

Early Intervention 2017

A program of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Early Intervention (EI) is a statewide system that provides coordinated Early Intervention services to parents of eligible children under age 3 with developmental delays or disabilities.

In 2017, more than 21,000 families were served by Early Intervention. EI is grounded in the philosophy that young children learn best from familiar people in familiar settings.

Every family served has an EI team that consists of a service coordinator, service providers, and the child's family. The team works with families at home, or in other places the family spends time, to develop a coordinated plan for needed services. Through the Individualized Family Service Plan, the team helps families use existing supports and build resources that enhance their child's learning and development.

Professional Development

Ohio continues to implement a comprehensive professional development plan that includes required foundational and implementation training. Training aligns with best practices, Ohio's position statement on EI, the Mission and Key Principles for Providing EI Services in Natural Environments, and the Division for Early Childhood standards.

In 2017, the department provided in-person training and webinars about more than a dozen different EI topics, including evaluation tools, authentic assessment, motivational interviewing, and understanding the principles of service coordination. These trainings were accessed more than 3,000 times.

The trainings about authentic assessment and motivational interviewing were led by nationally recognized experts in the field of early childhood, Dr. Lee Ann Jung and Dr. Robert Gallen.

"The EI staff has been wonderful to work with. I am amazed at the progress my son has made in just a few short months."

- Parent, Muskingum County

"My children would not be where they are today without the Early Intervention they received."

- Parent, Butler County

OhioEarlyIntervention.org

In February 2017, DODD launched a website to serve as a central location for all things EI. The site offers a section for families, materials for EI providers, data monitoring and federal reporting resources, and information about the EI Advisory Council. By the end of 2017, the website averaged more than 1,800 unique visitors per month.

Federal Reporting

Based on the review of Ohio's most recent Annual Performance Report, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs gave Ohio its highest determination, "Meets Requirements".



Luca and his family received EI services in Allen County.



Jackie, a parent in Williams County, says her local county board of developmental disabilities has shown her big family unwavering support during good times and bad.

Priorities in 2017

Supporting Early Intervention Service Coordinators

Service coordinators are on the front lines coordinating eligibility determinations, needed EI services, and planning for transition. At more than \$21 million, service coordination is the department's largest investment in EI. Those funds support local entities in conjunction with local in-kind contributions, providing service coordination to more than 21,000 Ohio families.

In 2017, DODD began a new tiered project to support the implementation of the 10 federally mandated responsibilities of a service coordinator. Using self-assessments, record reviews, observation, and site visits, the department is learning more about how service coordinators and their agencies support families.

Increasing Equity of Services

Partnering with the Southern Ohio Council of Governments (SOCOG), the department piloted a program that used state and local resources to fund physical, occupational, and speech therapy to provide EI services in seven historically under-served counties in Southeast Ohio. Those interventionists provided services in-person and through technology. Preliminary data indicate that service delivery is now more comparable to the state as a whole in the pilot county group, even while seeing an increase in the number of children served.

Diversifying Funding for Services

Throughout 2016 and 2017, the department worked with a diverse group of stakeholders to create a new system of payments rule that benefited families, worked well with Ohio's EI structure, and was consistent with all federal requirements. The group included people representing families, EI providers, service coordinators, county boards of developmental disabilities, advocacy groups, and other state agencies.

Initiatives

DODD continues to focus on ensuring children who are deaf or hard of hearing receive services within the EI team framework. DODD contracted with the Ohio State School for the Blind to ensure EI vision services were provided in all Ohio counties. Through a partnership with Federally Qualified Health Center in Southeast Ohio, early childhood mental health consultants are taking part in EI team meetings in five counties. Consultants share their expertise in children's social and emotional development with families and other interventionists on the team.

Autism Supports

The Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters (PLAY) Project is a parent-mediated autism intervention model designed to help improve outcomes for a child with autism spectrum disorder, particularly a child's ability to engage socially and emotionally. Working through the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), 65 counties had access to PLAY Project services in 2017.

CONNECTIONS is a short-term, intensive developmental intervention for toddlers newly diagnosed with autism and their families in multiple counties throughout the state. It is developed and implemented with funding in partnership with Akron Children's Hospital. Like the PLAY Project, CONNECTIONS is grounded in a relationship-based, developmental framework.

The Autism Diagnosis Education Project links Early Intervention service providers with physicians to ensure a comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation of a child suspected of having autism. Since starting implementation in 2008, more than 850 children have been evaluated in 50 counties.