



EarlySteps

Louisiana's Early Intervention System

January 20, 2026



Team Members



Marquitta Young

Professional Development Coordinator

Marquitta.Young2@la.gov



Valarie Laday

Program Manager of Support Coordination

Valarie.Laday@la.gov



What is Early Intervention?

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C is a federal grant program that assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers, ages birth through 2, with disabilities, and their families.

Early Intervention services promote children's growth and development and provide supports to families during the critical early childhood years.



Purpose and Philosophy

I IDEA Part C

In 1986, Congress established the program of early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities and in recognition of “an urgent and substantial need”

- To enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities;
- To reduce the educational costs to our society by minimizing the need for special education and related services after infants and toddlers with disabilities reach school age;
- To maximize the potential for individuals with disabilities to live independently in society;
- To enhance the capacity of families to meet the special needs of their infants and toddlers with disabilities; and
- To enhance the capacity of State and local agencies and service providers to identify, evaluate, and meet the needs of all children

Louisiana's Early Intervention Program

EarlySteps is Louisiana's Early Intervention Program.

- Services to families with infants and toddlers from birth through age 2
- Children with developmental delays or medical conditions that likely result in a developmental delay
- Services are provided in the child's natural environment, such as home, child care, or any other community setting
- Services are designed to improve the family's capacity to enhance their child's development

The child is experiencing developmental delays in the following areas:

- Physical Development (crawling, walking, seeing, hearing)
- Cognitive Development (learning skills or problem solving)
- Social and Emotional Development (playing with others, showing feelings)
- Adaptive Development (feeding, getting dressed)
- Communication Development (listening, talking, expressing self)

How are referrals made?

EarlySteps has ten **System Points of Entry (SPOEs)** set up across the state to perform intake and eligibility activities for children referred to EarlySteps. The person making the referral should determine which parish the child lives in and contact the SPOE for the parish.

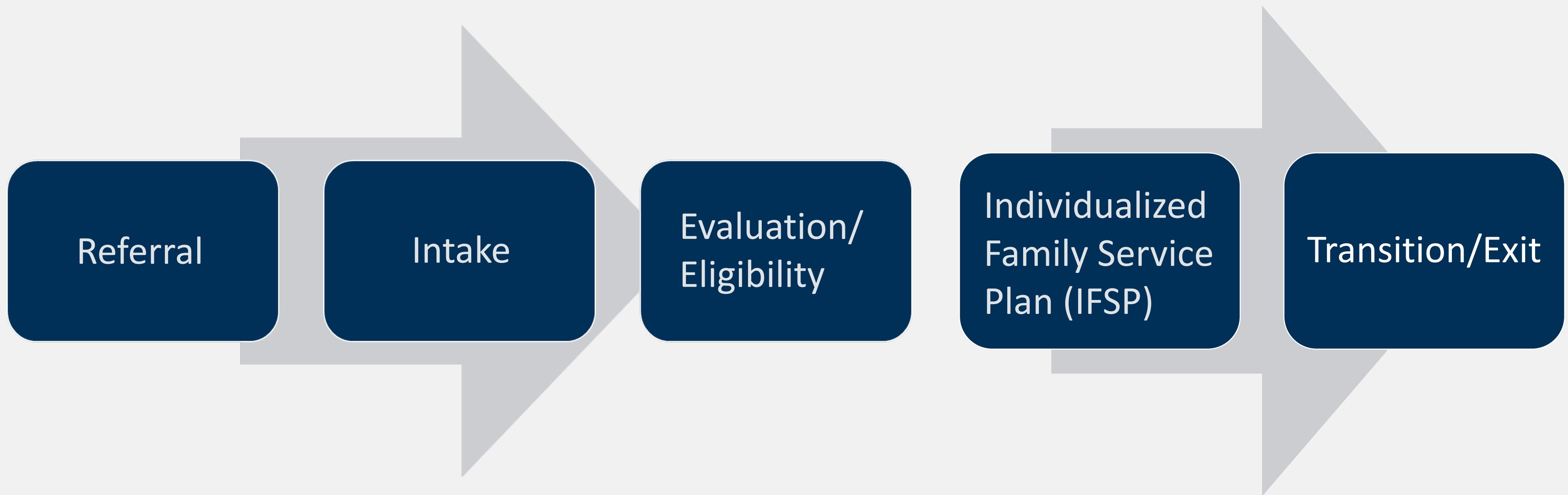


Who is Eligible?

- Must be birth to 2 years old (0-35 months)
- Resident of Louisiana
- EarlySteps eligibility criteria
 - Developmental delay in two or more developmental areas; or
 - Established medical condition (e.g. Down Syndrome; Cerebral Palsy; Autism; vision and/or hearing loss); or
 - Informed Clinical Opinion



Journey in EarlySteps



Early Intervention Services

- Assistive Technology devices and services
- Audiology Services
- Family Training, Counseling and Home visits
- Health services
- Medical Services (for diagnostic & evaluation purposes only)

- Nursing Services
- Nutrition Services
- Special Instruction
- Speech and Language Pathology
- Transportation
- Translation/ Interpretation

- Vision Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Psychological Services
- Service Coordination
- Social Work Services

What does Early Intervention Services look like?

- EarlySteps services are provided in the home or any other community setting where children live and play. This is often referred to as the natural environment of the child, a setting which would be typical for a child between the age of birth and two.
- Providing services in the natural environment reinforces the acquisition of developmental skills that can be practiced throughout the day during the typical routines of the child and family.
- There may be out-of-pocket cost for a family, depending on the family's incomes and services provided -Family Cost Participation



Parent Success Story



MY is a former recipient of Early Steps of Louisiana. MY was diagnosed with developmental and cognitive delays in early 2019. She utilized services through EarlySteps by way of speech therapy and occupational therapy.

Today, MY has made tremendous progress, with her highest achievement of being selected as Student of the Year in 2023.

She is now a thriving 8-year-old exceeding her Accelerated Reading scores, achieving the honor roll, and graduating to regular education.

For additional information

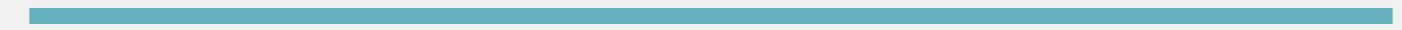


Please visit our website for additional information:

[EarlySteps | Louisiana Department of Health](#)

<https://ldh.la.gov/page/early-steps>





Thank you

