

Policy Title: Infant Toddler Early Intervention for Children in Out-of-Home Placement
Applies To: Child Welfare Operations staff (Community Umbrella Agencies and DHS OSR/Adoptions)
Revises: Early Childhood Screenings and Early Intervention Services, issued January 2012, as it relates to children under the age of three years in out-of-home placement in Philadelphia.

OVERVIEW:

Children involved in the child welfare system are at high risk of developmental delays. In Philadelphia, all children under three receiving child welfare services are eligible for services through Infant Toddler Early Intervention (ITEI). This policy is intended to ensure that all children under three in out-of-home placement in Philadelphia receive such services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Early Intervention programs are using virtual Intervention strategies as the primary method to provide evaluations and IFSP services. It remains allowable to use in-person strategies when there are barriers to implementing virtual Intervention strategies such as access issues, lack of progress, or an intermittent need to address an IFSP/IEP outcome. This is subject to the changing COVID-19 situation and may be revised accordingly.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
ITEI	Infant Toddler Early Intervention, a division of the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual disAbility Services for children under 3 years old. When ITEI receives a referral, their intake staff assign the child to a Service Coordination Organization based on the child's address.
SCO	Service Coordination Organization, an agency contracted by ITEI to provide Early Intervention and Regular Developmental Screening to children in Philadelphia.
EI	Early Intervention, a free service to address developmental delays in children 5 and under. EI is divided into two divisions: Infant Toddler Early Intervention for children under 3, and Preschool Early Intervention for children 3-5.
RDS	Regular Developmental Screening, a free service for children under 3 at elevated risk of developmental delays. RDS screens at-risk children every 3 months in their home or community to ensure they continue developing on target. If a delay is identified, the child immediately enters Early Intervention; if the child remains developmentally on target, the child is discharged at their 3 rd birthday.
ChildLink	One of two SCOs contracted by ITEI to provide Early Intervention and RDS.
Partnership For Community Supports	One of two SCOs contracted by ITEI to provide Early Intervention and RDS.
IMDE	Initial Multidisciplinary Evaluation, an evaluation provided by the SCO within 45 days of an ITEI referral to determine whether a child has a developmental delay. The IMDE occurs in the child's home or community with the involvement of the caregiver.

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IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan, a plan developed by the SCO when a child is identified as having a developmental delay. The IFSP is updated at least every 6 months and outlines the interventions the child is to receive as well as the developmental goals of the interventions.
ASQ	Ages & Stages Questionnaire, a developmental screening tool for children ages 4 months to 5 years.

POLICY

Policy Statement

All children under 3 in out-of-home placement within Philadelphia County must receive services through ITEI.

Referral to Infant Toddler Early Intervention (ITEI)

- All children under three years old in placement within Philadelphia County must be referred to ITEI within 30 days of receipt of the CUA Service Referral.
 - Each month, DHS will send CUAs a report/tickler identifying all children under age three years who were referred to the CUA for out-of-home placement for that month.
- Each CUA must have a central mailbox to receive the monthly tickler from DHS regarding new out-of-home placement referrals of children under age three years.
- The CUA must verify and forward children's referral information to ITEI within 10 days of receipt of the monthly tickler from DHS.
- ITEI forwards the referral to a Service Coordination Organization for completion of the Initial Multidisciplinary Evaluation and services as appropriate.
- The CUA CM must explain the referral process and purpose to the parent/legal guardian/reunification resource and inform them of their right to participate in the services.

Initial Multidisciplinary Evaluation Procedure (IMDE)

- If the case manager is contacted by the SCO, the case manager will communicate with the resource parent concerning the importance of ITEI, and provide whatever assistance is needed to ensure the IMDE is completed in a timely manner.
- The resource parent is expected to work with the SCO to schedule the IMDE.

Ongoing Service

- The resource parent is expected to work with the SCO to schedule and participate in quarterly Regular Developmental Screenings and early intervention services.
- The reunification resource has a right to participate in these services unless otherwise court ordered.
- Goals and objectives concerning EI or Regular Developmental Screening must be documented on the Single Case Plan.
- If the child is not receiving either Early Intervention services or Regular Developmental Screening, or if the CUA is unable to verify and document that the services are ongoing, the CUA must administer ASQs at required intervals.

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Out of County Placements and Children over age three

- When a child under age three years is placed outside of Philadelphia County, or a child is placed in Philadelphia County but is between ages three years and five years, the CUA is responsible for administering ASQs and referring to the county Early Intervention provider if a delay is identified.
- If a child under age three years moves back to Philadelphia County, the child must be referred to ITEI within 30 days.

Non-Committed Children

- When a child is not committed to the Department, the case manager is expected to discuss the benefits of Regular Developmental Screening or Early Intervention and seek to obtain the consent of the parent/legal guardian to make a referral to ITEI within 30 days of receipt of the CUA Service Referral.

Procedure Title: Infant Toddler Early Intervention for Children in Out-of-Home Placement
Applies To: Child Welfare Operations staff (Community Umbrella Agencies and DHS OSR/Adoptions)
Related Policy: Infant Toddler Early Intervention for Children in Out-of-Home Placement

PROCEDURE OVERVIEW

To ensure that all children committed to DHS who are under three years of age receive Infant Toddler Early Intervention services, including Regular Developmental Screenings when early intervention services are not indicated:

- Monthly ticklers of newly referred committed children under the age of three will be sent to the CUAs.
- After verification of the information in the ticklers, CUAs will forward the information to ITEI for assignment to a Service Coordination Organization (SCO).
- The assigned SCO will make good faith efforts to complete an Initial Multidisciplinary Evaluation (IMDE).
- Based on the results of the IMDE early intervention services will begin or a referral made for Regular Developmental Screenings.

