

INTERVENTION  
SERVICES  
FOR  
CHILDREN  
WITH  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DELAYS



Children with disabilities will have equal opportunity to live, learn, work and play in their community.



Early Start Developmental Services

EASTER SEALS  
SUPERIOR CALIFORNIA  
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# Early Start Developmental Services

## Easter Seals Superior California

Dear Early Start Family,

Welcome to Easter Seals Superior California Early Start Developmental Services! We are pleased to have been selected by your child's Alta California Regional Center Service Coordinator to provide a comprehensive program of developmental services and activities for your infant/toddler. Our goal is to provide your family with the very best early intervention services possible. You are entitled to receive these services and we urge you to fully participate with enthusiasm.

This Parent Handbook is intended to provide you with basic information about Early Start Developmental Services and assist your family in becoming the primary providers of ongoing developmental activities for your child. You are the most important person in planning and implementing early intervention services for your infant/toddler.

We are looking forward to working with you as part of a team focused on your family and your child's developmental needs. Please familiarize yourselves with the contents of this handbook. If you have any questions, feel free to contact our administrator at (916) 679-3155.



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# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Program Design

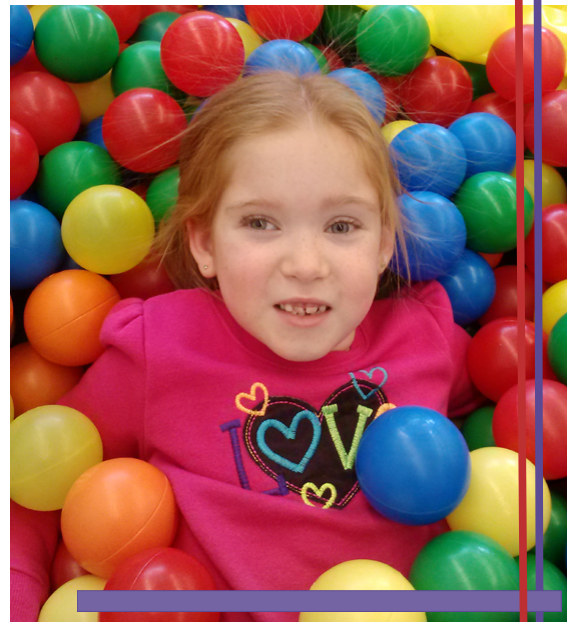
The Easter Seals Superior California Early Start Developmental Services Infant Development Program is a pediatric therapy-based and “hands on” teaching/coaching program for at-risk and developmentally challenged infants, toddlers (birth to three) and their families. The program focuses on parent training and early intervention services to develop and improve functioning in the following areas:

- \* Cognition
- \* Physical Development
- \* Communication
- \* Social/Emotional Development
- \* Self-care Skills

Services are provided in a variety of inclusive community settings that enable infants and toddlers to achieve their maximum developmental potential. Interventions are designed to foster family involvement and provide the foundation for on-going developmental activities in the absence of Early Start pediatric staff. Therapy services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, training from child development specialists and other services are conducted in natural environments, as stipulated in each child’s Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and as developed and approved by the IFSP team. Based on family preferences, therapeutic value and inclusive opportunities, services are provided in-home, at the Easter Seals Pediatric Clinic and in other locations such as childcare settings or community centers.

### Program Philosophy

The philosophy and intent of Easter Seals Early Start Developmental Services is that all infants and toddlers with special needs and/or developmental challenges are part of their communities. Based on team assessments, identified therapeutic and allied support services are provided in the most natural environment, with the inclusion of natural supports and existing community resources. Easter Seals believes that with a wide range of Early Intervention services, family training and support, and an on-going assessment of infants and toddlers referred, each child may reach their maximum potential.





# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Program Goals

The primary goals of the Easter Seals Early Start program are to provide therapeutic interventions and support services that enhance the ability of the infants and toddlers served to reach their maximum developmental potential, and to create opportunities for them to participate in life experiences similar to, and along with, their typically developing peers. Thus, our focus is to:

Provide comprehensive developmental assessments to assure appropriate interventions.

Provide comprehensive developmental services, including child development education and activities, occupational, physical and speech therapy, feeding clinic and warm water therapy to facilitate the attainment of each individual child's maximum potential in all developmental areas.

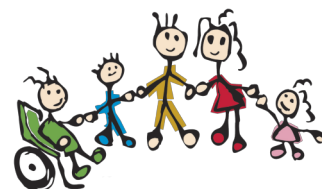
The Supervising Therapist(s) provide direct supervision to the professional intervention team and closely monitors the effectiveness of the program through family and professional feedback. Clinical supervision is provided by the team and each discipline-specific clinician is monitored by the Supervising Therapist. Feedback from families served, Alta California Regional Center representatives and others is regularly solicited to assure program quality.

