

## Walla Walla County Child Health Notes

Promoting early identification and partnerships between families, primary health care providers & the community.

Distributed by: Walla Walla County Department of Community Health – Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program  
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### EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

#### WHAT IS EARLY INTERVENTION?

- Early intervention (EI) provides services for infants and toddlers, **birth to age three**, who have developmental delays or disabilities. Eligible infants and toddlers in Washington State are entitled to individualized and quality early intervention services in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C.
- In Washington State, the early intervention program is called the **Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program**. The ESIT system in each county is coordinated by local lead agencies under the authority of a Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) contract. The local early intervention system involves partnerships between agencies who serve children and families such as school districts, health and human services agencies, and other community providers and organizations.
- If a child qualifies for services, a Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) will work with the family and early intervention professionals to write an **Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP)**. This is similar to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), but is for children below the age of three years. It outlines the child's unique strengths and needs, areas to be addressed, and services needed to meet the desired outcomes. The plan is reviewed at least every 6 months.
- Services may include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, special instruction and a FRC who works with the family to access needed services.



#### WHY REFER CHILDREN FOR EARLY INTERVENTION?



**A diagnosis is not required** for referral to EI. Provider or parent concern should initiate a referral. **Even if unsure, refer.**

**Early intervention enhances a child's development.** Over 50 years of research has demonstrated that children receiving EI services need fewer special education and other services later in life, and, in some cases, are indistinguishable from classmates without disabilities. The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) found that overall outcomes for infants and toddlers participating in EI included increased motor, social, and cognitive functioning; the acquisition of age-appropriate skills; and reduced negative impacts of their disabilities. Additionally, these children were acquiring skills in the social, cognitive, and adaptive domains at a faster rate when they left the program than when they began, and between 54% - 62% of the children receiving EI services exited the program functioning within age expectations in these domains.<sup>1</sup>  
**Families benefit too!** Early intervention helps parents understand their child's developmental skill level and reduces the stress experienced by families of infants and toddlers with disabilities. Supported families need less out-of-home placement. Data demonstrate less abuse and neglect occurs for children receiving early intervention services.

**It is cost effective.** Data shows long-term cost savings from early intervention programs. The cost is less when intervention is earlier, preventing developmental problems that would have required special services later in life.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ESIT IN WASHINGTON STATE?

