

Early Beginnings Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the differences between Early Beginnings and Early Intervention programs like Child and Family Connections?

Early Beginnings supports families and their children birth to age three who are at-risk for developmental delay that could lead to future academic failure. Contributing factors of being at-risk include but are not limited to: low income, teen parent, single parent with little support, children being premature at birth, or low education level of care giver. Child and Family Connections serve families and children under the age of three who are experiencing delays in development 30% or greater or have been diagnosed with medical conditions which involve a high probability of developmental delay.

2. What type of services does Early Beginnings provide?

Certified Parent Educators provide child development and parenting education for those expecting and families with children birth to three through personal visits and group programs. Additional services include: book/video lending library, childbirth education, Doula/labor support, family neonatal activities, community linkage through a resource network, case management through an Individual Family Support Plan, monitoring of the child's development through developmental, social-emotional, hearing and vision screening, educational newsletters, family events, parent-child activities, parenting support groups, and preschool transition.

3. Where do Early Beginnings provide services?

Currently, Early Beginnings provide services to families in McDonough, Fulton, and Hancock Counties in West Central Illinois. All activities are voluntary and at no charge to participating families.

4. Who can make referrals to Early Beginnings?

Anyone is welcome to contact Early Beginnings if they have children or know of families who are expecting and/or have children birth to age three. We will provide a developmental screening and parent interview to determine eligibility and make referrals if necessary. Eligibility factors are determined annually by the results of a community needs assessment.

5. How is Early Beginnings funded?

Early Beginnings is a part of the Early Childhood Block Grant funding through the Illinois State Board of Education as a prevention initiative program. Early Beginnings applies each year to maintain funding.

6. Does Early Beginnings staff conduct hearing or vision screenings along with developmental screenings?

Early Beginnings conduct basic hearing and vision screenings through a overall health screening that consists of an observational checklist and depends greatly on parent report. A photo screener is also available to conduct non-diagnostic vision testing and staff use the Ero-Scan screener to conduct OAE screening (inner ear screening). As with developmental screenings, if a concern is noted, Early Beginnings staff will make the appropriate referral.

7. What is the role of the Parent Educator at Early Beginnings?

Parent Educators at Early Beginnings provide developmental activities, education, and resources for parents and caregivers through home-based visits and center programs. They track developmental milestones of children birth to age three and encourage families to get involved in their children's development. Parent Educators at Early Beginnings are certified to use the Parent as Teachers model for program services and the Parents as Teachers Foundational research-based curriculum. Parent Educators' approach to personal visits focus on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting and family well-being. The four main goals of the Parents as Teachers model is to:

- Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve parenting practices.
- Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues.
- Prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Increase children's school readiness and school success.

8. What is the role of the Doula Parent Educator at Early Beginnings?

Doula Parent Educators at Early Beginnings support the emotional and educational growth of expectant families through pregnancy and the first months of a baby's life. Doula Parent Educators identify key indicators of a healthy pregnancy and use knowledge and skills to promote the best possible pregnancy and birth outcomes.

9. Who do I contact to learn more about Early Beginnings or make a referral?

McDonough/Hancock/Fulton Counties:

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(309)731-4385 E-mail: erlybegn@roe26.net

<http://www.roe26.net/earlybeg/>