

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE THREE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidance for the appropriate administration and provision of Early Intervention supports and services to eligible children up to age three and their families. The Erie County Board of DD in keeping with its mission to support Early Intervention eligible children birth to age three and their families will provide services, as identified in the Boards' description of services/procedures, to support positive outcomes for eligible children and families. Board services will be designed to support families in natural environments, support community connectedness and utilize evidence based Early Intervention practices. The Board recognizes that there are limited resources but is committed to offering supports with currently available qualified Board staff, facilities and funding.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish and revise as needed the procedures/description of services to be utilized in the implementation of this policy. The superintendent/designee shall ensure compliance with these procedures. All revisions and changes will be shared with the Board when made.

Superintendent Signature:  Date: 4/20/17

Implemented: 12/1/04

Board Approved: 12/1/04, 4/20/17

Revised: 4/1/08, 4/20/17

Reviewed: 12/1/16

Cross Referenced:

Description of Services/Procedures: Early Intervention/Children's Options Services Birth up to Age Three

Ohio Administrative Code Reference:

5123:2-1-04 Early Intervention

5126 Administrative Rule- Early Intervention

3708-08 AC Ohio Dept. of Health-Help Me Grow

Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Early Intervention for Children Birth to Age Three

I. Role of Early Intervention

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities (The Board) is responsible for the implementation of all of the components of the Erie County Help Me Grow (HMG) Program per contract with Erie County's Family & Children First Council. The Board's Early Intervention (EI) supports and services serve as an option for services for families whose children are eligible based upon a medical diagnoses or established developmental delay or disability as determined by state DODD & ODH HMG Rule. Eligibility for Board EI Services or HMG EI Service Coordination is the same.

The Board shall coordinate with other community agencies including the Family and Children First Council (FCFC), related early childhood committees, and families so that services are flexible and build upon family strengths and respond to their needs in meaningful ways.

II. Program Consent

A. Early Intervention Services shall include, the following:

1. Special Instruction provided Board certified staff employed by and certified by the County Board of DD, meeting the federal and state Early Intervention DODD requirements that are interest and strength based. We use the PLAY Project (when appropriate) and a Primary Service Provider approach to teaming and based on Early Intervention evidenced based practices that are delivered in natural environments.
2. Family support services such as community events/opportunities and access to related early childhood resource.
3. Service coordination as determined by Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and ODH HMG Rules. (This includes Service Coordination, Screenings, Evaluation and Assessment, Transition support, etc. as found in III.B, of this policy).
4. The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall ensure that an ODH credentialed HMG service coordinator is available for each of the children/families enrolled in Early Intervention. The Board of DD will ensure that families eligible for Early Intervention will be assigned one service coordinator per family at any given time.

III. Description of Services

A. The Board's Early Intervention (EI) services and Service Coordination are based on the following seven premises:

1. Family centered and community based (i.e. responsive to priorities and needs of the family, and provided in natural environments). Eligible children with a need for service, may enter and exit the system at any time, however eligible children need to show a continued need for Early Intervention services in order to stay enrolled in Early Intervention.
2. Coordination with families, other community agencies, the Family and Children First Council, and related early childhood committees so that services are flexible, accessible, and build upon family strengths and priorities.

Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Early Intervention for Children Birth to Age Three

3. Culturally sensitive to the diversity of beliefs, values, and family structures.
 4. Empowers families and supports individual family members in supporting their child.
 5. Service Coordination of Early Intervention services.
 6. Organized upon a framework of child find and eligibility determination, family involvement and support, trans-disciplinary evaluation/assessment, specialized early intervention services, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process, service coordination, parents rights/ procedural safeguards, and a comprehensive system of personnel development.
 7. Future-orientation to reflect transition toward the next environment, including linking with local education agencies serving preschool children.
- B. The Board's Early Intervention/HMG Services take an active role in the provision of:
1. Outreach/child find/intake: The Early Intervention supervisor will participate in FCFC meetings to collaborate with other community agencies to provide updated referral information. The Early Intervention supervisor will also be responsible for assuring that the intake process is complete and timely in accordance with ODH Rules and will be actively involved in community events including community-wide baby showers, open-houses, pre-school expos, etc. to identify children/families who may be eligible for EI/ HMG/services.
 2. Parent's Rights and Due Process: *EI/HMG Parent's Rights* brochure produced by the Ohio Department of Health, *ODH Notice of Privacy Practices*, and *Erie County Board's Guidelines for Resolving Concerns and Administrative Resolution of Complaints* are given to all families in the EI/ HMG/ program upon entry into the program, usually at but not before the first home visit during intake. Parents sign Consent for Screening/ Evaluation/ Assessment form. Parents receive a Parents Rights Brochure initially and at every IFSP review thereafter, at a minimum of every 180 days.
 3. Screenings: All referred children in the EI/ HMG/ program will receive Hearing, Vision, and Nutrition screenings. If a child does not otherwise qualify for Early Intervention Services, the child and family will be referred, if needed, to other community services in collaboration with the family and their priorities.
 4. Evaluations & Assessments: All children entering the program with a suspected delay in 1 or more of the 5 developmental domains (physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, adaptive) will be evaluated/assessed using the Battelle Developmental Inventory II tool to determine eligibility and a child assessment will be conducted to determine a child's need for service. A child assessment will be conducted on all children entering the program with a diagnosed physical/medical condition as well to determine a need for service. A family directed assessment will be offered to all families during their initial visit as well.
 5. EI/ HMG Service Coordination/ Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP): Service coordinators in collaboration with the Early Intervention team will develop the IFSP with families within the first 45 days of referral. The services indicated on the IFSP will begin within 30 days of date signed by parents to be considered timely. Also the IFSP will be reviewed at least every 180 days, or more

Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Early Intervention for Children Birth to Age Three

frequently, dependent upon the child's needs, family/team request, and in accordance with DODD/ODH rules.

6. Family Support: The Early Intervention program offer community group opportunities to encourage family-to-family support. at least once per quarter.
 7. Ongoing Service Coordination: Ongoing service coordination will be provided to eligible families. Frequency will be determined by the needs and priorities set forth by the family.
 8. Ongoing Early Intervention Services: The Early Intervention program will offer evidenced based early intervention services using a primary service approach to teaming to all eligible families. Early Intervention services will occur in a child's natural environment and be focused on achieving functional outcomes set forth in the child's Individualized Family Service Plan. (IFSP)
- C. **Eligibility for Early Intervention Services:**
In accordance with DODD/ODH, Early Intervention Services are available to infants or toddlers, eligibility established with the ODH Help Me Grow program, who are under three years of age who have a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high probability of causing a delay or are at or below 1.5 Standard deviations below the mean in one or more developmental domains as determined by the Battelle Developmental Inventory II evaluation tool.
- D. **Administration Procedures for Early Intervention (EI) services:**
1. Administrative Procedures for Early Intervention shall be developed for the following:
 - a) Child Find and Intake
 - b) Eligibility (evaluation, Assessment, and Enrollment)
 - c) Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
 - d) Transition Planning
 - e) Records and file content
 - f) Parent Rights
 2. Upon verbal or written request from anyone, a copy of these policies and procedures shall be made available.
 3. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to develop and implement written administrative procedures consistent with Board policy and applicable rules, regulations and statutes that apply.
- E. **Parent Rights and Due Process:**
1. ODH HMG Parent's Rights Brochure is reviewed initially with families and prior to the completion of each semi-annual and annual IFSP throughout their stay in EI/ HMG. Families may make complaints by any of the following ways:
 - a) Contacting the Local EI/ Help Me Grow program directly via phone (419-621-3962 or 1-800-491-4566), fax (419-685-3448), mail (Help Me Grow 4405 Galloway Rd., Sandusky, Ohio 44870).

Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Early Intervention for Children Birth to Age Three

- b) Writing to the Local Family and Children First Council (Attn: FCFC Director, 2900 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, Ohio 44870)
- c) Contacting the Bureau of Early Intervention Services at the Ohio Department of Health by phone (614-644-6389), email (beis@gw.ode.state.oh.us), or by mail (Ohio Department of Health, Bureau for Early Intervention Services, ATTN: Help ME grow Program, 246 N. High, PO Box 118, Columbus, Ohio 43216-0118).

IV. Calendar:

- A. The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall ensure and make available Early Intervention services on a year-round basis based on the availability of funds.

V. Participation:

- A. The frequency and location of participation in EI Services for each child and family shall be individually determined and shall be based on the child's age and developmental needs, families needs and priorities, and the team's recommendations, all will be reflected in the IFSP.
- B. Parents are encouraged to attend and participate in all EI services offered to the child/family. Parents are seen as the expert for their child and are partners with the Board's Primary Service Provider Professionals (Developmental Specialist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, and Physical Therapist) and HMG Service Coordinators to ensure lasting developmental improvement and functional family routines.
- C. Early Intervention services provided by the board will be based on the availability funds, availability of contracted providers, and provider capacity to serve.

VI. Reporting Requirements:

- A. The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall participate in the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities monitoring system through the accreditation process established pursuant to section 5126.081 of the Revised Code and rule 5123:2-4-01 of the Administrative Code; and provide information requested by the lead agency for the purpose of monitoring for compliance with Ohio Department of Health HMG Rules or Part C Federal Regulations.