



Early Intervention

What is Early Intervention?

Mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part C) and, in California, by the California Early Intervention Services Act, early intervention services are a coordinated set of services designed to help eligible children close any developmental gaps. Services include, but are not limited to, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, infant stimulation, nursing services, etc.

Effective January 1, 2015, eligible infants and toddlers include those who,

through documented evaluation and assessment, meet one of the following criteria:

1. have a developmental delay in either cognitive, communication, social/emotional, adaptive, or physical and motor development, including vision and hearing; or
2. have established risk conditions of known origin, with a high probability of resulting in delayed development; or
3. are at high risk of having a substantial developmental disability due to a combination of risk factors.

Your insurance carrier and/or the regional center, or a combination of both, pay for early intervention services as a means to help eligible infants and toddlers develop to their full potential. (Title 17, California Code of Regulations, §52022; California Government Code §95014; Welfare and Institutions Code §4642)

The initial evaluation and assessment for eligibility, and the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for those eligible, must be completed within 45 days of the date that the regional center receives

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the referral. (Title 17, California Code of Regulations §52086; California Government Code §95020)

California Early Start serves approximately 32,000 children under the age of three each year, but the number of eligible children is expected to increase after the latest changes in the law take effect on January 1, 2015.



Early Intervention Transition

The early childhood transition is a formal process beginning at least 6 months prior to the toddler's 3rd birthday, transitioning him/her from early start (Part C) to school programs (Part B).

Federal and state law dictate that the transition process must conclude at age 3, regardless of the child's and family's needs at that time. While Part C of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act

(IDEA) mandated a family-centered approach, Part B mandates a child-centered approach focusing on the child's educational needs. Parents, however, remain an integral part of the team and it is important for

parents to know the responsibilities of all the agencies that will be involved in their children's lives, as the services will look different and be provided in a different manner.

At 30 months...

⊗ The service coordinator must notify the parent that their toddler may be eligible for special education and related services and that transition planning will occur in the next 3-6 months.

⊗ Within 30 days after the service coordinator notifies the parent and school district, the team must agree on the date for the IFSP for the purpose of discussing the necessary transition steps.



Title 17 California Code of Regulations §52112(b)

⊗ The service coordinator must notify the local school district that there will be an IFSP meeting requiring their attendance when the toddler is between 30-33 months (as early as 30 months at the discretion of the entire team).

Between 30-33 months...

⊗ The transition meeting occurs when the toddler is between 30-33 months, and it must include the following:

⊗ Discussion and information to the parents on (1) the special education eligibility criteria; (2) community resources for toddler's that may not qualify for special education services at age 3; and (3) steps to prepare the

toddler for changes in service delivery and steps to help the toddler adjust to, and function in, a new setting.

⊗ The team will identify what assessments they will conduct to determine service related needs after age 3 (assessments must be done in all areas of suspected disability) and

⊗ A projected date for doing a final review of the IFSP .

Title 17 California Code of Regulations §52112(c-d)

Between 33-35 months...

⊗ Qualified personnel will meet with your toddler over the course of several days to conduct assessments in all areas of suspected disability, which may include, but not limited to:

- ⊗ Health
- ⊗ Vision & Hearing



⊗ Speech & Language

⊗ Occupational Therapy

- ⊗ Physical Therapy
- ⊗ Social-Emotional
- ⊗ Adaptive Behavior
- ⊗ Psycho-Educational
- ⊗ Auditory Processing
- ⊗ Assistive Technology

Assessment timelines

1. At the transition meeting , or no more than 15 days thereafter, you will receive a proposed assessment plan.
2. You have 15 days to sign the assessment plan and return it.
3. The school personnel has 60 days to conduct the assessment

California Education Code 56321 & 56344

At 35-36 months...

For special education

- ⊗ Convene for an IEP meeting to discuss:
- ⊗ Results of the assessments (you will receive copies)
- ⊗ Determination of special education eligibility at age 3 and the development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- ⊗ Community resources for those who are not eligible for special education at age 3

For regional center

- ⊗ Regional Center specialists will decide eligibility for services after age 3 by reviewing the following information:
- ⊗ Toddler's history
- ⊗ Progress made in Early Start
- ⊗ Current level of development

Lanterman eligibility (for over age 3) are different and more strict than early start eligibility criteria. Many kids who received early start do not qualify for Lanterman services.

Tips:

- ⊗ Try to get a copy of the special education assessments in advance of the meeting so that you have adequate time to review and note any questions.
- ⊗ Familiarize yourself with the school district's legal responsibilities in educating your child and regional center's eligibility criteria at age 3.
- ⊗ Don't be afraid to ask questions! Understand before you sign!



At 36 months...

One of three things will happen...

1. Your toddler is found eligible for continuing regional center services and also for special education services through the school.
2. Your toddler is found not eligible for continuing regional center services, but is eligible for special education services through the school.
3. Through early start services, your child has closed any developmental gaps and is not eligible for regional center or special education.

Important Notes

- ⊗ Each agency or person who has a direct role in the provision of early intervention services is responsible for making a good faith effort to assist each child in achieving the outcomes in the child's IFSP.
- ⊗ However, no agency or person shall be held accountable if an eligible child does not achieve the growth projected in the child's IFSP.

- ⊗ Not meeting IFSP goals does not, in and of itself, justify continued regional center services or special education eligibility, although it does play a factor.

*34 Code of Federal Regulations §303.346
20 United States Code §1436*



Remember....

- ⊗ Prepare for each meeting as best you can. Review your child's most recent progress reports and see how far they have come with the interventions provided. This will give you a good idea of what services should continue (provided by the school district) or what services can be discontinued.

- ⊗ You can bring a friend with you to the meetings to help take notes or keep you focused.
- ⊗ Talk with other parents going through this process and learn from their experiences.
- ⊗ Maintain open lines of communication. Make sure you share your input, ask questions, and also be receptive to the recommendations of the specialists.

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The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) is established by state and federal law as an independent state agency to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports they need.

Consumers know best what supports and services they need to live independently and to actively participate in their communities. Through advocacy, capacity building and systemic change, SCDD works to achieve a consumer and family-based system of individualized services, supports, and other assistance.



Resources & Referrals

Orange County Department of Education—200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 www.ocde.us
Phone: (714) 966-4000

Regional Center of Orange County—1525 North Tustin Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92705 www.rcocdd.com
Phone: (714) 796-5100

Comfort Connection Family Resource Center—Located in the lobby of the Regional Center of Orange County office.
Phone: (714) 558-5400

Orange County Head Start—2501 South Pullman Street, #100, Santa Ana, CA 92704 www.ochsinc.org
Phone: (714) 241-8920

Team of Advocates for Special Kids (TASK) - 100 W. Cerritos Avenue, Anaheim, CA 92805 www.taskca.org
Phone: (714) 533-8275

Orange County Health Care Agency—405 West 5th Street, Santa Ana, CA 92701 www.ochealthinfo.com
Phone: (800) 914-4887

Help Me Grow Orange County—2500 Red Hill Ave #290, Santa Ana, CA 92705 www.helpmegrowoc.org
Phone: (866) GROW-025