Provide Support and training to families, both individually and in small group settings, to foster acceptance, adjustment and coping skills. Parents are the primary teachers of their children. When provided with the necessary skills, most families will gain a better understanding of their child's needs, and have the confidence to follow through with specific techniques and increase opportunities to teach their children.

Develop a supportive, nurturing partnership with families, WarmLine Family Resource Center, service providers and other agencies in the community. By providing the opportunity for families and others to participate in activities at various locations, the ability to develop and form alliances, friendships and on-going support systems will be significantly enhanced.

Provide comprehensive assessments, including assessing the need for adaptive equipment and assistive technology. Individual and environmental assessments provide the opportunity for families to obtain equipment as needed for their children that will help to foster cognitive growth, motor development and independence, as well as acceptance.

Provide positive reinforcement to families and their children to enable parents to recognize the strengths and accomplishments of their children, as well as their own.





# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Program Curriculum

The Early Start Developmental Services curriculum is based on the program's goals, philosophy and the assessed needs of each individual infant and toddler served. It includes intervention services and activities that promote development in the following areas:

- \* Physical development including gross and fine motor, vision and hearing.
- \* Cognitive development
- \* Communication development, both expressive and receptive
- \* Social and emotional development
- \* Self help skills that promote independence
- \* Play and peer interaction

#### Assessment/Evaluations:

Comprehensive developmental assessments are administered to each infant/toddler upon entering the program annually every thereafter, with progress reports completed every 6 months.

The primary assessment tools utilized for initial assessment and ongoing progress reporting is the Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs, 3rd ed. Other assessment tools may be used in addition to these at the discretion of the interventionist.

Evaluations are administered through skilled observations, manual assessments and parent interviews. Assessment is a continuing process and occurs with each contact and interaction with the infant/toddler and his/her family.

#### Therapy and Intervention Services:

As requested by the referring Regional Center, and as stipulated in the IFSP, discipline-specific assessments are completed. These assessments are conducted by professional staff to determine strengths and developmental needs as well as treatment strategies. Parents are concurrently provided with training and activities to enhance their child's skills. Communication is a critical component of Early Start Developmental Services and is reinforced with each child's therapy. Children receive therapy in natural environments. When determined appropriate by the team, some services, including Feeding Clinic and Warm Water Therapy are provided on-site at the Easter Seals Pediatric Clinic.

#### Assessment/Testing Information Review:

Assessment information is interpreted by an Early Intervention Specialist, and recommendations are presented to the team and Alta California Regional Center staff. Recommendations for Early Intervention and/or additional therapy may be included.

- \* Assessment information includes:
- \* Audiology evaluations/reports
- \* Medical information
- \* Nursing services reports
- \* Nutritional evaluations
- \* Occupational Therapy evaluations/reports
- \* Physical Therapy evaluations/reports
- \* Psychological evaluations/reports
- \* Social Work services evaluations/reports
- \* Speech Pathology evaluations/reports
- \* Visual Screening evaluations/reports



# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Therapies Available

#### Physical Therapy:

Physical therapy is a therapeutic service designed to address gross motor delays in children due to decreased range of motion, abnormal muscle tone, abnormal movement patterns and orthopedic abnormalities. The main focus of physical therapy is to increase stability and mobility in large muscle groups. Physical therapy initially focuses on building postural stability, then on building mobility. Physical therapists make sure the building blocks of strength, joint range, muscle firing sequences and motor planning are present so that a child can build upon those skills to promote more normalized patterns of physical development. Therapeutic sessions focus on balance exercises, range of motion, positioning, mobility skills, family training, adaptive equipment and/or orthotic monitoring (if applicable). Physical therapy cannot make a child master a skill sooner than he/she is able to, but it can help provide opportunities for children to develop and practice the components of a skill as a basis for functional mobility.

#### Warm Water Therapy:

Warm water therapy is a specialized therapeutic service that is provided by a physical or occupational therapist within a warm water therapy pool environment. The warm water environment, which is usually kept between 91-94 degrees, allows therapists to use the properties of water, such as temperature, buoyancy, hydrostatic pressure and resistance for therapeutic purposes. Warm water therapy assists in increasing mobility, circulation and range of motion, while decreasing high muscle tone. Many children respond very well to the warm water and enjoy the fun, therapeutic environment.

