



Early Childhood Careers **Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Early Intervention Program?

The Early Intervention Program (EIP or EI) is included as Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA is the federal law that provides the right to a free and appropriate public education for all children under the age of 21. In New York State, the EIP is coordinated by the Department of Health (DOH). In New York City, the EI lead agency is the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

What are some of the unique aspects of the Early Intervention Program?

- ✓ Eligible children are age birth through 2 who are identified with a developmental delay or diagnosed with a physical or mental condition that has a high probability of developmental delay. Children are eligible for EI until their third birthday. Children who continue to be eligible for special education services will transition to the special education program for school age children.
- ✓ An individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is created by the child's parent(s) or guardian, Early Intervention Official, service coordinator, and evaluator. The IFSP is based on the results of the child's evaluation, which identifies specific areas of need. The IFSP is reviewed every 6 months and evaluations are completed annually.
- ✓ The IFSP identifies developmental and learning goals for the child to work towards through services such as health services, speech and feeding therapy, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, or special instruction. Special instruction often incorporates play based techniques to support the child's continued learning of skills, particularly in the areas of cognitive and social development. All service providers support the family with information and strategies to support the child's on-going and continual development.
- ✓ Early Intervention services are provided in community settings. The EI provider often travels to the child's home, a caregiver's home, or to child care centers in order to work with the child.
- ✓ In general, an EI provider creates their own daily schedule depending on how many children are on their case load and length of service for each child. It is essential to have strong organizational skills, to be flexible in nature, and to have an energetic and engaging personality. Early Interventionists collaborate closely with parents and child care providers or teachers; coordinate with the team of multidisciplinary service professionals working with the same family, and contribute to documenting the child's progress.



How do I become a teacher in Early Intervention?

There are two methods in which to provide early intervention services:

1. Become an approved independent contractor by NYS DOH; or
2. Be hired as an employee of an approved Early Intervention Agency. A listing of approved Early Intervention Agencies in NYC can be found at:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/earlyint/earlydirectory.shtml#contract>

Independent Contractor/Provider of EIP Services	Employee of an approved EI agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Must complete application for individual approval from the New York State Department of Health <input type="checkbox"/> Must have 1600 hours of experience working with children (birth to age five) <input type="checkbox"/> Must be licensed/certified in a qualified profession as indicated on application, teacher certifications include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of Students with Disabilities (Birth –2) • Teacher of Speech and Language Disabilities • Teacher of Blind and Partially Sighted • Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing <p><i>Certification Titles Prior to 2004 Revisions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of Special Education • Teacher of Speech and Hearing Handicapped • Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired • Teacher of Deaf and Hearing Impaired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize the NYC DOHMH Early Intervention Provider Directory to learn which agencies provide EI services, research the agencies that fit the criteria you are seeking in employment, and to explore possible job openings <input type="checkbox"/> If you are employed by an agency, you do not need to complete the Application for Individual Approval <input type="checkbox"/> If you do not have 1600 hours of experience, it is recommended to become an employee of an agency to accrue experience hours

For more information:

- The Bureau of Early Intervention is easily accessible via email: bei@health.state.ny.us
- For assistance completing individual approval application, call: EI Provider Approval Unit (518) 473-7061, press 1
- NYS Department of Health Early Intervention Program Website: http://www.nyhealth.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/
- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Early Intervention Website: <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/earlyint/earlyint.shtml>