

# What Is Early Intervention?

*Early Intervention is a statewide program that provides supports and services for families to help their children under age 3 meet developmental milestones.*

## Should I Be Concerned?

Most developmental differences are nothing to worry about, but in some children, the differences can signal a need for special help.

A developmental screening can offer a quick snapshot of your child's development. Ask your health care or child care provider whether your child's growth and development are on target for her age.

For a list of milestones that are typical for young children, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse website at [eiclearinghouse.org/milestones](http://eiclearinghouse.org/milestones)



## Early Intervention ...

- Uses a team approach with YOU as the most important team member
- Blends supports and services into your daily routines in familiar spaces
- Fits into your family's lifestyle and culture
- Provides supports and services in your native language or other mode of communication
- Depends on family involvement



## Why Is Early Intervention Important?

Your child's brain and body are growing rapidly during the first three years of life. He is learning many new things about the world around him. While all children need love and support to grow and learn, some children need a little extra help. An early intervention team can support your family and help your child reach his potential.

## How Can We Help You?

The Early Intervention (EI) Program empowers families to help their children learn and overcome challenges. The family, service coordinator, and service providers are a team. Together, we will:

- Build on your child's and family's strengths
- Talk about the challenges and concerns your family is having about your child
- Find out how your child is learning, moving, talking, eating, behaving, etc.

*Anyone can call to refer a child to the EI Program.  
Participation is voluntary.*

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.

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## How Do I Get Started?

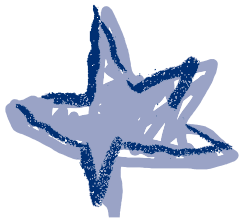
1. **Call** your local Child and Family Connections (CFC) office to request a developmental evaluation. To find your local CFC office, call (800) 843-6154.
2. You will meet with a service coordinator to talk about your concerns about your child. You will then meet with service providers to help **evaluate** your child's development and to determine whether your child is eligible for early intervention supports and services.
3. If your child is eligible, you will work with your team to develop a **plan** for supports and services. These will be provided at a convenient time for your family and in familiar places where your child learns and plays, such as your home, child care center, the park, or the library.



You and your child will learn new skills within your family's daily routines, such as mealtime, play time, story time, or bath time.

For more details about the EI Program, see *A Guide for Families* at <https://eiclearinghouse.org/familyguide/>

## What Does Early Intervention Cost?



Free evaluations determine eligibility for EI supports and services. Planning and coordinating services for an eligible child and family are always free.

EI supports and services are paid by a variety of funding sources including the EI Program, the family's private or public (such as Medicaid or All Kids) insurance. Some families may be charged a fee based on their family's size and income. The EI Program does not require proof of immigration status.

## How Do I Learn More?

For more information or to refer your child to the Illinois EI Program, call your local CFC office. To find your local CFC office, please visit the IDHS Office Locator at <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>

Or call the IDHS Helpline at

**1-800-843-6154**

**1-866-324-5553 TTY/Nextalk, 711 TTY Relay**

*Information is available in English and Spanish*

For a complete list of services and additional resources for families with young children, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at [eiclearinghouse.org/](https://eiclearinghouse.org/)