

Speech & OT of North Texas

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THE BENEFITS OF EARLY INTERVENTION IN CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS

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When you realize that your child's development is delayed or not progressing as you had hoped, it can be overwhelming. Many parents in recent years have learned the importance of early childhood intervention for developmental concerns. Early intervention is the process of seeking and utilizing the various therapeutic services available in our community to help your child reach his or her full potential.

Every child is unique and there are so many possible causes for a developmental delay. However, there are numerous resources available to families in this situation. The very first step, which can be difficult – yet is so crucial – is to seek help and set up an evaluation.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION BENEFITS THE CHILD

It is widely reported that the first five years of a child's life are critical to learning and development. When a child is not reaching milestones at the expected age(s), it is important to determine whether there is an underlying reason for the delay. If evaluation reveals the need for therapy, you should also get an estimate of the scope and a timeframe for your child's therapy plan. Studies have shown that children who receive early intervention for speech and/or motor delays have a higher chance of showing significant progress on a regular basis. [Speech-Language Pathologists](#), [Occupational Therapists](#), and [Physical Therapists](#) can be an important part of an early childhood intervention team.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION BENEFITS THE FAMILY

Sometimes families experience anxiety when a child is diagnosed with developmental delays. Early intervention programs can be customized to fit the needs of not only the child, but the family as well. Beginning the process of early intervention will give parents a sense of empowerment because they are taking action to help their child reach milestones. In addition, it will arm them with a wealth of information on various topics, from goal setting to sibling interaction. This helps parents encourage and enrich their child's development at home, incorporating the process into their family routines.

Did you know that most insurance plans will cover an evaluation by a certified therapist??? If you have concerns about your child's development, ask your pediatrician for a referral to an early intervention specialist.

·Guralnick, M. J. (2005). Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities: Current knowledge and future prospects.

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