

## Talking About ... Early Intervention

### What is early intervention?

Early intervention consists of services for infants and toddlers who are delayed in development or have a diagnosis that puts them at risk for delays. Early intervention services are funded by each state. The program is called *Help Me Grow in Ohio* and *First Steps* in Kentucky and Indiana.

### Who qualifies for early intervention service?

Children between the ages of birth and 36 months may be eligible for early intervention services. To qualify, these infants or toddlers must have delays in one or more of the following areas of development:

physical (example – delay in walking),

cognitive (example – delay in the ability to

follow directions), adaptive (example – delay

in the ability to feed oneself), communicative (example – delay in using single words), or social and/or emotional development (example – delay in showing interest in others).



### What is the treatment for early intervention?

Early intervention is designed to improve skills by providing early, appropriate, and intensive treatment during a period when the brain is still developing. Treatment can include speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

### Where does early intervention take place?

Treatment for early intervention can take place within the child's home, child care center, preschool, play group, or in other settings familiar to the family.



### What can parents do to help at home?

Parents are the primary teachers of speech and language for their children. The more parents talk to their child, the faster the child will learn language. Talking to the child while he or she explores his or her environment will increase his or her language skills over time. Parents should use a variety of techniques, such as:

- Imitating the child's vocalizations
- Modeling words and phrases for the child to repeat. Tell the child "You say..."

- Responding positively to the child's communication attempts
- Using simple signs and gestures with speech
- Singing songs
- Asking lots of questions
- Repeating what the child says and then expanding on it. Child says "ball" and parent says "Bounce ball"
- Talking about pictures in a book and later, reading books.

### **Websites on Early Intervention:**

- The Hanen Centre: <http://www.hanen.org/Home.aspx>.
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: [www.asha.org/public](http://www.asha.org/public).
- Zero to Three: [www.zerotothree.org/](http://www.zerotothree.org/).



For more information, please contact the Division of Speech Pathology at (513) 636-4341 or visit our website at [www.cincinnatichildrens.org/speech](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/speech).