#### Occupational Therapy:

Occupational therapy is a therapeutic service designed to address delays in how a child interacts with their environment. Therapists look at the skills needed for children to perform successfully in their lives and in the world. An occupational therapist may assist in identifying areas in which the child's environment may be adapted to accommodate his or her needs, or in identifying specific adaptive equipment that help with the skills of living independently. One area that occupational therapists often address specifically is the area of fine motor development as it impacts the way a child interacts with their environment. Many of the fine motor skills that an occupational therapist addresses are prerequisites for later acquisitions of reading and handwriting skills, as well as for areas of self-care including dressing, grooming and independent feeding skills. In addressing fine motor skills, an occupational therapist may look at underlying areas that relate to fine motor development including upper extremity and postural strength and stability, muscle tone and motor planning. Other areas an occupational therapist frequently addresses are concerns related to sensory integration, or the body and nervous system's internal organization, modulation and the processing of sensory information. Areas of sensory information include auditory, vision, smell, taste, touch, perception of gravity and motion of head in space (vestibular) and position and movement of muscles and joints (proprioceptive). During an evaluation an occupational therapist will look at how a child responds to sensory information, including whether he or she had a tendency to over respond or under respond, as well as how a child perceives and discriminates sensory information.





# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Therapies Available

#### Speech Therapy:

Speech and language therapy services are designed to address delays in a child's communicative abilities. The function of speech and language services is to help a child communicate as best as he/she can given their level of functioning, and to assist the family and caregivers to "read" their child's communication, respond, reinforce and expand so that the child and the family can participate together in daily activities and loving social interactions. The main goal of speech and language therapy is to provide a child with ways of communicating their wants and needs. The speech therapist works with the child and their family to enhance the communicative environment through direct therapy and/or preventative treatment and teaches the family how to be their child's language facilitator. Depending on the child's needs, the therapist may focus on speech development through sound imitation and production, targeting receptive and expressive language, oral motor skills, pictorial communication systems, sign language or augmentative communication devices.

#### Feeding Clinic:

The feeding clinic is provided by licensed speech and language pathologists, and/or an occupational therapist with feeding certification, and provides a comprehensive oral feeding, swallowing and mealtime preparation assessment to aide families in understanding their child's feeding problems and train them on the necessary techniques to advance their child's feeding skills. Children are seen by the feeding clinic therapist for a variety of reasons including difficulties making progress in the ability to handle foods of different textures, problems related to learning how to chew and to drink from a cup, having a hard time introducing new foods or having trouble gaining weight. Follow up visits are scheduled ever four (4) to six (6) weeks, as needed, so that the child and family have time to practice new skills and make them part of their family

#### Feeding Clinic (continued):

routines. Feeding clinic cannot cure underlying medical problems, manage nutrition, provide behavioral intervention or make a child eat. Instead, feeding clinic aims to provide support and learning opportunities for families in order to help them understand their child's feeding needs, and advance their child's feeding skills so they are able to eat as safely and efficiently as possible.

#### Child Development Services:

Child development intervention services are provided to increase a child's cognitive or mental development as well as their social-emotional development through structured play activities. Child development services address children's ability to gather, interpret and act on information about the world around them. These services allow children the opportunity to practice a variety of skills in a structured learning environment with the expectation that they will be better able to demonstrate those skills in other environments and play scenarios. Child development services address a child's cognitive and social-emotional development in the following areas: attention and memory, problem solving, functional use of objects, symbolic play, visual perceptual skills, interpersonal skills, self-regulation and self concept through a variety of toys including shape sorters, blocks, puzzles and books. Many of our child development staff members are certified Infant Massage Trainers who can provide families with training on infant massage techniques to use with their children. Child development specialist are also great resources for parents on typical childhood development and milestones, play and peer interactions, as well as strategies to address behavioral challenges.



# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Program Guidelines

#### WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

Easter Seals Early Start Developmental Services is an infant development program contracted with Alta California Regional Center to provide services to families of children with special needs from birth to three years of age. We firmly believe that early intervention makes a positive difference in the lives of children and their families. Using professionally trained staff and licensed therapists, we will provide:

- 1) Comprehensive developmental assessments.
- 2) Scheduled home visits at your family's home, child's daycare and/or other locations as designated. The Multidisciplinary Team determines length and frequency of visits.
- 3) Developmentally-based therapy and early intervention programming; your child's needs are determined through assessments and we provide activities to enhance her/his development.
- 4) Discipline specific intervention services as determined by the MDT.
- 5) Play-based activities as a developmental tool. Activities occur at your home, our Pediatric Clinic and other identified locations.
- 6) Information regarding your child's special needs.
- 7) Referral information for services, equipment, etc.
- 8) Assistance with transition planning.

#### WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU

You are the most important person in planning and providing for your child's developmental progress. You have the opportunity to engage your child in activities that will enhance his/her developmental growth with each interaction. Our staff is professionals with education, experience and training in pediatric therapy and child development. We provide activities during our scheduled appointment times with you and your child, as well as information, training and activities for you and your child when we are not present. You are expected to actively participate in your child's developmental program. Specifically, you are expected to:

- 1) Have your child ready when Easter Seals staff arrives.
- 2) Minimize distractions, noise, phone calls, television and/or any other interference that may detract from the therapy session.
- 3) Observe and participate in activities with your child and the Easter Seals Early Intervention staff.
- 4) Be on time for therapy appointments and other activities provided away from home.
- 5) Follow through with activities whenever you are asked to do so.
- 6) Keep all appointments.
- 7) If you must cancel an appointment for illness or other emergencies we ask that notice be given promptly as soon as you are aware of the need to cancel. Call the Easter Seals Center at the number listed on the front cover of this Parent Handbook and ask for the therapist's voicemail.





# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Program Guidelines

#### GUIDELINES FOR CANCELING APPOINTMENTS

Our time with you and your child is valuable and we will make every effort to be on time and not cancel appointments. It is inevitable that occasionally appointments will need to be canceled for various reasons. The following general guidelines should be considered when deciding about canceling an appointment. We want you and your child to benefit from our services and also would like to keep our staff well. Considerations for cancellations should include: illness, rashes and/or other infectious conditions. Your child's pediatrician or family doctor should be considered whenever you have concerns about an illness or your child's health.

Please contact the Easter Seals Early Start interventionalist at least four (4) hours prior to your child's scheduled appointment, preferably with more notice if you are able, so that arrangements can be made to reschedule your child's appointment as soon as possible, and so that staff is able to schedule other intervention appointments in your open time slot.

Easter Seals reserves the right to discontinue services at any time with 30 days notice provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Alta California Regional Center. All therapy and intervention services may be suspended during this 30-day time period.

#### YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS NOTES

Communication is extremely important for you and your child's success. Writing things down can help us to better communicate with you. Communication provides a record of progress, concerns and questions. These notes are also beneficial at planning meetings and assessments. Your child's Progress Notes may include:

- 1) Daily activities with your child.
- 2) Reinforce ments (things your child likes).
- 3) Negatives (things you child dislikes)
- 4) New behaviors or activities
- 5) Questions and concerns about your child's development
- 6) Questions about why certain activities are beneficial.
- 7) Activities you and your child do that are successful.
- 8) Ideas that you have about a new or different activity.
- 9) Training or educational needs for you.
- 10) Anything you consider important about you and your child.

We need to work together as a team in order to provide the very best program for your child and family. We therefore ask you to please write even a brief note about your child's progress on a daily basis.





# Early Start Developmental Services

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### Therapies Available

#### PARENT HANDBOOK GLOSSARY

**Adaptive Equipment:** Devices that are made to work specifically with an individual's need relative to positioning and interacting within their environment. These devices assist an individual in providing him/her with increased independence.

**Assistive Technology:** A term used when describing both adaptive and augmentative equipment.

**Audiology:** Working with and the treatment of hearing deficiencies.

**Cognition:** Mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning and judgment.

**Communication:** Exchange of thoughts, messages and information by speech signals, writing or behaviors.

**Development:** The act of developing, changing and growing.

**Fine Motor:** Small muscle groups such as with use of the hands.

**Gross Motor:** Large muscle groups such as used with trunk stability and lower extremity use.

**Multidisciplinary Team:** A team of individuals with a variety of educational backgrounds and training (i.e. speech and language pathologist, physical therapists, occupational therapists and child development specialists).

**Natural Environments:** Areas that include a child's everyday routines, activities and places.

**Nutrition:** Deal with food and nourishment.

**Oral Motor:** Use of muscles in the mouth required for speaking and eating.

**Therapeutic:** Having or exhibiting healing powers

**Receptive:** Understanding of language, signals and behaviors

**Orthotics:** Devices used to support or supplement weakened or abnormal joints and limbs.

If you have any questions regarding the Easter Seals Early Start therapy services provided to your child, please feel free to call or contact our office at any time. You can reach us at the numbers listed below 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Easter Seals Superior California**  
**3205 Hurley Way Sacramento, CA 95864**  
**916.679.3155**  
**Toll Free 888.877.3257**  
**Fax 916.679.3100**



# Early Start Developmental Services

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### APPEALS PROCEDURE

If a client has a program-related questions, complaint or problem, the client should relate such question, complaint or problem to the Program Director. If the client feels uncomfortable doing this, or the Director is the source of the problem, condones the problem or ignores the problem, the client should report the problem to the Vice President of Pediatric Services.

If neither of these alternatives is satisfactory to the client, then the client can direct his/her questions, complaints or problems to the President – CEO by writing a letter outlining the issues and/or concerns at the following address:

Easter Seals Superior California  
3205 Hurley Way  
Sacramento, CA 95864

The President – CEO or a designated representative will promptly investigate all questions, complaints or problems. The President – CEO will return a response in writing.



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