

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE THREE POLICY

This policy establishes guidance for the appropriate administration and provision of Early Intervention supports and services to eligible children up to age three and their families. The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities, in keeping with its mission to support Early Intervention eligible children birth to age three and their families, will provide services as identified in the Board's description of services/procedures. These services will support positive outcomes for eligible children and families. Board Early Intervention services will be designed to support families in natural environments, support community connectedness and utilize evidence based Early Intervention best practices. The Board recognizes that there are limited resources, but is committed to offering supports with currently available and qualified Board staff, facilities and funding.

The Superintendent shall establish, revise and keep current the procedures to be utilized in the implementation of this policy. The Superintendent/ designee shall ensure compliance with these procedures. All revisions and changes will be shared with the Board when made.

Superintendent Signature:  Date: 4/15/21

Implemented: 12/1/04

Board Approved: 12/1/04, 4/20/17, 5/17/18, 7/18/19

Revised: 4/1/08, 4/20/17, 5/8/18, 7/9/19

Reviewed: 12/1/16, 5/8/18, 7/9/19, 4/15/21

Cross Referenced:

Description of Services/Procedures: Early Intervention/Children's Options Services Birth up to Age Three

DODD Early Intervention Rule 5123-10-01, 5123-10-02, 5213-10- 03, 5123-10-04

**ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE THREE PROCEDURE**

I. ROLE OF EARLY INTERVENTION

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities (The Board) is responsible for the implementation of all the components of DODD Early Intervention rule 5123-10-01 through 5123-10-04 per contract with Erie County's Family and Children First Council (FCFC). The Board's Early Intervention (EI) supports and services serve as an option for services for families whose children are eligible based on a diagnosed physical or mental condition or established developmental delay or disability as determined by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD). Eligibility for Board EI services and EI Service Coordination is the same.

The Board shall coordinate with other community agencies including the Family and Children First Council, related early childhood committees, and families so that services are collaborative, build upon family strengths, and respond to families' needs in meaningful ways.

II. PROGRAM CONSENT

A. Early Intervention services utilize a Primary Service Provider approach to teaming and is based on Early Intervention Evidence Based Practices. Early Intervention Services shall include the following:

1. Special Instruction provided by Board certified staff employed by and certified by the Erie County Board of DD, meeting the federal and state Early Intervention DODD requirements that are interest and strength based.
2. PLAY Project curriculum (when appropriate and available) by certified PLAY project consultants.
3. Family support services such as community events/opportunities and access to related early childhood resources.
4. Early Intervention Service Coordination as determined by Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and current rules set forth in DODD Early Intervention 5123-10-01 through 5123-10-04.
5. The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall ensure that a DODD credentialed Service Coordinator is available for each of the children/families enrolled in Early Intervention. The Erie County Board of DD will ensure that families eligible for Early Intervention will be assigned one service coordinator per family at any given time.

III. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

A. The Board's Early Intervention (EI) services and Service Coordination are based on the following seven premises:

1. Family-centered and community based (i.e. responsive to priorities and needs of the family, and provided in natural environments). Eligible children may enter and exit the system at any time before the age of three.
2. Coordination with families, other community agencies, the Family and Children First Council (FCFC), and related early childhood committees so that services are collaborative, accessible, and build upon family strengths and priorities.
3. Culturally sensitive to diverse beliefs, values, and family structures.
4. Empowers families and supports individual family members in supporting their child.
5. Service Coordination of Early Intervention services.

