



TOOLS for TODDLERS

EARLY INTERVENTION Reference Card

What is Early Intervention?

Early Intervention is the second component to Early Identification of a hearing loss. Following the identification and confirmation of a hearing loss, it is recommended by the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) that intervention begin as soon as possible, but at no later than 6 months of age. Intervention for a hearing loss may include the following services: audiological, educational, and medical.

The JCIH has identified Principles to Early Intervention, which include the following:

1. Parents should be offered the opportunity to interact with other families who have infants and children with hearing loss or adults with hearing loss.
2. Parents should also be offered access to professional, educational, and consumer organizations and provided with general information on child development, language development, and hearing loss.
3. Foundational characteristics of developing and implementing early intervention programs include a family-centered approach, culturally responsive practices, collaborative professional-family relationships and strong family involvement, developmentally appropriate practice, interdisciplinary assessment, and community-based provision of services.

Educational intervention services will usually be provided by Infant and Family Services in or near your community.

What are Infant and Family Services?

Infant and Family Services are special education services provided by your public school system. Two federal laws—PL 105-17, Part C, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—regulate these services. Together, these laws encourage states to develop coordinated programs of early intervention services for children with disabilities from birth to age 3, and require that these children and their parents have the same legal right to a free and appropriate education as children without disabilities.

Why is Early Intervention Important?

Research has compared children with hearing loss who receive early intervention and amplification before 6 months of age versus after 6 months of age. By the time they enter first grade, children identified earlier are 1–2 years ahead of their later-identified peers in language, cognitive, and social skills.¹ Therefore, early intervention can lay the foundation for developing fundamental language, social, and cognitive skills that provide the framework for later schooling and success in society.

What is a Home Visit?

A specialist, such as an infant/family specialist, will come to your home or another natural environment, such as daycare, to work with you, your infant, and your family members. Visits are conducted in the home or other places where your child spends a big part of his or her time because these are the most natural places for your baby.

During the home visit the infant/family specialist will help you communicate with your child and encourage his or her development. Your specialist will work closely with you to identify your needs and set priorities for your baby, help you locate resources, and answer your questions.

To learn more about Early Hearing Detection and Intervention, visit InfantHearing.org.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). (1990). Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives. Washington, DC: Public Health Service.