

EARLY START

In Imperial and San Diego Counties



SAN
DIEGO
REGIONAL
CENTER

SAN DIEGO COUNTY - San Diego Regional Center
Early Start Intake
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IMPERIAL COUNTY - San Diego Regional Center
760-355-8383

Early Start

Facts about

Many parents have questions and concerns about their baby's growth and development, even when everything goes well. But, if there have been serious problems in pregnancy, around the time of birth, or in the first few days or weeks of life, parents wonder and worry about whether their baby will be alright.

WHAT IS CALIFORNIA EARLY START?

California Early Start is a federally funded program through Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The program is designed to ensure that eligible infants and toddlers and their families receive evaluation and assessment of their current functioning and coordinated services early enough to make a difference in development.

WHICH CHILDREN ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL CENTER EARLY START PROGRAM?

Infants and toddlers, birth to age three, are eligible for the SDRC Early Start Program if they require intervention services due to one of the following:

1. Developmental Delay

Infants and toddlers with developmental delays are those who are determined to have a significant difference (at least 33%) between the expected level of development for their age and their current level of functioning in the following 5 areas:

- Cognitive
- Physical/Motor
- Communication
- Social/Emotional
- Adaptive Skills

2. Established Risk

An established risk condition exists when an infant or toddler has a condition which has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. An example of an established risk condition is a child born with Down syndrome.

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3. High risk for developmental disability (two or more factors)

- Less than 32 weeks gestation and/or birth weight less than 1500 grams
- Assisted ventilation for 48 hours or longer during first 28 days of life
- Small for gestational age
- Asphyxia neonatorum
- Severe and persistent metabolic seizures during the first three years of life
- Neonatal seizures or nonfebrile seizures during the first three years of life
- CNS lesion or abnormality
- CNS infection
- Biomedical insult (injury, accident or illness) which may affect developmental outcome
- Multiple congenital anomalies
- Prenatal exposure to teratogens
- Prenatal substance exposure, positive tox screen or withdrawal
- Clinically significant failure to thrive
- Persistent hypertonia or hypotonia

OR

- Parent of the infant/toddler is a person with a developmental disability

HOW CAN THE EARLY START PROGRAM HELP CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES?

The Early Start Program brings together resources and services to help infants and toddlers grow and learn, and provides support to families to enhance their child's development. Early intervention services are planned and delivered to help prevent or lessen the need for special services later in the child's life. The goal is to help answer questions and concerns about each child's development, and to assure that infants and toddlers are off to the best possible start.

WHAT DOES EARLY INTERVENTION MEAN?

Early intervention involves the prompt identification of delays and risk factors and the provision of assistance to eliminate or minimize problems resulting from them. Early intervention services are designed to meet the developmental needs of each eligible infant or toddler and the needs of the family related to the infant's or toddler's development.

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WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES?

Resources are available to families depending on the need. Generic resources include, but are not limited to: Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), In-Home Support Services (IHSS), California Children's Services (CCS) and Tri-West. Families are required to use their private insurance or health care service plan for required Early Start services identified in the Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP).

EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT

Smiling..... birth to 2 months
Rolling over..... 3 to 4 months
Sitting alone..... 5 to 6 months
Pull to stand..... 7 to 9 months
Standing 10 to 12 months
Walking..... 13 to 15 months
Talking words 16 to 18 months
Talking sentences..... 24 months

WHAT TYPES OF INTERVENTION SERVICES ARE THERE?

There is a wide range of early intervention services. Here are a few examples:

- Medical services for diagnosis and evaluation
- Physical, occupational and speech therapy services
- Special instruction provided by infant education teachers to promote development
- Social Services to provide family support, counseling and home visits

WHO PROVIDES SERVICES FOR EARLY INTERVENTION?

There are a number of providers of services in this community. Here are a few:

- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Follow-Up Programs
- Public Schools
- Public Health Departments
- Regional Centers for the Developmentally Disabled
- Private, Nonprofit Agencies which provide infant/parent educational programs, therapies, equipment, etc.
- California Children's Services (CCS)

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REGIONAL CENTER IN CALIFORNIA EARLY START?

- To provide service coordination
- To coordinate or arrange for evaluations to determine eligibility for Early Start services
- To complete assessments for planning for services
- To develop an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- To monitor services and provide periodic reviews and assessment of the IFSP

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SERVICE PLAN?

An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a family-focused, outcome-oriented plan built upon a family's natural supports. It is written to address the infant's or toddler's developmental needs, family concerns and the needs of the family related to meeting the developmental needs of the child.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SERVICE COORDINATOR?

A service coordinator is assigned to work with the child and family at the time they are referred for evaluation and assessment. They will serve as a primary point of contact for coordinating services and providing assistance to the child and family. The service coordinator is responsible for planning the development of the Individual Family Service Plan, and reviewing it with the family and service providers every six months. As the child approaches his or her third birthday, the service coordinator, with the IFSP team, will develop a plan to transition out of the Early Start Program by age three.

WHAT HAPPENS AT AGE THREE YEARS?

Early Start infants and toddlers may be served through the San Diego Regional Center until age three. By age three, those toddlers who are not developmentally disabled are referred to community resources for other services as needed. Toddlers who are found to be developmentally disabled by or before their third birthday continue to be eligible for Regional Center services, and are referred to a case management unit in their geographic area for ongoing support and assistance. Eligibility for Regional Center services is defined through the Lanterman Act, and includes individuals who have the following conditions: intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, and other conditions requiring services similar to those required by individuals with intellectual disability.

For additional information on California Early Start or to apply for services, please contact:

SAN DIEGO REGIONAL CENTER

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A Service of San Diego-Imperial Counties Developmental Services, Inc

SAN DIEGO
REGIONAL CENTER

Serving Individuals with Developmental Disabilities in
San Diego and Imperial Counties

