

How to Access Services for Children from Birth to Two Years of Age

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EI)

EI services are available to children from birth through 2 years of age. The steps in the EI process include referral, evaluation, eligibility determination, and delivery of services. First, a child must be directly referred for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (MDE). This can be done by his or her parent or guardian, or by a professional working with the child and family. (Below are the phone numbers to contact the intake office at the Westchester, Putnam or Rockland County Department of Health.) After the referral, the family is assigned an Initial Service Coordinator (ISC), who will contact the parent as soon as possible. The ISC will assist the parent in selecting a State-approved evaluation site to perform the MDE. The evaluation results and the needs of the family, in addition to the informed clinical opinion of the evaluators, are used by the evaluators to determine the child's eligibility for EI services.

Next, if the child is eligible for EI services, a meeting is held to discuss the specific services to be provided to the child and family. Participants in this meeting may include the child's parent(s), the ISC, the EI Official or Designee (EIO or EIOD), and the evaluator(s), who will create the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP is a legal document which lists the services agreed upon by the participants. The aim is to provide services to children and families in locations considered to be "natural environments," which means settings where typical same-age peers would naturally or typically participate. These include the child's home, the home of a caretaker or relative, a child care center, or other community locations where children without disabilities or developmental delays are found. Services may include, but are not limited to, speech, physical or occupational therapies; social work and/or psychological counseling; special instruction; and nursing services. EI services are provided throughout the calendar year, including summertime.

Please contact us for a copy of the timeline and more detail about the EI process and services. If you have access to the internet, you can locate a flow chart on our website: www.wihd.org Give us a call at (914) 493-2902 if you have any questions about EI and other services available to assist children with special needs from birth to age five.

To refer a child for an evaluation or for further information about services provided through your local EI Program, contact the Department of Health intake office in the County you live in:

WESTCHESTER (914) 813-5094

PUTNAM (845) 808-1640 ext. 46031

ROCKLAND (845) 364-2625