



Alberta Health
Services

Parent Handbook



CHP06-1168 (Revised 2018 10) Public Health - Edmonton Zone

Edmonton Zone Early Intervention Program

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Alberta Health Services Edmonton Zone Early Intervention Program

Who is able to access the Alberta Health Services (AHS) Edmonton Zone Early Intervention Program?

The program is available, at no cost, to families who have a child from birth to age 3 ½ years who:

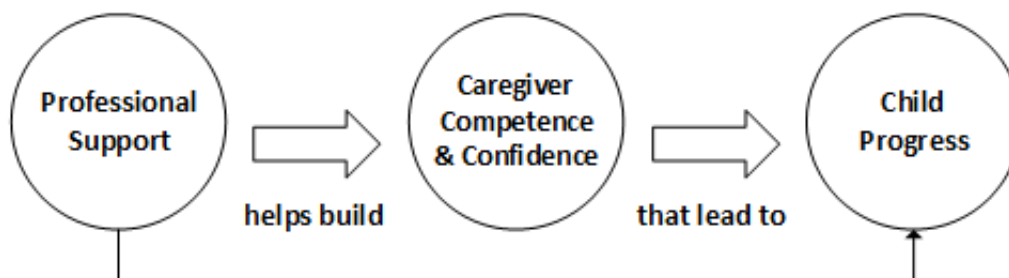
- Is experiencing concerns in two or more areas of development, or
- Has a diagnosed disability.

How does a child get referred to the program?

The Early Intervention Program accepts referrals from many different sources: parents, foster parents/guardians, doctors, public health nurses, hospitals, and community agencies. The referral form is available on-line at: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-19156.pdf>

How does the Early Intervention Program work?

“You might expect home visits to focus on your child, but your early intervention staff person’s focus is actually the adults in the child’s life. Why does this work? [refer to graph]. Because children learn from the interactions and other opportunities that occur in everyday life. You are your child’s greatest teacher, and you have the opportunity to work with them throughout the day, every day. We will provide information and support you need to make the most of your “teachable moments” with your child. This way, your child receives quality intervention all the time not just during a home visit.” (Siskin Children’s Institute, n.d.).



When determined eligible for the program, an early interventionist called an Infant Child Development Specialist (ICDS) is assigned to your family. Early Intervention Program services may include individual visits in your home or at a community agency, in a group setting, phone calls, or by email.

- How often these visits occur is decided in partnership with each family.
- Individual visits may occur for a certain period of time while the family works towards their chosen goal. When the goals are met, individual visits may no longer be required.
- The family can call the ICDS if another concern arises.

Reference:

Siskin Children’s Institute.(n.d.) *Home-and Community-Based Early Intervention for Children with Special Needs Birth to Three Years Old*. [Brochure]. Chattanooga, TN

The Infant Child Development Specialist will:

- Provide an overview of the program.
- Meet with you to discuss your priorities and concerns regarding your child.
- Complete developmental and other assessments to gather more information.
- Provide information about special needs and various disabilities/conditions, as needed.
- Provide consultation with and referral to other appropriate health professionals, as needed.
- Identify specific strategies to help encourage your child's development and meet family chosen goals.
- Help with transition planning and identify preschool programs, as needed.

Together we will develop a family service plan which:

- Includes a detailed discussion regarding the family's daily routine, gathering information about the child's level of engagement, independence and social relationships (three critical areas of child development).
- Identifies goals and a plan to reach the goals you have for your child and family.
- Identifies important family members, friends and professionals involved with the family that help achieve child and family goals.
- Identifies the interests and strengths of the child and family.
- Outlines activities the family currently participates in, either at home or in the community, that support development.

What is the key to success of Early Intervention?