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6. Organized upon a framework of child find and eligibility determination, family involvement and support, trans-disciplinary evaluation/assessment, specialized early intervention services, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process, service coordination, parents rights/ procedural safeguards, and a comprehensive system of personnel development.
 7. Future-orientation to reflect transition toward the next environment, including linking with local education agencies serving preschool children.
- B. The Board's Early Intervention Services take an active role in the provision of:
1. **Outreach/ Child find/ Intake:** The Early Intervention supervisor will participate in FCFC meetings to collaborate with other community agencies and provide updated referral information. The Early Intervention supervisor will also be responsible for assuring that the intake process is complete and timely in accordance with current rules and will be actively involved in community events including community-wide baby showers, open-houses, pre-school expos, etc. to identify children/families who may be eligible for EI services.
 2. **Parent's Rights and Due Process:** *EI Parent's Rights* brochure, and *Erie County Board's Guidelines for Resolving Concerns and Administrative Resolution of Complaints* are given to all families upon entry into the EI program, usually at the first home visit during intake. Parents sign the Consent for Screening, Evaluation, and Assessment as applicable. Parents receive a Parents Rights brochure initially and at every IFSP review thereafter, and at a minimum of every 180 days.
 3. **Evaluations & Assessments:** All children entering the program with a suspected delay in 1 or more of the 5 developmental domains (physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, adaptive) will be evaluated/assessed using the Battelle Developmental Inventory II tool to determine eligibility and a child assessment will be conducted to assist in program planning. A family directed assessment will be offered to all families and completed within 45 calendar days of the program referral. Family Directed Assessments are not required, and families can opt out of completing this with their Early Intervention team.
 4. **EI Service Coordination and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP):** Service Coordinators, in collaboration with the Early Intervention team, will develop the IFSP with families within the first 45 calendar days of program referral. To be considered timely, the services indicated on the IFSP will begin within 30 days of the date the IFSP is signed by the parent/caregiver. Also, the IFSP will be reviewed at least every 180 days, or more frequently, dependent upon the child's needs, family/team request, and in accordance with DODD Rule.
 5. **Family Support:** The Early Intervention program offers community group opportunities at least once per quarter, to encourage family-to-family support.
 6. **Ongoing Service Coordination:** Ongoing Service Coordination will be provided to eligible families. Frequency will be determined by the needs and priorities set forth by the Early Intervention team, including the family.
 7. **Ongoing Early Intervention Services:** The Early Intervention program will offer evidence based Early Intervention services using a Primary Service Provider approach to teaming to all eligible families. Early Intervention services will occur in a child's natural environment and be

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focused on achieving functional outcomes set forth in the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

- C. **Eligibility for Early Intervention Services:** In accordance with DODD, Early Intervention Services are available to infants and toddlers under the age of 3 who have a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high probability of causing a delay or those whose development is at or below 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in one or more developmental domains as determined by the Battelle Developmental Inventory II evaluation tool.
- D. **Administration Procedures for Early Intervention (EI) services:** Upon verbal or written request from anyone, a copy of this policy and procedure shall be made available.
- E. **Parent Rights and Due Process:** Early Intervention Parent's Rights brochure is reviewed and given to families initially and prior to the completion of every IFSP throughout their stay in the EI program. Families may make complaints by any of the following ways:
 - 1. Contacting the Local EI program directly via phone (419-621-3962 or 1-800-491-4566), fax (419-685-3448), mail (Erie County Board of DD; 4405 Galloway Rd., Sandusky, Ohio 44870).
 - 2. Writing to the local Family and Children First Council (Attn: FCFC Director, 2900 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, Ohio 44870).
 - 3. Contacting the Bureau of Early Intervention Services at the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities by phone (614-644-6389), email (beis@gw.ode.state.oh.us), or by mail (Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Bureau for Early Intervention Services, ATTN: Early Intervention Program, 30 E. Broad St, Columbus, Ohio 43215).

IV. CALENDAR

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall ensure and make available Early Intervention services on a year-round basis based on the availability of funds.

V. PARTICIPATION

- A. The frequency and location of participation in EI Services for each child and family shall be individually determined and shall be based on the child's developmental needs, families' needs and priorities, the team's recommendations, and all will be reflected in the IFSP.
- B. Parents/caregiver are required to attend and participate in all EI services offered to the child/family. Parents/caregivers are seen as the expert for their child and are partners with the Board's Primary Service Provider professionals (Developmental Specialist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, and Physical Therapist) and Early Intervention Service Coordinators to ensure lasting developmental improvement and functional family routines.
- C. Early Intervention services provided by the board will be based on the availability of funds, availability of contracted providers, and provider capacity to serve.

VI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall participate in the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities monitoring system through the accreditation process established pursuant to section 5126.081 of the Revised Code and rule 5123:2-4-01 of the Administrative Code; and provide information requested by the lead agency for the purpose of monitoring for compliance with DODD and Part C Federal Regulations.