

Family Outcomes Survey Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. Who conducts this survey?

The Early Start program, which is the program the Department (DDS) provides services to infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities.

To learn more about Early Start services and eligibility: [What is Early Start? : CA Department of Developmental Services](#)

Q2. How do families receive the survey?

Families will receive an official letter in the mail with a paper copy of the survey from DDS in August. The letter will include a postage-paid return envelope, as well as a QR code to take the survey on a smartphone.

Q3. How to complete a survey if you didn't receive one in the mail?

If you would like to share your experience with the Early Start program, you can access the survey online using your smartphone, tablet, laptop, or computer here: [Family Outcomes Survey](#). Please enter your child's date of birth, zip code, ethnicity and unique client identifier (UCI) at the top of the form. If you are unsure of your child's UCI, please reach out to your service coordinator.

Q4. What information is collected?

The survey asks about families' experience in Early Start and how helpful early intervention (EI) services have been for them. The survey focuses on four topics, asking "how helpful has EI been" with:

- giving useful information to the family about rights and access to services,
- providing ways for the family to explain the child's needs,
- helping their own child develop and learn, and
- the process of changing from EI to school-based services (if the child recently turned age 3).

Q5. How are the survey answers used?

Early Start uses families' responses to understand how the program and services can be improved. The summary data are also reported in an annual report that all states submit to the U.S. Department of Education. No personal data is included in that report; only counts and percentages of families are reported. For example, California will report the percentage of families that said that EI helped the family help their own child develop and learn.

Q6. Do all Early Start families receive the survey?

No, Early Start selects a sample of families from the entire set of families that received early intervention services for at least six months in the past year. This sample includes families that recently exited the program. Early Start can only send the survey to a group of about 10,000 families because of the costs of mailing the survey letter. The roughly 10,000 families are selected randomly - meaning everyone has an equal chance of being selected in the state. Early Start does not use family or child characteristics when selecting families to participate, only location. This helps ensure potential participants represent all communities, cultures, and languages in California.

Q7. What languages is the survey available in?

The survey is available online in English, Chinese-Simplified - 简体中文, Chinese-Traditional - 繁體中文, Farsi - فارسی, Hmong - Lus Hmoob, Korean - 한국어, Spanish - Español, Tagalog - Tagalog, and Vietnamese - Tiếng Việt.

Q8. Who sees how a family responds on the survey?

Each family's information is kept private by Early Start. The only people who see individual responses are the state staff who analyze the data. Each response is confidential, unless on the survey the family asks for help with a concern with services or staff. Then, someone from the state will work with the family to address the concern.

Q9. When will the survey be sent out and when is it due?

The survey will be sent to families in August and is due at the end of October.

Q10. How do families answer the survey?

Families can answer the survey in three ways.

- a. Complete and mail the paper copy to Early Start using the postage-paid return envelope provided.

- b. Use the QR code included in the letter to open and complete the survey on a cell phone. The survey code to begin the survey is provided in the letter.
- c. Open the public access survey link at [Family Outcomes Survey](#) and complete the survey online. Families will need to provide the child's unique identifier number (UCI) to complete the survey through this link. If you do not know your child's UCI, please reach out to your service coordinator.

Families will not receive a mailed reminder, so Early Start recommends that families keep the letter with the submission code if they are not able to answer right away.

Q11. How are Regional Centers and Family Resource Centers involved in the survey?

Regional Centers and Family Resource Centers are raising awareness about the survey to increase participation. Regional Center and Family Resource Center staff are not involved in sending out the survey and do not know who has received a survey. The Department (DDS) has asked Regional Centers and Family Resource Centers to share information about the survey with families and encourage them to complete the survey if they receive one.

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