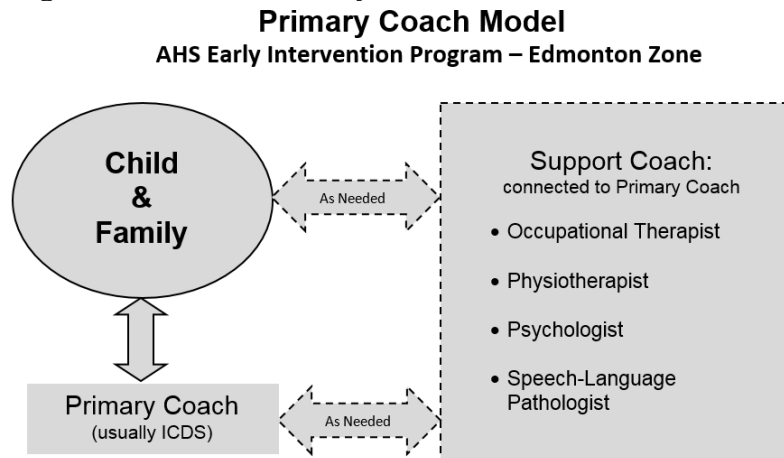
- Partnering with families.
- Home visits offer adults support so that intervention with the child can happen all day, every day - not just when the professional is present.
- Home visits provide emotional support, offer guidance about child development, point families to other community resources, and ensure child and family goals are met.
- It is a family-centered process that is customized to meet family needs!

Who is part of the Early Intervention Program Team?

The Early Intervention Program provides support and services through a trans-disciplinary team. Your main contact will be the ICDS also referred to as your Primary Coach. A team of Support Coaches will work with your ICDS, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Speech Language Pathologist, and a Psychologist.

The ICDS consults directly with the Support Coach through phone conversations, joint visits, meetings, or at playgroups. The team discusses your child's progress, addresses specific questions, determines additional strategies to use, and accesses programs that are appropriate for your family. When required, the Support Coach will be directly involved with the family.

Your ICDS can provide more information about the various disciplines and coaching. Here is a diagram of what the Primary Coach Model looks like:



What do the Support Coaches offer?

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)

The SLP looks at the child's communication. The SLP may assess, consult and/or provide intervention to help with:

- Communication (listening, understanding, talking, interacting with others)
- Speech sounds
- Fluency (stuttering)
- Voice (loudness, pitch, quality)

Occupational Therapist (OT)

The OT supports the child to take part in everyday activities that are important to the parent and the child. The OT assesses and provides intervention to support:

- Daily routines such as eating (e.g. accepting different food textures, drinking from a bottle or cup), sleeping, bathing, brushing teeth, transitions and outings.
- Play, which includes your child's ability to move his/her body, handle toys, and interact with others (children and adults), and other fine motor activities.
- Behaviours which result from a child's struggles with interaction, play or daily activities and routine.

Physiotherapist (PT)

The PT supports the child to position and move his/her body for play and to get around in their home and community settings. The PT assesses and provides intervention to support:

- Motor development, strength, balance, and coordination.
- Gross motor activities such as moving to standing, walking, running, jumping, etc.
- Participation in play activities in your home and in the community.

Psychologist

The Psychologist works with families who have questions or concerns about their child's:

- Behaviour and emotions such as temper tantrums, aggressive behaviour, self-control, or withdrawn behavior.
- Interactions with other people.
- Thinking, learning, attention, or other developmental abilities.

How do we contact you to arrange home visits?

The ICDS will call one business day before your scheduled home visit to confirm the appointment. If there is no answer, we will leave a message asking you to call to confirm. It is important that you call us back as we will not go out to see you if we have not heard from you.

Want to help us serve you better? Missed appointments and late cancellations affect wait times for children in need. Giving notice ahead of time opens the space for another child. We may close files of clients who fail to attend or repeatedly cancel scheduled appointments.

Preventing the spread of colds and flu

- To help prevent the spread of illness, if a child in your home has a fever, coughing, vomiting or diarrhea, you will be asked to reschedule the home visit.
- The ICDS will also cancel any home visits if they are ill.
- Some of the children visited have medical issues and are very frail, so it is especially important that illnesses are not spread to these children.
- You may rebook the home visit, have a phone visit, or ask for information to be mailed out.



