Introduction to Early Intervention

All young children grow and develop in their own unique ways.

Some young children may experience developmental delays, disabilities, or other risk factors that may impact their development. Early Intervention (EI) partners with caregivers to provide services and support to young children with, or at risk of, developmental delays and/or disabilities and their families.

Eligible children are entitled to EI services under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA). Infants and toddlers (birth–age 3) receive EI services under IDEA Part C and preschool-aged children (ages 3–5/age of beginners) receive EI services under IDEA Part B.

To find out if a child qualifies for services, a child's caregiver can contact the CONNECT Helpline: 1-800-692-7288, email help@connectpa.net, or submit a form online.

What are EI Services?

- EI is provided at no cost to eligible young children and their families.

- Eligibility is determined through a multidisciplinary evaluation of the child's development.

- Services may include developmental therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, vision, hearing services and more.

- Services are individualized, family focused, and built on everyday learning opportunities throughout daily routines, activities, and interactions.

- Infant/toddler EI takes place in the child's natural environment, including the home, child care or early learning program, or other community setting familiar to the family.

- Preschool EI takes place in the child's educational environment but may also occur in an alternate location as agreed upon on a case-by-case basis.

- EI is collaborative. EI providers listen, share information, model strategies, and offer coaching as they partner with the important adults in a child's life.

- EI services are voluntary, and families have the right to decline or discontinue services and/or explore other privately funded services.

- If a child is not eligible for EI services, families are given information on other relevant community resources.

Scan the QR Code for sources and additional information!