Early Intervention (EI) in Massachusetts is a statewide, integrated, developmental service available to families of children between birth and three years of age. Children may be eligible for EI if they have developmental difficulties due to identified disabilities, or if development is at risk due to certain birth or environmental circumstances.

EI provides family-centered services that facilitate the developmental progress of eligible children. EI helps children acquire the skills they will need to continue to grow into happy and healthy members of the community.

**What should I do next?**

- Call the Central Directory for Early Intervention at 1-800-905-8437, or visit [www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org) for a listing of certified Early Intervention programs serving your city or town.
- Call and speak with a local EI program to make a referral.
Who is eligible for EI?

Any Massachusetts child up to three years of age and his/her family may be eligible for EI services if the child:

- Is not reaching age-appropriate milestones in one or more areas of development.
- Is diagnosed with a physical, emotional or cognitive condition that may result in a developmental delay.
- Is at risk for developmental delay due to various biological and/or environmental factors.

What happens after a referral?

With parental consent, an EI team will conduct an evaluation with the child and family to determine eligibility. This evaluation will focus on specific areas of child development, including areas related to cognitive, language, motor, social, emotional, behavioral and self-help skills.

If the child is eligible, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is written based on the individual needs of the child and family. The IFSP meeting occurs within 45 days of referral.

Who provides EI services?

Services are provided by a professional and dedicated EI team, which includes the child’s family. Depending on the child's needs, an EI team may also include a developmental specialist, physical therapist, speech-language pathologist, psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker, nurse and other specialty service providers.

Where and how are services provided?

An EI team serves the child and family in what are called “natural settings” – for example, at home, childcare centers, community play groups or libraries. Providing services in natural settings supports children in their everyday activities with family and friends.

Who pays for EI?

- Most health insurances pay for some or all of the cost of services if you give consent to have your insurance billed.
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health pays for any costs not covered by insurance, including co-payments and deductibles.