

Early Intervention

Every year across the Commonwealth, **nearly 60,000 preschool children** (ages 3-5) with disabilities and other developmental delays are **served through Preschool Early Intervention programs operated by intermediate units**. As mandated under federal and state law, Early Intervention providers supply a full continuum of special education services to every eligible child that needs them; these services are provided at **no cost to families**.

Services provided in Early Intervention Programs include:

- Special Education Instruction
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Behavior Plans and Modifications
- Audiology Services
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Autism Services
- Psychological Evaluations

Thanks to the services they receive, children with disabilities develop and learn to their fullest potential and are able to enter elementary school better prepared for success. Thousands will either require no special education services, or the level of support they need will be reduced.

Last school year, 59,960 children received early intervention services; this represents a 2.5% increase over the prior year. In fact, each year, for the past 5 years, intermediate units have served an average of 2.85% additional children than the prior year.

Not only have the number of eligible children increased, but the children's needs are more complex. Today, children often require multiple services beyond special education (e.g., speech therapy, physical therapy, mental health services). The provision of multiple services results in higher costs per child.

Legislative Request:

Increase Early Intervention funding by **\$10 million (2.97%)**



FAST FACTS:

59,960 number of children served in 2020-2021

95% % of children served by IUs (via a contract with PDE), who are enrolled in early intervention programs

2.85% average annual increase in the number of children served in the past 5 years

\$336,500,000
2021-2022 allocation

0% Governor's budget recommendation