

Trying  
together



# Early Intervention Resource Guide

A resource guide for parents, caregivers, educators,  
and health professionals produced by members of  
Trying Together's Early Childhood League

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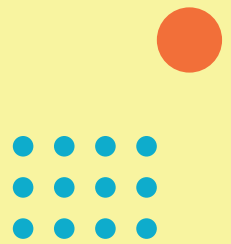
# Introduction

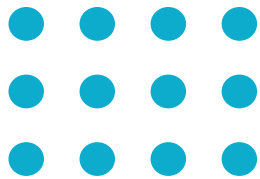
Imagine being a parent and recognizing that your very young child, as early as infancy, isn't moving quite like other children their age. Your gut instinct is screaming that something is off. You schedule an appointment with your pediatrician, and your concerns are brushed off. You speak up to other professionals, including your child's teacher, and you are met with the same response, feeling unheard. As a parent, you did what you thought you were supposed to do, but nothing happened for your child. Years later, as your child becomes older, someone finally listens to you. Now there is a diagnosis attached to your child. Frustration ensues, and you sit and wonder, "If only they would have listened to my concerns earlier. If my child could have received early intervention services, where would we be?"

This is not only our experience but thousands of other parents have met this same fate. Professionals across the board tend to discredit our input as parents because they may assume we don't have the college degrees or expertise to know what we are talking about. The child's future is most important through the entire ordeal. Figuring what is best for the child is the end goal, nothing else. In conjunction with education and health professionals, parents need to meet on common ground. Organizations that are specific to early intervention (EI) are plentiful. Through Trying Together's Early Childhood League, we — as parents, caregivers, and front-line professionals, who have daily interactions with the children — created an Early Intervention Resource Guide. The guide lays out numerous local and national resources. The resources are intended to be utilized by parents, caregivers, educators, and health professionals.



*If you're concerned about your child's development, don't wait. You know your child best.*





## What is Early Intervention (EI)?

Early intervention—or EI—is the term used to describe services and support that help infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. Early Intervention in Pennsylvania includes children from birth to age three (Part C of the Individuals with Disability Act, IDEA) and children from age three to age five (Part B, IDEA). Young children with disabilities have the right to receive EI services in programs or settings where young children without disabilities spend their time, including in the child’s home, child care center, nursery school, play group, Head Start program, early childhood special education classroom, or other settings familiar to the family.

## Why Early Intervention?

EI services can significantly impact a child’s ability to learn new skills and increase their success in school and life. All children grow and develop in unique ways, and some children may benefit from additional supports and resources. Pennsylvania’s Early Intervention program provides coaching support and services to families with children, from birth to age five, with developmental delays and disabilities.







## Eligibility & Services

### Infant/ and Toddler Services (birth-3)

Children who have: a developmental delay OR a delay shown by informed clinical opinion (ICO), OR a known physical or mental condition with a high probability of resulting in a delay

### Preschool Services (3-5)

Children who have a developmental delay OR a listed disability AND need special education

Supports and services are designed to meet the developmental needs of children with a disability, as well as the needs of the family related to enhancing the child's development in one or more of the following areas:

- Physical development, including vision and hearing
- Cognitive development
- Communication development
- Social or emotional development
- Adaptive development

### Can parents or caregivers ask questions about EI services?

Yes. Parents and caregivers who have questions about their child's development may call the CONNECT Helpline: 1-800-692-7288 or email [help@connectpa.net](mailto:help@connectpa.net).

### Cost

Early Intervention services are provided at no cost to families.

# Resources for Educators and Health Professionals

## PEAL Center

Website: [www.pealcenter.org](http://www.pealcenter.org)  
Toll-Free Number: 866-950-1040  
Phone Number: 412-281-4404  
Email: [info@pealcenter.org](mailto:info@pealcenter.org)

The PEAL (Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership) Center is an organization that helps families, community members and educators find resources for individuals with special needs and health care needs. PEAL offers help within six categories: individual assistance, outreach, training, resources, leadership development and partnerships. Their biggest goal is to provide inclusion to education and healthcare. They serve families across Pennsylvania with offices in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

## Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA)

Website: [www.eita-pa.org](http://www.eita-pa.org)

EITA works on behalf of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL). EITA is a technical assistance portal for early intervention families and professionals. They offer resources and training, professional development classes, YouTube modules and a podcast. EITA has three locations across Pennsylvania:

### Pittsburgh Office

3190 William Pitt Way  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238  
Toll-Free Number in PA: (800) 446-5607  
Phone Number: (412) 826-2336

### Harrisburg Office

6340 Flank Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17112  
Toll-Free Number in PA: (800) 360-7282  
Phone Number: (717) 541-4960

### East Office

333 Technology Drive  
Malvern, PA 19355  
Toll-Free Number in PA: (800) 441-3215  
Phone Number: (610) 265-7321





## **Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA) Professional Development for Professionals**

Website: [www.eita-pa.org/professional-development](http://www.eita-pa.org/professional-development)

EITA Professional Development offers professionals a wide variety of training to support children with differing abilities.