Remember hand-washing and getting your annual influenza vaccine are the best ways to protect yourself and your family.

Why is it important to your child's development that he/she has a connection with the community?

- Communities are rich in providing learning opportunities for children.
- Families are most successful when they have a strong informal support network, including resources in the communities in which they live.
- Children of all abilities do best when they are involved and accepted in their communities.
- Learning opportunities will be explored and matched to the strengths and needs of the child/family.

We understand that there can sometimes be barriers for families and their children in accessing resources in their community. To help reduce these barriers we:

- Help families to access community programs. This may include attending a program with a family, accompanying you on an outing, and developing ideas on how to provide additional support.
- Provide education and support to community programs so they feel comfortable including children of all abilities in their programs.

EIP Community Playgroup Calendar

To access the Early Intervention Program Community Playgroup Calendar, please see link:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-5818-calendar.pdf>

You can request a copy of it by asking your ICDS.

What other resources are available to help your child develop and learn?

Lending Library

Our program has a library of books, toys, CD's, and DVD's to loan to families. This has been made possible by a variety of different grants and donations. The ICDS may bring you an item, or you may request an item. To ensure that all families have an opportunity to use these items, we have implemented the following procedure:

- The item will be signed out of our library system to your child's name.
- Loaning time is four weeks.
- After the four weeks, the staff will pick up the item, or you are welcome to return it to our office.
- We ask that you do not allow children to handle the CD's or DVD's.
- If an expensive item is destroyed or damaged, we will ask you to replace that item or pay us the amount for replacing the item.

Contact Newsletter

The Contact Newsletter is made available four times per year for anyone interested in supporting preschoolers' development. This newsletter is available at the link: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7664.asp>

You can request a copy of it by asking your ICDS.

Healthy Parents, Healthy Children: The Early Years

Reliable information about how to help your children grow, learn, and be healthy in the early years. It is made for families with young children in Alberta. The resource is available at the link: www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca

When does a child leave the program?

A child leaves the program when he/she:

- Completes all available sessions.
- Enters a specialized preschool program.
- Turns 3 ½ years old.
- The family no longer needs the program.
- The family moves outside of the Edmonton and WestView areas.

The ICDS will assist you with planning for a transition to other programs/services. Families who have left the Early Intervention Program are welcome to contact their ICDS at any time.

How is your family's health information kept confidential?

Alberta Health Services respects your confidentiality and privacy. Your information is collected, used, disclosed, and protected according to the provisions of provincial and federal legislation.

The purpose of collecting your health information is primarily for:

- Providing health services
- Determining eligibility for health services
- Providing health services provider education, and
- Internal management purposes

If you have any questions related to health information, you can contact the Chief Privacy Officer at 1-877-476-9874 or email: privacy@albertahealthservices.ca

Most of the health information we collect relates to the child, however, there may be times where the information and intervention relates more to the parent. A client record will be opened for the parent/caregiver in that circumstance.

Client records are locked at the program site or maintained on secure AHS drives and databases. In order to collaborate with other agencies you will be asked to sign a consent form to allow the exchange of information. If it is not possible to obtain written consent, we will ask you if it is okay to share information about your child with other programs. This will help other professionals in supporting your child by understanding your child's abilities and interests, learning about what strategies work, and assisting with referrals that are needed for your child.

The only time we share information without your specific consent is:

- When a child may be at risk of being harmed
- When required by a court of law

How do you report a concern about the Early Intervention service?

We want to meet your family's needs in the best way we can. If you are not satisfied:

- First, talk to your ICDS.
- If unresolved, call the Team Leader at 780-342-1731.

Your feedback is appreciated and important. We will ask you to fill in the yearly Parent Survey and the End of Service (Transition) Parent Survey.

Contact information

Dickinsfield Health Centre Office (City of Edmonton)

Phone: 780-342-1707

Fax: 780-413-5068

Website: <http://www.ahs.ca/ezeip>