent and confident to
- Care for their children and help them learn and develop,
- · Communicate with professionals, and
- Advocate for services for their children.

For more information and/or to ask questions regarding Early Start referrals, please contact the Early Start BabyLine at 1-800-515-BABY (2229) or email EarlyStart@dds.ca.gov.

^{* 17} CCR 52040(e)(4)

^{**}Initial evaluation for eligibility is required to be at no cost to the family. Insurance may cover the cost for some children.

^{***}Goode, Diefendorf & Colgan (2011). Retrieved from https://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/pubs/outcomesofearlyintervention.pdf.

REASONS to REFER a child in your care for extra help



Children develop at different rates and in different ways. Differences in development may be related to personality, temperament, and/or experiences. Some children may also have health needs that affect their development.

The first years are very important in a child's life. The sooner a concern is identified, the sooner a child and family can receive specialized services to support growth and development. Use this resource to discuss any questions or concerns you have about a child's development.

Risk Factors

The following factors may place children at greater risk for health and developmental concerns:

- Prematurity or low birth weight
- Vision or hearing difficulties
- Prenatal exposure or other types of exposure to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Poor nutrition or difficulties eating (lacks nutritious foods, vitamins, proteins, or iron in diet)
- Exposure to lead-based paint (licking, eating, or sucking on lead-based painted doors, floors, furniture, toys, etc.)
- Environmental factors, such as abuse or neglect

Behaviors and Relationships

Some of the following behaviors may be cause for concern in any child regardless of age:

- Avoids being held, does not like being touched
- Resists being calmed, cannot be comforted
- Avoids or rarely makes eye contact with others
- By age four months, does not coo or smile when interacting with others

- By age one, does not play games, such as peek-a-boo or pat-a-cake or wave bye-bye
- By age two, does not imitate parent or caregiver doing everyday things, such as washing dishes, cooking, or brushing teeth
- By age three, does not play with others
- Acts aggressively on a regular basis, hurts self or others

Hearing

- Has frequent earaches
- Has had many ear, nose, or throat infections
- Does not look where sounds or voices are coming from or react to loud noises
- Talks in a very loud or very low voice, or voice has an unusual sound
- Does not always respond when called from across a room even when it is for something that the child is usually interested in or likes
- Turns body so that the same ear is always turned toward a sound

Seeing

- Has reddened, watery eyes or crusty eyelids
- Rubs eyes frequently



- Closes one eye or tilts head when looking at an object
- Has difficulty following objects or looking at people when talked to
- Has difficulty focusing or making eye contact
- Usually holds books or objects very close to face or sits with face very close to television
- Has eyes or an eye that look(s) crossed or turned, or eyes do not move together

Moving

- Has stiff arms or legs
- Pushes away or arches back when held close or cuddled
- By age four months, does not hold head up
- By age six months, does not roll over
- By age nine months, does not sit up
- By age one, does not creep using hands and knees, does not pick up small objects with finger and thumb
- By age eighteen months, does not walk alone
- By age two, has difficulty holding large crayons and scribbling
- By age two and a half, has difficulty turning pages in a book
- By age three, shows poor coordination and falls or stumbles a lot when running

Communicating

- By age four months, does not coo or smile
- By age nine months, does not babble to get attention
- By age one, does not respond differently to words such as "night night" or "ball"
- By age fifteen months, does not say words to name people or objects, such as "mama" or "bottle," or shake head "no"
- By age eighteen months, does not follow one-step directions
- By age two, does not point to or name objects or people to express wants or needs
- By age two, does not use two-word phrases, such as "want juice" or "mama go"
- By age three, does not try to say familiar rhymes or songs

Thinking

- By age one, has difficulty finding an object after seeing it hidden
- By age two, does not point to body parts when asked such questions as "Where's your nose?"
- By age two and a half, does not play make-believe games or follow two-step instructions
- By age three, does not understand ideas, such as "more" or "one"