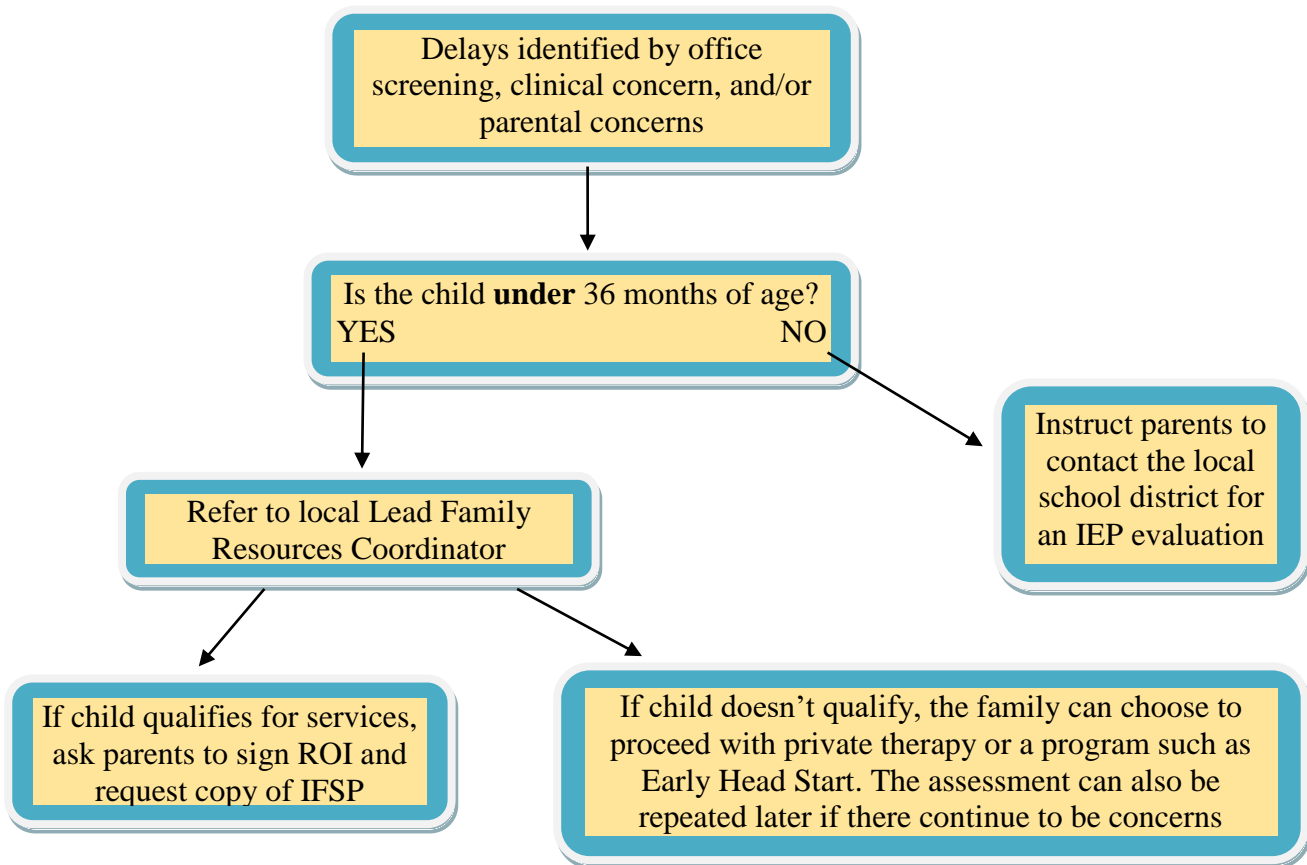
- To be eligible, a child must have a **25% delay or show a 1.5 standard deviation** below his or her age in one or more of the developmental areas (motor, cognitive, communication, social and adaptive).
- A child may also be eligible if he or she has a **physical or mental condition**, such as Down syndrome, that is known to cause a delay in development.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A CHILD DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR THE ESIT PROGRAM?

If a child's delays are not significant enough to qualify for services through ESIT, but you believe they would benefit from intervention, a FRC can assist parents to explore the option of private therapy services. Insurance contracts vary a great deal, so each family would have to determine coverage with their carrier. Additionally, a FRC can help a family find other child and family supports such as Early Head Start or local play groups.

## HOW DO I REFER A CHILD FOR AN ESIT EVALUATION?

You (with family permission) or the family can call your county's lead Family Resources Coordinator (FRC), who will help the family access early intervention services. Find contact information for your local lead FRC in the [ESIT Contacts Directory](#) or call the statewide "Family Health Hotline" number at **1-800-322-2588**. Consider asking the family sign a release of information (ROI) so that you may receive a copy of the evaluation.



## HOW DO I TALK TO PARENTS ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS & ESIT?

- Make development a regular discussion. The AAP recommends that primary care practices perform developmental surveillance at every preventive visit throughout childhood and that a standardized developmental screening tool be administered if a developmental concern arises and/or at the 9-, 18-, and 30-month visit.
- Start by asking the parent to share their own observations, questions, or concerns. The parent may already sense a problem, but might not yet know how to articulate it.<sup>ii</sup>
- Focus on the need to err on the side of caution. By referring for further evaluation, it opens up the opportunity to "rule out" or "rule in" any concerns.
- Emphasize the importance of early identification and intervention for improving outcomes for their child.
- Highlight the child's strengths. Keep the conversation balanced with a positive side.<sup>iii</sup>

## REFERENCES

- <sup>i</sup> The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (2011). The Outcomes of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families The Outcomes of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families. <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/outcomesofearlyintervention.pdf>
- <sup>ii</sup> First Signs. Sharing Concerns Physician to Parent. [http://www.firstsigns.org/concerns/doc\\_parent.htm](http://www.firstsigns.org/concerns/doc_parent.htm)
- <sup>iii</sup> CDC. Tips for Talking with Parents about Developmental Concerns. [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/tipstalkingparents.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/tipstalkingparents.pdf)