## **The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework**

Website: [https://bit.ly/PA\\_familyengagement](https://bit.ly/PA_familyengagement)

The framework was designed to support a shared language and understanding of family engagement across Pennsylvania. The framework includes specific sections on best practices and support for working with families.

## **Infant Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)**

Website: [www.pakeys.org/iecmh](http://www.pakeys.org/iecmh)

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation is a free resource that supports children's social-emotional development from birth through age five within early learning programs participating in Keystone STARS. Through a reflective, collaborative, problem-solving and capacity-building relationship, mental health consultation encourages adults to strengthen relationships with infants and young children so that they feel safe, supported and valued.

## **Promoting Inclusion and Reduction of Suspension and Expulsion**

Website: <https://bit.ly/inclusive-early-learning>

OCDEL created these two announcements to guide programs and educators regarding appropriate behavior support practices and the reduction of expulsion and suspension in early childhood programs in Pennsylvania.

## **Ages and Stages Questionnaire**

Website: [www.pakeys.org/iecmh/ages-and-stages-questionnaire](http://www.pakeys.org/iecmh/ages-and-stages-questionnaire)

Screening young children is an effective, efficient way for professionals to catch problems and start treatment when it does the most good – during the crucial early years when the child's brain and body develop so rapidly. The tool is quick and easy to administer and score. Parents complete the ASQ. Numerous state and county programs, such as Early Care and Education, Early Head Start and Head Start, Early Intervention for developmental monitoring utilize this system.



# Resource for Families

## **Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU)**

Website: [www.aiu3.net](http://www.aiu3.net)

Address: 475 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120

Phone Number: (412) 394-5700

Email: [webmaster@aiu3.net](mailto:webmaster@aiu3.net)

The AIU offers Early Head Start, Head Start, Pre-K Counts and Early Intervention services (DART). AIU offers kindergarten transition support. In addition, AIU operates 11 family support centers throughout Allegheny County.

## **CONNECT Helpline**

Toll-Free Number: (800) 692-7288

The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age five. CONNECT can also help families by directly linking to their county early intervention program or local preschool early intervention program. To make a referral for early intervention, call the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288.

## **Pennsylvania State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) and Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC)**

Website: [www.pattan.net/About-Us/Partners/State-Interagency-Coordinating-Council-SICC](http://www.pattan.net/About-Us/Partners/State-Interagency-Coordinating-Council-SICC)

The SICC is a council that advises and assists the Departments of Health, Education and Human Services to ensure that a comprehensive delivery system of integrated Early Intervention programs and services is available in Pennsylvania to all eligible infants, toddlers and young children and their families.

The Local Interagency Coordinating Councils (LICC) consist of representatives from families, county administration, Intermediate Units, school districts, Early Intervention providers, Head Start, service coordinators, health agencies, and other community organizations. While each LICC is different, each works toward the overall goal of enhancing local Early Intervention Supports and Services. For additional information, contact Suzanne Pasquariello at [spasq@pattankop.net](mailto:spasq@pattankop.net)



## Latino Community Center

Website: [www.latinocommunitycenter.org](http://www.latinocommunitycenter.org)  
Address: 212 9th Street, 5th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
Phone Number: (412) 335-7446  
Email: [info@latinocommunitycenter.org](mailto:info@latinocommunitycenter.org)

The Latino Community Center offers Parentchild+ and Support Our Youth (SOY) Pittsburgh. Parentchild+ is an early childhood literacy program that supports children ages two to four. SOY is a bilingual after school program that helps children in grades K-5. The Latino Community Center also offers additional family support services.

## Achieva Early Intervention

Website: [www.achieva.info/early-intervention](http://www.achieva.info/early-intervention)  
Address: 711 Bingham Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203  
Toll-Free Number: (888)-272-7229  
Phone Number: (412) 995-5000

Achieva Early Intervention serves families in Allegheny, Beaver and Westmoreland counties. Services offered include early childhood education, feeding and nutrition, hearing and vision, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy and infant massages. Families must receive referrals for services.

## The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers

Website: [www.afit.org](http://www.afit.org)  
Address: 2801 Custer Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15227  
Phone Number: (412) 885-6000

The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers serves children from birth to age three. Children must reside in Allegheny county to receive developmental assessments. If services are necessary, the alliance assigns the child a service coordinator. The service coordinator will also assist the child and family in transition to appropriate services at age three.

