

Early Intervention

The first three years of a child's life are important learning years. They are learning to communicate and move around. Self-help skills, such as eating and dressing are developing. Children are developing their social and thinking skills by playing and interacting with others. Children learn these skills naturally by watching the people around them and by being shown how to do different things. While children grow and develop at their own rate, some children do experience delays in development and may need extra help. Our infant/toddler early intervention program can provide that extra help to children and families.

Infant/toddler early intervention is a program designed to help families of children with developmental delays. Services are provided by a team of therapists and/or teachers, with you, the parent, as the **most important** member of the team. Through formal evaluations and discussions with you, a plan is developed to meet your family's concerns and priorities for your child.

Early intervention is a family-centered, routine-based program. We will talk with you about your dreams and hopes for your child, what your family likes to do, what your child likes to do and what a typical day is like for your family. We will discuss with you situations, family activities and routines (eating, playing, dressing, etc.) that may be difficult for your child to take part in because of his/her special needs. The strategies developed for your child, with your input, will center around your child's strengths and needs and are designed to increase your child's participation in daily routines and activities. Early intervention for infants and toddlers works best when it is part of your family's daily routines and activities – not a task that is in addition to what you already do, but maybe a different way of doing what you already do. You will spend more hours in a week with your child than we will. So, our goal is to work with you, the family, to help your child develop to his/her potential.

We provide services to infants and toddlers (birth until the day before the child's third birthday) who show delays in the following areas:

- Communication – ability to talk, understand and express needs.
- Social/Emotional – ability to relate, interact and play with others.
- Physical (includes gross and fine motor) – ability to move and use their hands.
- Self-Help – ability to eat, dress and take care of themselves.
- Cognitive – ability to think and learn.

To be eligible for services, a child needs to show a delay of at least 25% in one or more of the above areas.

There is no charge to the family for early intervention services. Funding for early intervention in comes through the Office of Child Development and Early

Learning in the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and Juniata Valley Behavioral and Developmental Services.

If you have concerns about your child's development, you can arrange for an initial evaluation by contacting Service Access Management (SAM Inc), 717-242-0351.