PROCEDURE and PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (*what happens, who does it, what are the time frames, how is it documented*)

DHS Intervention Unit and Performance Management and Technology (PMT) Responsibilities

- DHS PMT will create a monthly tickler of children under age three referred in that month to each CUA for out-of-home placement services and forward the report to the DHS Intervention Director.
- The DHS Intervention unit will send a monthly tickler to a central mailbox at each CUA.

CUA Responsibilities

- The assigned CUA CM will provide a letter to the parent/legal guardian that informs them of the referral and their right to participate in services. The referral process and purpose should also be explained to the parent by the case manager.
 - This letter can be found on DHSCoNECT.
- Within 10 calendar days of receiving the monthly tickler from DHS, **but no later than 30 days from the receipt of the CUA Service Referral**, the CUA is required to add or verify the resource parent's name, address, and phone number on the monthly tickler spreadsheet and forward the spreadsheet to ITEI at Birthto3EI@phila.gov.
- If the CUA does not receive a "referral assignment letter" within one week of forwarding children's referral information to ITEI, the CUA should contact ITEI to ensure the referral has been processed.
- If the assigned CUA CM is contacted by the SCO due to challenges in completing the IMDE or providing services, the CUA CM will communicate with the resource parent concerning the importance of ITEI, and provide whatever assistance is needed to ensure the IMDE is completed in a timely manner.
- The CUA CM is encouraged to schedule a joint visit with the SCO and to engage the resource parent's provider agency as needed to ensure the resource parent participates in the IMDE within the required timeframe.
- Case management staff should encourage partnership between the resource parent and the reunification resource to meet the child's developmental needs, as this is critical to safe and timely reunification.

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- On an ongoing basis, if the child is tracked in the Regular Developmental Screening (RDS), the CUA is required to obtain screening results at the same interval that they would otherwise administer the ASQ (although RDS exceeds DHS requirements):
 - ASQ every 4 months, ASQ-SE once per year for children ages 4 – 24 months.
 - ASQ every 6 months, ASQ-SE once per year for children ages 24 – 36 months.
- If the child is receiving Early Intervention, the CUA is required to obtain copies of Multidisciplinary Evaluations and IFSPs at least annually.
- When first requesting screening results, Multidisciplinary Evaluations, and IFSPs, the CUA must include a completed Release of Information with the request.
- The CUA does not need to administer the Ages & Stages Questionnaire if they are monitoring and documenting the child's participation in Infant-Toddler Early Intervention, whether the child is tracked into Regular Developmental Screening or Early Intervention.
- If the toddler will transition from early intervention to preschool services, CUA staff should attend transition meetings that are convened and ensure that relevant objectives and actions are included in the SCP.

ITEI and Service Coordination Organization (SCO) Responsibilities

- When ITEI receives the verified child and resource parent information from a CUA, ITEI will flag the children for special coordination between the CUA and the SCO (ChildLink or Partnership for Community Supports).
- ITEI should forward a "referral assignment letter" to the CUA in their central mailbox within one week of receiving the referral from the CUA.
- The SCO must complete an IMDE and hold an IFSP meeting within 45 days of the referral to ITEI. The IMDE will determine whether the child should be tracked into EI or Regular Developmental Screening. After the evaluation, the SCO is responsible for sending a Referral Feedback Letter to the CUA central mailbox, indicating which service the child should receive.
- The SCO has a "Good Faith Efforts" (GFE) policy that outlines steps they must take if they encounter difficulty completing the IMDE or providing services. The GFE policy requires the SCO to contact the CUA, and to go up the chain of command if necessary, for assistance in working with the resource parent.
- If the IMDE indicates that Early Intervention is needed, the SCO initiates Early Intervention services immediately.
- If the IMDE indicates that Early Intervention is *not* necessary, the child should participate in the Regular Developmental Screening program until their 3rd birthday.
- SCOs will forward copies of screening results, IMDE, and IFSPs upon request by CUA.
- To ensure continuity of services and consistent with 55 Pa.Code § 5226.77, prior to a toddler's third birthday, ITEI and the SCO will take all necessary steps to ensure that the toddler transitions smoothly from early intervention services to preschool services.

Resource Parent Responsibilities

The resource parent is expected to work with the SCO to schedule and participate in quarterly screenings and to cooperate with early intervention services.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- The CUA is required to upload Regular Developmental Screening results to the electronic case record at the same interval that they would otherwise administer the ASQ (see intervals above).
- If the child is receiving Early Intervention, the CUA is required upload copies of Initial Multidisciplinary Evaluations and IFSPs to the electronic case record at least annually.
- The CUA is required to upload copies of all consents to the electronic case record.
- Goals and objectives concerning EI or RDS must be documented on the Single Case Plan.

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Policy and Procedure Guide

**RELATED DOCUMENTS AND
RESOURCES:**

Attachments:

Forms: EI Letter to Parents

Related Policies or Procedures: Early Childhood Screenings and Early Intervention Services, issued January 2012, as it relates to children under the age of three years in out-of-home placement outside Philadelphia county, children ages three to five years, and children not committed to the Philadelphia Department of Human Services.

Other Resources:

POLICY AND PROCEDURE REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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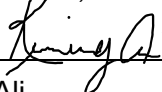
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