## Autism Urban Connections, Inc

Website: [www.aucofpgh.org](http://www.aucofpgh.org)  
Phone Number: (412) 853-0115  
Email: [info@aucofpgh.org](mailto:info@aucofpgh.org)

Autism Urban Connections, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that is the first of its kind — the first and only African American, minority, family-focused Autism 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The mission is to provide education, support, advocacy and empowerment, emphasizing self-care to families of those diagnosed with Autism.





## **Parent to Parent of PA**

Website: [www.pattan.net/About-Us/Partners/Parent-to-Parent-of-Pennsylvania](http://www.pattan.net/About-Us/Partners/Parent-to-Parent-of-Pennsylvania)

Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania links families of children and adults with disabilities or special needs to a volunteer peer support parent for support and information.

A parent or family member can be matched for physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, special health care needs, behavioral/mental health concerns, foster care or adoption and educational issues. The regional coordinator will then look for the best support parent for you by accessing their database of over 1,200 volunteer peer support parents.

## **TEIS**

Website: [www.teisinc.com](http://www.teisinc.com)

Phone Number: 412-271-8347

Email: [info@teisinc.com](mailto:info@teisinc.com)

TEIS is an early intervention provider in the Greater Pittsburgh area for children ages birth to three. The website has many resources, including a blog, developmental milestone quizzes, videos and more.

## **The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework - A Companion Guide for Families (PDF)**

Website: [https://bit.ly/PA\\_familyengagement](https://bit.ly/PA_familyengagement)

This guide was created as a tool for families to have the necessary information so that they can have discussions with educational facilities and organizations to best support children in their care.

## **A Family Guide to Inclusive Early Learning in Pennsylvania (PDF)**

Website: <https://bit.ly/ELC-inclusion-guide>

Education Law Center developed a comprehensive guide on children and family rights regarding early intervention and inclusive early learning.

## **The Garden of Different Abilities**

Facebook Group, led by ECE League Member Andrea Coleman

Website: <https://bit.ly/GardenofDifferentAbilities>

# Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRC)

Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRC) provide a single point-of-contact for families, early learning service providers and communities to obtain information and access services that support high-quality child care and early learning programs.

## ELRC 5 serves families and providers in Allegheny County.

Website: <https://elrc5.alleghenycounty.us/>

Address (Main Office): 304 Wood Street, Suite 400 Pittsburgh, PA 15222 (Satellite locations on website)

Toll-Free Number: (888) 340.3572

Phone: (412) 350.3577

Email: [elrc5@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:elrc5@alleghenycounty.us)

For other ELRC regions: [www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/ELRCs.aspx](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/ELRCs.aspx)

## Further Reading

### A Families Introduction to Early Intervention in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network's (PaTTAN) booklet explains how to request Early Intervention services; eligibility criteria, rights and responsibilities; individualized family service planning for ages birth to three; and individualized education planning for ages three to school age. English and Spanish versions are available.

### CDC Milestone Tracker App

Track your child's milestones from age two months to five years with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) easy-to-use illustrated checklists. Get tips to encourage your child's development and find out what to do if you are concerned about your child's milestones.

### Watch Me Grow

This Department of Human Services guide outlines a list of developmental stages during the early years of children's lives.



## **If You Think There's a Problem—Helping Your Child Become a Reader**

U.S. Department of Education

This reading offers ideas to parents that will help them support a child experiencing difficulties with reading.

## **Why Act Early if You're Concerned about Development?**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

This article provides an overview of the importance of early intervention in supporting children with developmental delays or disabilities.

## **The Importance of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and Their Families**

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

This research supports why parents and families should intervene early.

## **Timing of the Diagnosis of Autism in African American Children**

Pediatrics: Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics

This research shows how African American children with autism experience racial disparities in the timing of diagnosis and access to quality interventions.

# Contact Information for Early Intervention Services

## Allegheny County

If you live within the City of Pittsburgh, call Pittsburgh Public Schools District at (412) 529-4000 to schedule a screening for your child.

If you live within Allegheny County but outside of Pittsburgh, call the Allegheny Intermediate Unit at (412) 394- 5904 to schedule a screening for your child.

## Fayette County

Phone Number: (724) 430-1370 for a referral

## Greene County

Phone Number: 724-852-5276

Email: lachambers@co.greene.pa.us

## Washington County

Call Beth Philips at (724) 228-6832

## Westmoreland County

Westmoreland Case Management and Supports, Inc.

Toll-Free Number: (800)-353-6467

Phone Number: (724) 837-1808

## Statewide

CONNECT Line: (800) 692-7288

Website: [www.connectpa.net](http://www.connectpa.net)

**Thank you to the Early Childhood League members who comprised the early intervention committee and thoughtfully contributed their expertise, stories, and resources to the development of the guide:**

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