

# Serving Babies and Toddlers

*Early Childhood Intervention helps families with children who have developmental delays or disabilities*



TEXAS  
Health and Human Services  
Early Childhood Intervention

[hhs.texas.gov/eci](https://hhs.texas.gov/eci)

All children develop at different rates and need support as they grow and learn. But some children have developmental delays or disabilities and need extra support. This is where Early Childhood Intervention services can help families.

In the first few years of a baby's life, the brain develops faster than at any other time. Learning skills during this time helps a child build a foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. This is why early is best and parents should not wait to call ECI.

## ECI Understands Babies

- The program partners with families to help children grow, learn and stay healthy.
- ECI has helped Texas babies and toddlers from birth to 36 months with developmental delays or disabilities for more than 35 years.
- ECI services help thousands of families and their children each year.
- Families enrolled report that ECI has helped them help their child learn new skills.



## Family-Centered Services

Families know their children best, so parent and caregiver participation is crucial to the ECI process.

- Children learn best when they are taught by people they trust in familiar places.
- ECI and families work together as a team.
- The family participates in every step of the process.
- ECI professionals teach the family activities to help their child. In between visits from ECI, the family works daily with their child using the activities they learned.



Services are convenient for families and provided in familiar and comfortable surroundings where children live, learn and play. They can be provided in any place the family feels would work best for their child, including:

- The family's home
- Restaurant
- Library
- Child care center
- Grocery store
- Park
- Community center

Children learn new skills through everyday activities. ECI works with the family to find learning opportunities within the family's normal routines such as bath time, meal time or play time. ECI uses items already available to the family, such as the child's favorite toy, preferred foods or clothing, to help families work on the goals for their child.

## ECI serves the entire family.

- ECI assigns each family a service coordinator who talks with the family to find out what they need and helps them get those needs met. Service coordinators can provide both local and statewide resources.
- Services are coordinated with others in the community, such as doctors, child care providers, social services and schools.
- Children leave ECI at 36 months. Staff help the family connect with other programs in their community, such as the school district or Head Start, so that the child continues receiving services.

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## Examples of Services

Licensed or credentialed professionals provide:

- Physical therapy
- Speech-language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Specialized skills training
- Case management
- Family education and training
- Audiology and vision services
- Nursing and nutrition services
- Assistive technology
- Counseling

**Specialized skills training** is an early intervention service only offered by ECI that helps the child:

- Develop positive social-emotional skills (getting along with adults and other children).
- Learn new developmental skills (walking and talking).
- Learn to meet basic needs (eating and dressing).
- Develop thinking, behavior and social skills needed to be ready for school.

## How to Get Services

### Refer a Child

Anyone can make a referral — parents, doctors, child care providers, grandparents, foster parents or others. To be eligible, a child must:

- Be from birth to 36 months.
- Live in Texas.
- Have one of the following:
  - ♦ A developmental delay of 25% or greater in one or more areas of development.
  - ♦ A qualifying medical diagnosis.
  - ♦ A hearing or vision impairment.

### Cost of Services

Families of all income levels receive services. No family is turned away because they're unable to pay. ECI does ask families to share in the cost of services if they can afford to do so.

**Early Is Best! Don't Wait.  
Contact ECI today.**

If you are concerned about a child, don't wait. Contact ECI and find out more about services. To find the ECI program in your area visit [citysearch.hhsc.state.tx.us](https://citysearch.hhsc.state.tx.us) or call **877-787-8999**.

