

# The Importance of Early Intervention



## Early Intervention Supports Families

Delays in communication and language development are often the first sign of developmental problems in young children. When we identify concerns in communication and language development, we encourage families to seek intervention as soon as possible. Early diagnosis and treatment for developmental delays increases the chances of improvement rather than simply “waiting it out” and treating problems later.

## Earlier is Better

Treating communication and language difficulties early on can prevent potential problems with behavior, learning, reading and social interaction. Recent research on brain development reminds us that “earlier IS better” when teaching young children. By age 3, most of the major brain structures are mature, and it becomes more difficult to make significant changes in a child’s growth and development.

### What can early intervention do for your family?

#### Provide resources, support and information

Early intervention provides parents with resources, supports and information to enhance their child’s communication skills. Working together with a provider trained in early childhood enables parents to feel confident that they are facilitating their child’s communication development.

#### Improve relationships

When communication and language are delayed, understanding and interacting with other children will also be delayed. This makes it difficult to develop friendships, solve problems and learn to negotiate conflicts. Through early intervention, children learn how to use language to convey messages, to express feelings and to interact with their friends.

#### Improve behavior

Children with delayed communication development may get frustrated and exhibit challenging behaviors to compensate for their delays. It is difficult to express wants and needs when communication is delayed so often a physical response such as biting or hitting takes its place. Intervention will provide supports and strategies to facilitate your child’s communication needs.

#### Promote future success in school

Communication development sets the stage for literacy and influences later success in school. There is evidence suggesting that having a good command of language goes hand-in-hand with the ability to imagine and to create new ideas and, eventually, to read and write.

#### Make learning fun

Early intervention will help families add supports into everyday activities that they do with their child. This provides lots of opportunities for children to learn—not only when playing but also when getting dressed, brushing teeth, preparing meals, eating, bathing, helping with family chores, getting ready for bed, and lots of other activities. Intervention also brings the family a greater understanding of their child’s needs and how to break learning down into small steps for their child. When children know what they are expected to do and can be successful, they have fun learning in almost any activity, and want to learn more.

*Though some children who are late in communicating outgrow this delay, it is important to remember many need help to be able to communicate as expected for their age.*