

The Success of the Early Bird

The Importance of Early Intervention Services in Young Children Displaying Possible Milestone Delays

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The first five years of a child's life have such a monumental impact on their ability to succeed in the future, during the school-age years and far beyond. While this is a sensitive time for development, ground work of functioning, on all levels, and self-regulation, it is also a time of exploration and opportunity for parents to seek assistance for children who may be struggling.

Early Childhood Intervention is a service designed to redirect the factors and setbacks that may be affecting a child's development in the present and the future. Early Intervention services not only greatly influence a child's positive outcomes and progress but also can support the entire family. Well-designed Early Intervention Programs have the capability to combine the individualized needs of the child, while incorporating those needs into the larger picture by including socialization with other students, learning through play, coping mechanisms, and even complete mastery of a skill.

What exactly is Early Intervention?

While many services fall under the umbrella of Early Intervention, it mainly encompasses academic achievement, behavior and educational progress. This could look like Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Special Instruction or Behavior Supports. Recognizing and acting on a child in need of services is crucial during this age, and can prove to be one of the most effective steps taken in helping a child. One of the most important aspects besides the "Early" in Early Intervention is having well-trained, individualized therapists providing services.

What should I look for?

Developmental Milestones help clinicians establish a baseline of where a child is functioning and what milestones your child should be able to reach, by the time they are a certain age. While understanding that each child progresses at their own pace, it's important for parents or guardians to be vigilant in recognizing any possible setbacks. Talk with your child's doctor about the milestones your child has mastered, and what to expect next.

By age 3, these are just a few of the major milestones to look out for:

- Copies adults and friends
- Understands the idea of "mine"
- Follows 2-3 step directions
- Can name familiar objects
- Walks up and down the stairs
- Copies a circle with a pencil
- Climbs well
- Can work toys with buttons, levers, parts

By age 3, these are some possible issues to look out for:

- Drools or has very unclear speech
- Doesn't speak in sentences
- Doesn't understand simple directions
- Avoids eye contact or loses skills he once had

What should I do if I suspect a delay?

Speak with your child's doctor about developing milestones. Utilize your pediatrician to find resources on contacting the appropriate Early Intervention Evaluation team or center near you.

Does CORA provide Early Intervention Services?

Yes, CORA is a provider of Early Intervention Services for Elwyn, within the Philadelphia area for children ages 3-5 years old. CORA has a dedicated and experienced team of speech therapists, occupational therapists and special instructors. The therapists work as a team to provide multi-faceted services to children within their school environment. In the summer, CORA hosts summer Early Intervention group workshops for children.