



## Answers to Common Questions

### Who is Early Intervention Colorado (EI Colorado) for?

EI Colorado supports families with young children, birth to age 3, who have a delay in their development or a disability. All babies and toddlers need support for their development so they can get off to a strong start. Some children need extra support to nurture them in the early years. Early Intervention gives parents the tools and coaching to help their child learn and grow every day.

### What can I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

Contact your child's health care provider or contact [Early Intervention Colorado](#) directly. If you or someone else has a concern about your child, an EI Colorado evaluation will determine if your child could use some extra support or if they are right on track.

### Can my child get an evaluation through EI Colorado?

Yes! Anyone can refer a child for an evaluation, including parents and family members.

[Click here to get started.](#)

### Is there a cost to families for the evaluation or for services?

No. The EI Colorado evaluation and services are offered at no cost to families. There are no income requirements to participate.

### How do children benefit from the EI Colorado program?

The brains of babies and toddlers grow and develop quickly so it's much easier for young children to learn new skills than it is for older children. That's why it's so important to identify delays in a child's learning or development early. The first few years are a critical window of opportunity. Acting early will make sure your child has the skills and strong foundation they need.



### How do families benefit from the EI Colorado program?

The program offers coaching and support so that you, the parents, have the information and skills you need to turn everyday interactions and activities into opportunities to help your children learn and grow. The EI Colorado program is a partnership with your family and you are in control. You are the expert on your child, and EI Colorado is here to give you the tools you need to support their success.

### Why should I have my child evaluated through EI Colorado?

The EI Colorado evaluation is a great opportunity to learn more about your child and how they are growing and developing in each of the five areas of development. The five areas of development are cognitive (problem solving, play), social-emotional (interactions with others and self-soothing), physical (how a child moves), communication and language, and self-help/adaptive skills (such as feeding and dressing). The evaluation will determine if your child could use some extra support or if they are right on track. Either way, you will learn more about your child, their strengths and challenges, and how you can best support their development.

### What happens during the evaluation?

The evaluation will be scheduled at a time and place that is convenient for your family. This could be in your home (in person or virtually) or another location in the community. Because the evaluation offers an overall picture of how your child is growing and developing, more than one professional will participate in the evaluation. The qualified professionals that complete the EI Colorado evaluation have different specialties, and all of them are qualified to work with babies and toddlers. Parents are partners in the evaluation process. You will participate during the appointment and receive results soon after the evaluation, sometimes in the same appointment.

# Answers to Common Questions



## Who qualifies for EI Colorado services?

To qualify for services through EI Colorado, children must have a delay of 25% or greater in two areas of development or a delay of 33% or greater in one area of development.

Some children who were born prematurely or spent time in the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit), children diagnosed with a condition likely to cause developmental delays, or if a child lives with a parent who has a developmental disability may be automatically eligible for services.

## If my child qualifies for services, what happens next?

If your child is eligible to receive EI Colorado services and you choose to move forward, your family's service coordinator will work with you to create an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP is a detailed summary of the support that your child and family will receive and how those services will be provided. Your family's service coordinator will ensure that your family gets connected to all of the services and support that your child needs — even if some of those services are outside of the EI Colorado program. Participating in early intervention is completely voluntary and families are not required to move forward with services even if their child qualifies.

## What if my child does not qualify for EI Colorado?

If your child's evaluation shows that they are not eligible to receive services through EI Colorado, your family's care navigator can connect you to community programs that can provide the extra support that your child may need. If concerns arise with your child's development down the road, another referral can be made to EI Colorado any time before their 3rd birthday.

## What services does EI Colorado provide?

Every family's experience with the EI Colorado program is unique, and services will look different depending on the child's needs and the family's priorities. Services can be provided by a variety of different providers, including speech language pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, assistive technology professionals, and more.

## Where do EI Colorado services take place?

Your child's EI Colorado services can take place wherever you feel comfortable and at a time that works for your schedule. Children can learn new skills the best when they are with familiar people in a familiar place, so many families choose to have EI Colorado providers come to their home or another comfortable place such as grandma's house.

## My child needs a lot of support, how am I going to manage the different providers?

Your family's service coordinator will be with you at every step to ensure that your family can get all the support that you need. Your service coordinator is available to answer your questions, can help you make informed decisions, and coordinates all of the services that your child and family need.

With EI Colorado, you never have to be alone in addressing your child's developmental delay or disability. Your child's development and well-being are your early intervention team's shared priority. With you as the leader, your family's service coordinator will guide your EI team and serve as your primary contact.

## How long does the EI Colorado program last?

Early intervention services last different lengths of time depending on what a child and family need. Some children will participate in early intervention for a short time only to address a temporary delay in development. Other children transition from EI Colorado and receive continuing support as they start school.

## Is my family required to have an evaluation or participate in services if my child is eligible for EI Colorado?

No. Choosing to have an evaluation or participate in services with EI Colorado is completely voluntary. At every point in the process, parents are in control. You must give permission for your child to receive an evaluation and again for them to receive services through EI Colorado. At any time you can choose for your child to stop receiving services or a portion of services.

# Answers to Common Questions



## What happens if my child is still receiving services when they are close to their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday?

If your child continues to receive EI Colorado services after their 2nd birthday your service coordinator will share [information with you about the transition process](#). If you are interested, you will meet with your service coordinator and local school district to understand what is offered in your area. After that meeting an evaluation with your school district will be scheduled. This evaluation will determine if your child is eligible for preschool special education services. If you are not interested in that path for your child or if you are interested in another program such as private preschool or Head Start your service coordinator will help you navigate your options.

## Can families receive an evaluation and/or services in another language?

Yes. Often, EI Colorado has therapists that speak the family's native language and can conduct the evaluation and services in your language without the support of an interpreter.

If there are no professionals available that speak your family's language, an interpreter will be provided at no cost to your family for the evaluation and/or EI Colorado services.

## Can EI Colorado services help with my child's challenging behavior?

EI Colorado services can help make a family's routines easier by helping children develop the skills to communicate, feel more comfortable, and overcome challenges that can affect how they develop and interact with others. .

## Does EI Colorado consider a child or family's immigration status?

No. All children living in Colorado can receive support from EI Colorado if they meet the eligibility guidelines at no cost. EI Colorado will not ask about your immigration status or that of your child.

## I thought the program was no cost. Why did my service coordinator ask if I want to bill my insurance?

If your family has private insurance or Medicaid, the service coordinator will talk to you about the option of using your insurance to support the costs of EI Colorado services. You will never pay any co-pays, and there is no requirement that you meet a deductible before EI Colorado costs will be paid in full by insurance. Using your own insurance to support the costs of these services will ensure that more families, including those without health insurance, are able to access this important resource. If your private health insurance is connected with a health savings account, please inform your service coordinator so these funds will not be utilized.

## Is EI Colorado going to try to change the way I parent my child?

No. The EI Colorado program deeply values and respects each family's preferences, culture, parenting style, language and beliefs. Our goal is to give your family information and tools that you can incorporate into your own parenting style to help your children thrive.

## If my child participates in EI Colorado, will they be labeled as having a problem when they start school?

No. Some families may worry about participating in EI Colorado because they don't want their child to be "labeled" as having a problem when they start school. Information about participation in EI Colorado is not shared with a child's preschool or elementary school unless the family chooses to share it.

## I have a concern about my child but I was told to 'wait and see.' What should I do?

If you or someone you trust has a concern about your child's development, it's better to get support now than wait and see. Acting early will help make sure your child has the skills and strong foundation they need to thrive. An early intervention evaluation is free, easy to access and will tell you whether your child needs some extra support or if they are right on track.