

Having an Evaluation and/or Assessment Done

All infants and toddlers referred to the EI Colorado program have the right to a free multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment. Multidisciplinary means a group that is made up of qualified people who have different areas of training and experience. Information from the multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment is used to determine your child's eligibility and will look at all five areas of your child's development. It is a process that will help you to better understand your child's developmental strengths and needs and how the EI Colorado program can help. Unless you request otherwise, the multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment must be completed within 45 days of the referral date. You must sign a written permission form before any evaluation and/or assessment of your child occurs.



How is eligibility decided?

Your child and family may receive early intervention services if:

- Your child and family live in Colorado;
- Your child is between birth through two years of age; and
- Your child is eligible based on either of the following:

I. Developmental Delay

A child may be determined eligible because he or she has a significant delay in one or more of the following areas:

- Adaptive development (taking care of one's self when doing things like feeding or dressing)
- Cognitive development (thinking and learning skills)
- Communication development (understanding and using sounds, gestures, and words)
- Physical development (moving, seeing, and hearing)
- Social emotional development (responding to and developing relationships with other people)

II. Based on a Diagnosis

A child may be determined eligible because he or she has been diagnosed with a condition that will likely result in a significant delay in development, and who may or may not currently have an observable delay. A list of diagnoses that will qualify a child for the EI Colorado program is available at www.eicolorado.org within the Family Members Section; the Established Condition Database icon is located on the right side of the webpage. If your child has a condition that establishes their eligibility, your child will still need an assessment to help plan for what services may be needed.

What is a multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment?

A multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment is a process that is completed with you and your child by specialists from a variety of backgrounds such as medicine, teaching, and specialized developmental areas, such as communication or movement. The number and types of specialists involved in the evaluation will depend on your concerns and the needs of your child. However, at least two different specialty areas must be a part of the eval-

uation and/or assessment team, along with your service coordinator. The evaluation and/or assessment will consider information your family reports and your child's:

- Medical history and current health status;
- Adaptive or self-help skills, such as feeding and dressing;
- Cognitive skills, such as thinking, learning, and reasoning;
- Communication skills, such as understanding and using sounds, gestures, and words, pointing, understanding your words, expressing thoughts;
- Physical development, such as vision, hearing, movement and health; and
- Social and emotional development, such as getting along with others, expressing feelings, developing relationships.

The multidisciplinary evaluation and/or assessment not only helps determine your child's eligibility for EI services, it provides information to help determine which services are most appropriate, should your child be eligible. The evaluation and/or assessment also describes your child's strengths and needs. Your family's concerns, resources, and priorities are important. You can share as much or as little information as you wish. Keep in mind, an evaluation and/or assessment is not a test that your child either passes or fails. It is a way of letting you know what your child does well and where he or she needs some help. The results of your child's evaluation and/or assessment will be explained to you to highlight your child's strengths and assets, as well as areas of difficulty and next steps.

The evaluation and/or assessment team and your service coordinator will review with you the results, the information you provide about your child's history and development, and any reports received from medical providers to arrive at an eligibility decision.

You can and should participate in the evaluation and/or assessment by:

- Helping your child feel comfortable;
- Helping with activities that explore your child's abilities;
- Telling the team whether or not what they are seeing is what is typical for your child;
- Helping the team see your child's unique strengths and needs;
- Asking questions and offering your opinions about how your child's evaluation and/or assessment is going; and
- Telling the team about the types of circumstances they would most likely be able to observe the things you are most concerned about.

***Remember,
you are the expert
on your child.***

It may be helpful to share other information during your child's evaluation and/or assessment, such as:

- Your child's prenatal history;
- Your child's health and developmental history;
- When you were first concerned that something might not be quite right;
- What you may have done to learn more about your concerns; and
- What your child does or does not do that you are concerned about now.

