

NEW JERSEY EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM
NJ Department of Health and Senior Services

TOPIC	PROCESS
Early Intervention	The mission of the New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) is to provide quality early support and services to enhance the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of children, birth to age three, who have delays or disabilities.
Referral	There is a single point of entry for early intervention in each NJ county. Primary referral sources are required to refer a child to Early Intervention within 2 days of identification. Those sources include hospitals, physicians, parents, child care programs, local educational agencies, public health facilities, other social service agencies, and health care providers.
Service Coordination	Service coordination assists and enables eligible children and families to receive the rights, procedural safeguards, and services within NJEIS. Service coordinators are also a single point of contact in helping families to obtain community services and assistance that they might need for themselves and their child.
Evaluation & Assessment	An early intervention evaluation will gather information about the child to see how he or she is developing. It is used to determine eligibility for early intervention services. Assessment helps to define the types and levels of services needed by the child and family.
Eligibility	A child between birth and 3 years of age is eligible with at least a <u>33% delay in one</u> and/or a <u>25% delay in two or more</u> developmental areas. Those areas include physical, cognitive, communicative, social/emotional, and adaptive.
Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	Following the evaluation and assessment, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is developed to describe the services that are needed by the child and family and how they will be implemented. The IFSP is both a plan and a process. The plan is a written document and the process is an ongoing sharing of information between the family and early intervention to meet the developmental needs of the child and the resource needs of the family.
IFSP Meeting	The IFSP is developed at a meeting with the family, service coordinator, and at least one member of the evaluation team. It is based on information collected from the family and the evaluation/assessment. The meeting is held at a time and location convenient to the family and in the language or method of communication that is used at home.
Early Intervention (EI) Services	Early Intervention services are designed to address a problem or delay in development as early as possible. They are provided by qualified personnel in <u>natural environments</u> : settings in which children without special needs ordinarily participate and that are most comfortable and convenient for the family.
IFSP Reviews	The IFSP is reviewed every 6 months, or more frequently as appropriate, to ensure the plan continues to meet the needs of the child and family. At IFSP meetings, the IFSP team, which includes family members, reviews the current outcomes and early intervention services to update as needed. A new IFSP is written at least once per year.
Transition	The goal of all transitions is to assist children and families to move from one phase to another in the most helpful way possible. Transitions can occur at any time a child and family are receiving early intervention services. When a child is 2 years old, a transition information meeting will be held with the parents, service coordinator, and others who have worked with the child to begin planning services and support that might be needed when the child turns three and leaves early intervention. This process contains several steps to transition from early intervention to other early childhood settings and support services that the child and family may need at age three.
Cost of Service	Federal law requires that specific services be provided to eligible children and families at public expense. These services include Child Find and Referral; Evaluation and Assessment; Service Coordination; IFSP Development and Review; and Procedural Safeguards (family rights). Beyond these, a family may have to assume some or all of the costs, depending on resources available and families' ability to pay. Family cost share is based on a sliding fee scale that determines the cost by a family's income and size.

This fact sheet was developed by the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network and the Map to Inclusive Child Care Team. **For more information, please go to www.state.nj.us/health/fls/eiphome.htm or call 800-322-8174. You can also receive assistance from the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, 800-654-SPAN (7726) or www.spannj.org.**