



Early Childhood Information and Tips

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Early Childhood Information for Families

Developmental Screening and Early Childhood Intervention

- If you're concerned about the development of an infant or toddler, or you suspect that a child has a delay, **this resource will assist to summarize the information.**
- Developmental screening and early intervention services can help infants and toddlers to learn many key skills and achieve gains in their development.
- There are many tools available to help parents learn about their child's growth and development, as well as resources for parents who have developmental concerns about their child.
- **A child's growth is more than just physical, and their development can be followed by how they play, learn, speak, and behave.**
- **Children grow, develop, and learn throughout their lives, starting at birth, the first 5 years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out.**

Developmental Milestones and Screening

- Learning about **developmental milestones** helps parents understand what young children typically know and can **do at different ages**.
- While every child is an individual, **milestones checklists allow parents to see how their child's skills compare to typical growth and development and become aware of possible delays**.
- Screening is conducted using **evidence informed instruments, administered by trained personnel, or an early intervention program**.
- The **purpose of screening** is to determine whether an **infant or toddler is suspected of having a delay and is, therefore, in need of early intervention services**.

Examples of Screening Tools

- Developmental Checklists
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- English Language Learner Screening
- Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening

All children should be screened during regular wellness visits at:

- 9 months.
- 18 months.
- 24 or 30 months.
- Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for developmental problems due to preterm birth, low birth weight or other reasons.

What is Early Intervention?

- Early intervention is a **system of services that helps babies, toddlers, children with developmental delays.**
- Infants, toddlers **grow and change rapidly during the first three years.**
- Early intervention **focuses on helping babies, toddlers and children learn the basic and brand-new skills that typically develop during the first years of life, such as:**
 - physical (reaching, rolling, crawling, walking and running)
 - cognitive (thinking, learning, solving problems)
 - communication (talking, listening, understanding)
 - social/emotional (playing, feeling secure and happy)
 - self-help (eating, dressing)

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Examples of Early Intervention Services

- If an infant, toddler or child **has delay in one or more of these developmental areas**, the child will **likely be eligible for early intervention services**.
- Services **will be tailored to meet the child's individual needs** and may include:
 - Assistive technology (devices a child might need)
 - Audiology or hearing services
 - Speech and language services
 - Medical services
 - Nursing services
 - Nutrition services
 - Occupational therapy
 - Physical therapy
 - Psychological services
- Services may also be provided to **address the needs and priorities of the child's family**.
- Family-directed services are meant **to help family members understand the specific needs of their child and how to enhance his or her development**.

Tips for Families

Prepare

- Start **discussions** about services **early**
- **Help children to communicate at home**, with other family members, health care providers and teachers **to learn to express their needs**
- Talk about **future goals** as a family

Connect

- Reach out to **family, friends, and natural supports** who can **assist during and after the transition to service.**
- Talk to **health care providers, child care providers, teachers and other professionals** about **resources** that may be available to **assist in planning**

Open Doors

- Support **children in engaging in recreational activities** and **neighbourhood organizations** to become **involved in their communities**

Tips for Families: Building Your Team

Possible Team Members:



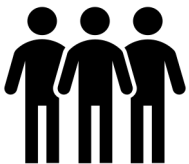
Child



Family, friends and other natural supports



Care givers, teachers, other personnel



Social workers, community and health care professionals, translators, cultural supports, community members

Tips for Families with Young Children



Find activities in the community that your child enjoys! Getting involved in recreational activities helps build social connections and skills.



Attend preschool fairs and parent information sessions to learn more about your options.



There are several resource repositories such as Children's Link, the Family and Community Resource Centre at Alberta Children's Hospital, and the Family Resource Networks that provide early childhood information.



Talk as a family about your questions regarding early childhood services and getting ready for school. There are resources that can help you!

Early Childhood Pathway

Clarified Early Childhood Transition Pathway

Agreed upon integrated plan, common approach, shared language, RTI universal services first, then targeted and specialized services when necessitated, seamless across sectors and systems

Implement Plan

Review plan, share accountability, coordinated response to supports and resources, collaborative plan in consultation with family, re-evaluate - assess when necessary

Create Plan

Shaped by evidence informed, individualized, developmentally appropriate, strength-based, family centred practice

Early Childhood Screening

Screening to assess need, access to early childhood development information and family supports



Transition into School

Simplify process and paperwork, ensure partners share information, reduce need for assessment, identify shared outcomes and common goals, consider functionality impact, discontinue supports with successful intervention

Gather Information

Share and build on existing assessment reports and information, support quality service, avoid duplication through linking and aligning organizations

Early Intervention-Assessment

Develop a team in conjunction with family, access to referrals and support resources, ensure coordinated cross sector connection and contribution

Transition into Service

Identified by e.g. parent/family, public health nurse, family doctor, wellness clinic, natural support, pediatrician, primary care network, childcare provider, Child Development Centre

Journey Begins Here