

Children develop differently and at their own pace. The period from birth to age three is a critical time in a child's development and an important time for parents to have accurate information and consistent support close at hand.

Children's Integrated Services - Early Intervention Program (CIS-EI)

Parents know their child better than anyone else. They are their child's first and best teachers. Children who are showing a delay in their development, or who are at risk for a delay, may be eligible for support services.

What is Children's Integrated Services - Early Intervention?

The CIS-EI Program provides family-centered early intervention for children from birth to age three who have a delay in development or a health condition that may lead to a delay in development. Early Intervention is a federally mandated service under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

CIS-EI in Vermont, as part of the broader system of Children's Integrated Services, recognizes the importance of providing services early in a child's life to ensure the best developmental outcomes possible.

CIS-EI provides a developmental screening if one has not been completed and/or a comprehensive,

multi-disciplinary evaluation of your child. If your child is found eligible for CIS-EI services:

- a One Plan will be developed which includes services based on your goals for your child and family.
- a service coordinator will ensure the delivery of your child's services and share information and resources to support your family around your child's development.
- transition planning will be provided for when your child achieves all of their goals, or when they turn three, ending their eligibility with CIS-EI.



How do I know if my child is eligible for Early Intervention services?

The eligibility process begins with a multi-disciplinary evaluation of your child. Information will be gathered about your child's current strengths, abilities and needs.

When you meet with your CIS-EI service coordinator, you will discuss your child's medical history and current health status and the primary areas of development including:

- Cognitive - how children think, explore and figure things out
- Physical - how children grow, use their senses and control their bodies (includes gross and fine motor skills as well as vision and hearing)
- Communicative - how children understand and express themselves through forms of communication like language, gestures and sounds
- Social/emotional - how children develop relationships and identify and control their emotions
- Adaptive - how children participate in a new environment or situation and in their personal care and daily routines (such as dressing and eating)

During the multidisciplinary evaluation, CIS-EI providers will look at these areas of development to determine your child's areas of strength and if there are any delays. If your child is demonstrating an observable and measurable delay in any areas of their development based on this evaluation, or if they have a diagnosis that puts them at risk for developmental delays, then they are likely to be determined eligible to receive early intervention services.

Who conducts my child's evaluation and when must it be done?

Your child's first evaluation must be completed within 45 days of the time they are referred. Evaluations are only completed with your written consent. As a member of your child's team, your input is extremely important for completing the evaluation. Other caregivers who you agree to, such as childcare providers, may also provide information.

The evaluation is administered by a multi-disciplinary team and may include a CIS-EI service coordinator, developmental educator, and/or speech, physical, or occupational therapists. You can expect a written report of the evaluation findings after it is completed, regardless of whether or not your child is determined to have any delays.

You will be invited to attend an eligibility meeting where you will review this report and discuss the results. There is no cost to you to have this evaluation done, although your health insurance carrier may be billed with your permission and written consent.



What happens after my child becomes eligible for CIS Early Intervention services?

If your child is determined eligible for services, and you are interested in receiving support, then a One Plan will be created with you for your child during a One Plan meeting. The One Plan is a flexible plan which changes as your child grows and develops.

The One Plan team, which includes you as the most important member, will work together to develop simple strategies and activities that you and other caregivers can also do with your child during regular routines. The best way to help your child learn and grow is by making developmental strategies a part of your child's daily routine. The providers on your team will coach and guide you in learning how to best support your child's development.

The team will also include a service coordinator, who will help your family access early intervention services and other CIS and community resources. Depending on your child's needs, the team may also include service providers such as a developmental educator, speech and language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and medical social worker among others. In addition, you may want to include school partners and/or any other people you feel would be helpful to support your child's development. Once your One Plan is developed, you must give your written consent before your child can receive any early intervention services. You have the right to consent to some or all the services in your child's One Plan.



What should be in my child's One Plan?

- Your child's strengths, challenges and needs;
- Your hopes and dreams for your child—what you'd like CIS-EI or other CIS services to focus on with you;

- Your child's and family's outcomes which are the goals that the services will support;
- Strategies and activities that you can use throughout the day to help your child learn and grow and reach the goals you have identified;
- Duration and frequency of services, and service provider information;
- How fees for services will be reimbursed;
- Location of where services will be provided: early intervention services are provided in the child's natural setting, including at home, at childcare, or in other community spaces, as identified by you with your team.

What can we do to change or improve our child's Early Intervention services?

You have the right to disagree with the services your child is receiving. To make changes in your child's services, you can:

- Ask your CIS-EI service coordinator for a One Plan review meeting to discuss your concerns and the changes you want to make in your child's EI services.
- Request from your CIS-EI service coordinator a re-evaluation of your child to look at the areas where you feel improvement is needed.
- Request mediation, file an administrative complaint or a due process hearing from the Vermont Agency of Education.
- Contact the State's CIS-EI program administrator at AHS.dcfddcis@vermont.gov to discuss your concerns.
- You can also ask another parent, relative, or a friend to help you work out your differences with the CIS-EI program.
- You can find out more about your parental rights by visiting: [Early Intervention Parental Rights, VT Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](http://www.vermont.gov)



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802-876-5315

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What can we do to prepare for our child's transition out of Early Intervention?

Your child's CIS-EI team will support your family's transition out of the Early Intervention program. A successful transition involves planning carefully and early and can be included as a goal on your child's One Plan. To ensure a smooth transition, your child's Early Intervention team should meet three to six months before your child turns three or as early as possible if your child is making progress and may exit early from CIS-EI services.

Some children may be *potentially eligible* for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), a program that provides support for children ages 3 to 5 years old in your school district or supervisory union. If your child is demonstrating the need for continued services, then, with your consent, your CIS-EI service coordinator will organize a transition meeting with your child's CIS-EI team and the school ECSE team in your town. This transition meeting must be held at least 90 days before your child turns 3. Your service coordinator will facilitate appropriate transition planning to ECSE or other community supports as needed.

Resources

[Children's Integrated Service/Part C Early Intervention](#)

Child Development Division
280 State Drive, NOB 1
Waterbury, VT 05671
802-241-3110 or 800-649-2642

[Help Me Grow](#)

Supports families' and service providers' understanding of early development, promotes the importance of social and emotional skill development, and connects children to the community resources and supports they need, when they need them.
2-1-1 ext. 6

[Vermont Agency of Education Early Education Program](#) **802-828-5042**