

Early Intervention Glossary

Assistive Technology (AT): any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities. Assistive technology helps with speaking, seeing, hearing, learning, walking, and many other functions. Different disabilities require different assistive technologies such as wheelchairs, walkers, braces, educational software, pencil holders, communication boards, etc.

Developmental Delay: a significant lag in a child's achievement of developmental milestones in one or more areas of development (adaptive, cognitive, language, motor, social-emotional)

Disability: a physical or mental condition—such as hearing loss, cerebral palsy, autism, or Down syndrome—that affects the way the body works or develops and that significantly limits a person's abilities in one or more major life activities, including walking, standing, seeing, hearing, speaking, and learning [Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (Public Law 101-336).]

Inclusion: the practice of educating children with disabilities in the same classroom as their same-age peers who do not have disabilities. Inclusion is part of the philosophy that people are more similar than different, that differences make classrooms and experiences richer, and that everyone—children with and without disabilities, families, educators, and communities—benefits when children are educated together.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): a written plan for a child between the ages of three and 21 that outlines the child's learning goals and the services to be provided to meet their educational needs

Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP): a written plan for children between the ages of birth to three years old that outlines the services and supports to be provided to the child and family to meet their developmental needs.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 (Public Law 108-446): the law that governs how states and agencies provide early intervention and special education services to children and young adults.

Multidisciplinary Team: a team of professionals who evaluate a child to determine whether a delay or disability exists and whether they are eligible for early intervention services and support.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): the educational setting that allows a child—to the maximum extent possible—to be educated with their same-age peers who do not have disabilities.

Referral: a formal request that is often made by families, physicians, or teachers to begin the early intervention evaluation process.

Sensory Processing Issues: difficulty handling and responding to sensory input.