

Guide for Physicians

When you or one of your families has a concern about an infant's or toddler's health or development, refer the family to *Early On*®.

Visit **1800EarlyOn.org** or
call 1-800-EarlyOn (1-800-327-5966)

Early On builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance eligible children's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.

Don't worry. But don't wait.



What is *Early On*® Michigan?

Early On is Michigan's statewide system of early intervention services mandated by federal legislation (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). *Early On* provides evaluation and services to families of infants and toddlers, birth to age 3, who have a developmental delay or a medical condition that is likely to result in developmental delay. *Early On* is provided at no cost to the family.

Services are designed to make the most of each child's potential, as well as to strengthen the family's ability to help their child. *Early On* helps families support their infants and toddlers to grow in the following measurable areas so that they may fully participate in family and community life:

- social-emotional development, including self-regulation, social relationships with family, other adults, and other children
- acquisition of knowledge and skills, including language and communications skills, thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving
- ability to meet their own needs, including gradually becoming more independent, moving from place to place, and feeding themselves

The goal of early intervention is to enable young children to be active and successful participants during the early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes with their families, in child care, in preschool or school programs, and in the community.

- Early Childhood Outcomes Center

When do I refer to *Early On*?

- Whenever there is a concern, either by you or a parent, that the child's development is delayed. Practitioners should not wait for a specific diagnosis before initiating a referral.

and/or

- When the child has an "established condition" (a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay).

Early On emphasizes *early* identification and *early* referral to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities, to minimize their potential for developmental delay, and to support the significant brain development that occurs during a child's first three years of life.

What happens when I refer?

- Within 45 days of referral, with parental consent, an evaluation of all areas of development, an assessment, including the developmental history, and a family interview are conducted. If the child has an established condition, the evaluation is not typically conducted.
- The child's health and physical status are critical to the developmental evaluation. Physicians are asked to share a recent health appraisal report, including vision and hearing and screening results, with consent of the family, as part of *Early On* eligibility determination.

- After evaluation, the child's eligibility status is discussed with the family. Participation is voluntary. Families choose whether to participate in early intervention services.
- The family will be asked to give permission to share information with their referring physician.

Who is eligible for *Early On*?

An infant or toddler may be eligible for *Early On* under one of the two categories of eligibility:

1. **Developmental Delay:**

- Younger than two months of age (adjusted age): **any delay**
- Two to 36 months of age: **20% delay** (or one Standard Deviation below the mean) in one or more of the following domains:
 - Cognitive development
 - Communication development
 - Social/emotional development
 - Adaptive/self-help skills
 - Physical (gross and fine motor, including hearing and vision)



2. **Established Condition** (a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay). Categories and examples include (but are not limited to):
- **Congenital Anomalies:** Microcephalus, Spina Bifida w/o Anencephaly, Cleft Palate
 - **Chromosomal Anomalies:** Trisomy 21 (Down Syndrome), Turner Syndrome
 - **Infectious Conditions:** Rubella, Bacterial Meningitis, Encephalitis, Viral Meningitis
 - **Endocrine/Metabolic Disorders:** Hunter Syndrome, Hyperpituitary, Sickle Cell Disease
 - **Hearing Deficiency:** Bilateral or Unilateral hearing loss of ≥ 25 dB at 2+ frequencies between 500-4000 Hz
 - **Neurological Disorders:** Cerebral Palsy, Torticollis, Muscular Dystrophies
 - **Exposures Affecting Fetus/Child:** Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Blood Lead Level ≥ 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$
 - **Chronic Illness:** Very Low Birth Weight (<1500 grams or 3.3 lbs.)
 - **Developmental Disorders:** Autism, Regulatory Disorders of Sensory Processing
 - **Mental Health Conditions:** Adjustment Disorders, Regulatory Disorders

For a complete list of Established Conditions and to view other *Early On* materials, visit: [1800EarlyOn.org/Physicians](https://www.1800EarlyOn.org/Physicians)

What happens when the child is eligible?

Once a child is determined eligible, the family and the local *Early On* team will write the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) which will include information about:

- the child's status
- family information regarding resources, priorities, and concerns
- measurable outcomes
- services
- the service coordinator

What happens if I need to refer a child age 3 or older?

Supports for preschool-aged children (ages 3 through 5) who qualify are available through the local public school districts. If the child is having a difficult time in areas that may impede learning, such as speech and language, gross or fine motor skills, or social and emotional behavior, he or she may qualify for preschool special education services. Resources are available for parents:

- Local school district website
- Intermediate (county-level) school district website
- Michigan Special Education Information Line at 1-888-320-8384
- Build Up Michigan buildupmi.org

How can a physician or medical provider support a family?

- Refer in a timely manner to *Early On* when you or the family have a concern about the child's development or when the child has an established condition.
- To refer a child, use the online referral form on the *Early On* Michigan website at 1800EarlyOn.org or call 1-800-EARLY ON (1-800-327-5966).

Suggestions for Communication with *Early On*:

- Early intervention service type and intensity are determined through the Individualized Family Service Plan process. Medical input is encouraged, prescriptions are not appropriate.
- In order for the local *Early On* team to make a determination on eligibility, please respond timely to requests for health records, including vision and hearing screening results, with the consent of the family.
- Order free public awareness materials, brochures, child developmental wheels and more for your office.

Visit 1800EarlyOn.org.



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Early On Vision

*Infants and toddlers who are enrolled in
Early On reach their fullest potential, successfully
transitioning to the next phase of life, with
empowered and supportive families.*



Michigan.gov/EarlyOn



BuildUpMI.org



eotta.ccrea.org

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