## SPECIAL NEEDS INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### Local:

<b>For children birth through age 18</b> – Amanda Hinrichs RN, CYSHCN Coordinator at WW County Department of Community Health	Phone # 509-524-2658
<b>For children under age three</b> – ESD 123 Early Intervention program	Phone # 509-544-5745
<b>For Children age three and older</b> – contact the following school districts	College Place School District Phone # 509-525-4827 Columbia School District Phone # 509-547-2136 Dixie School District Phone # 509-525-5339 Prescott School District Phone # 509-849-2217 Touchet School District Phone # 509-394-2352 Waitsburg School District Phone # 509-337-6301 Walla Walla School District Phone # 509-527-3000
<b>For Family to Family Support</b> – Parent to Parent Program	Angie Witt P2P Coordinator Phone # 509-540-9880 E-mail <a href="mailto:p2p@wwvwn.org">p2p@wwvwn.org</a>  Ysabel Fuentes, Hispanic Outreach P2P Coordinator Phone # 509-525-9435 E-mail <a href="mailto:p2pespanol@wwvwn.org">p2pespanol@wwvwn.org</a>
<b>Other Local Support</b> – Walla Walla Valley Disability Network	Phone # 509-386-2356 (office hours Mon-Fri 10 am – noon) <a href="http://www.wwvwn.org/">http://www.wwvwn.org/</a> - local resources & events, information by diagnosis & more

<b>Regional:</b>	Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) Program	1-360-725-3500 <a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-development-supports/esit">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-development-supports/esit</a> <a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ESITContactsDirectory.pdf">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ESITContactsDirectory.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/esit/DearWAPrimaryCaregiver.pdf">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/esit/DearWAPrimaryCaregiver.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-dev-support-providers/esit/forms-publications">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-dev-support-providers/esit/forms-publications</a>  <a href="https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-dev-support-providers/esit/practice-guides">https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-dev-support-providers/esit/practice-guides</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESIT Contacts Directory</li> <li>• Dear WA Primary Care Provider Letter</li> <li>• Forms and Materials for Families -(multiple languages)</li> <li>• Practice Guides Materials from ESIT</li> </ul>	
	WithinReach Family Health Hotline and Website (bilingual English/Spanish staff and interpreter line)	1-800-322-2588, 1-800-833-6388 TTD <a href="http://www.parenthelp123.org/">http://www.parenthelp123.org/</a> Spanish: <a href="http://www.parenthelp123.org/es/">http://www.parenthelp123.org/es/</a>
	Parent to Parent Support Programs of Washington	1-800-821-5927 <a href="https://arcwa.org/index.php/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs">https://arcwa.org/index.php/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs</a>

<b>National/ Internet:</b>	<p>American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Clinical Report: Identifying Infants and Young Children with Developmental Disorders in the Medical Home: An Algorithm for Developmental Surveillance and Screening. <i>Pediatrics</i>. 2006;118(1):405–420. (Reaffirmed 2014)</p> <p>AAP Clinical Report: Early Intervention, IDEA Part C Services, and the Medical Home: Collaboration for Best Practice and Best Outcomes. <i>Pediatrics</i>. 2013;132(4):e1073-e1088. (Reaffirmed 2017)</p> <p>Center on Children and Families at BROOKINGS. Brief: How Much Could We Improve Children’s Life Chances by Intervening Early and Often?</p>	<p><a href="https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/118/1/405">https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/118/1/405</a></p> <p><a href="https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/132/4/e1073">https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/132/4/e1073</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/improve_child_life_chances_interventions_sawhill.pdf">https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/improve_child_life_chances_interventions_sawhill.pdf</a></p>
	<p>AAP Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics</p> <p>CDC Learn the Signs, Act Early</p> <p>CDC Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Health Professionals</p> <p>Family Voices (National and state family support networks)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.dbpeds.org">www.dbpeds.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html">www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening-hcp.html">https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening-hcp.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.familyvoices.org">www.familyvoices.org</a></p>