

What is *Early On* Michigan?

Early On Michigan provides early intervention services to families of infants and toddlers, birth to age three, who are eligible because they have a delay in development or a medical condition that is likely to result in a delay.

Why do families need *Early On* Michigan?

New parents who are caring for infants and toddlers, with mild delays to significant disabilities, often need help. *Early On* supports families when children are in their first three years of life and their brains and bodies are growing faster than at any other time in their lives. Trained professionals connect with families and visit them in their homes to teach skills for supporting their child's development. *Early On* provides services such as physical and speech therapy, hearing and vision services, and specialized instruction to set up children and their families for success. Intervening with children in these youngest years can have the greatest impact.

Young children have greater developmental needs since the pandemic. Referrals to *Early On* have increased by 27% since pre-pandemic levels.³ In addition, Michigan's new requirement for universal lead screening for infants and toddlers is likely to result in increased referrals.

Number served: 4% or 26,386 infants and toddlers annually; 12,907 on a given day.¹

Funding: A recent study of *Early On* Michigan determined that the costs associated with a high quality early intervention system are estimated at approximately \$230 million.² Currently Michigan receives \$14.5 million in federal funding and \$22.3 million in state funding. In addition, about 42% of children in *Early On* are also eligible for special education which provides access to reimbursement of personnel costs related to serving this sub-population. Some local and intermediate school districts are also able to utilize local millage dollars where available, inconsistently across the state. Often school districts whose populations have greater needs do not have access to millage funding through Act 18.

Outcomes: Of children who enter *Early On* below age expectations, 73% substantially increased their rate of growth in social-emotional skills, 75% substantially increased their rate of growth in acquisition and use of knowledge/skills, and 75% substantially increased their rate of growth in use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs before exiting *Early On*. 82% of families reported that *Early On* helped the family to help their children develop and learn⁴

***Early On* Michigan needs additional funding in order to adequately serve the families of children already identified as eligible, and to serve all children who should be identified as eligible. An increase in Sec. 54d of \$15 million to \$37.3 million would make a difference.**

¹Michigan Student Data System (June 2023). "Period" and "Snapshot" counts; <http://EarlyOnData.com>.

²American Institutes for Research, *Early On System Costs: Understanding Early Intervention in Michigan*, presented to the MICC 2/22/24.

³Referrals processed via centralized intake at 1800earlyon.org, *Early On* Public Awareness.

⁴Michigan Department Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential. (2023). FFY 2021 Part C Annual Performance Report.

<http://www.michigan.gov/earlyon>; Additional resources: 1800EarlyOn.org; EarlyOnCenter.org