



**Administration for Children's Services**

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**JOHN B. MATTINGLY**  
*Commissioner*

**ZEINAB CHAHINE**  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Division of Child Protection  
**From:** Zeinab Chahine *ZC*  
**Date:** February 20, 2007  
**Re:** Access to the Early Intervention Program and Child Find

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This memo reminds ACS staff about the New York State Early Intervention referral requirement, introduces the new the Early Intervention Program (EIP) referral form and provides guidance on how to complete this referral appropriately. Children's Services is mandated to refer any child under the age of three who is the subject of an indicated case of abuse or neglect to EIP as per the State Office of Children and Families' Local Commissioners Memorandum and Children's Services policy issued in 2004.

**What is EIP?**

The Early Intervention Program provides services to infants and children with developmental delays and supports families in meeting their child's and their own needs. It also provides developmental monitoring to at-risk children. The program is administered by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). It is important to note that in New York City, the Early Intervention Program has two parts: Early Intervention and Child Find. Early Intervention serves children who are known to have a developmental delay or disability. Child Find serves children who are "at-risk" for atypical development.

**Making Referrals to EIP**

The assigned Child Protective Specialist and Supervisor are responsible for completing the referrals as soon as a case involving a child under the age of three is indicated. In addition, for cases being served by Family Services Unit (FSU) staff must make referral on cases that meet the criteria to the Early Intervention Program if one has not already been made.

In addition, referrals should not be limited to indicated child protective cases. Any child under age three who is suspected to have a developmental delay or disability should be referred to Early Intervention and those who are deemed to be "at-risk" for atypical development should be referred to the Child Find Unit. Early Intervention and the Child Find Unit are described in more detail below.

EIP recently released a new referral form which can be downloaded at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/earlyint/ei-referral-form.pdf>.

### **How Do You Fill Out The Referral Form?**

When you are completing the referral form, you are required to check off either, “This child is suspected or known to have a developmental delay or disability” (which is a referral to Early Intervention) or “This child is developing typically at this time but may be at risk for atypical development” (which is a referral to Child Find). As always, be sure to let the parent know you are making a referral to Early Intervention or Child Find and what to expect.

- **EARLY INTERVENTION**

**If you have any suspicion that the child has a delay, you should check the first box (the Early Intervention box) which says, “The child is suspected or known to have a developmental delay or disability.”** When a child is referred to Early Intervention, an initial service coordinator is assigned to work with the family to arrange for an evaluation of the child. For a reference tool that can help you identify developmental concerns, you can reference the Healthy Development handbook published by the Office of Child and Family Health (available on the ACS Intranet site at <http://nycacs/>. Go to Forms and Documents>OCFH Handbooks>Handbook for Healthy Development of Children and Youth), and the soon to be distributed "How to Interview a Baby" laminated palm card developed by the Babies Can't Wait Advisory Committee (also available on the ACS Intranet site at <http://nycacs/>. Look for “Babies Can't Wait” in the top box on the home page and click on “Providing a quality assessment.” The Palm card is in the third attachment titled, “How to Interview a Baby.”)

- **CHILD FIND**

**If you have no concerns regarding the child’s development, you should check the second box (the Child Find box) which says, “This child is developing typically at this time but may be at risk for atypical development.”** This means that the child is only “at-risk” for a developmental delay, and WILL NOT RECEIVE A FULL EVALUATION. Instead, someone from Child Find will try to contact the parent by phone to tell them about the program and to ask whether s/he would like to participate. If the parent is reached, the person from Child Find will tell them about his/her role in providing developmental monitoring. After speaking to the parent, a welcome packet will be sent which includes a sample of the types of questions that the parent will be asked to fill out on an “Ages and Stages Questionnaire” (a questionnaire that asks about the child’s development), a pamphlet that outlines some of the developmental milestones, and a “request for information” form (a form used to provide information on the child’s doctor, etc). This form has a place for the parent to sign to provide consent to participate in Child Find.

If the program is not able to reach the parent or if the parent does not have a telephone, a letter is sent informing the parent that a referral was made and a welcome package is included as above. The parent is asked to contact Child Find to let them know if the parent wants to participate in the developmental monitoring process. Regardless of whether Child

Find hears from the parent, Child Find will then send an “Ages and Stages Questionnaire” for the parent to fill out. If the parent fails to respond to the questionnaire, a letter will go out to the parent letting him/her know that if the parent does not contact Child Find by a certain date, the case will be closed. The letter also indicates that the parent can request that the case be re-opened at a future date.

If the parent chooses to participate, an “Ages and Stages Questionnaire” will be sent to the parent at regular intervals (so that a child is “monitored” over time). To move forward, the parent must complete the questionnaire and return it to Child Find, where it gets scored (Child Find provides a stamped envelope). If the score falls within a certain range (that suggests atypical development), staff from Child Find will speak to the parent about transferring the child to Early Intervention for an evaluation. If the score falls within a typical range, the parent will receive a letter indicating the result and letting him/her know that another “Ages and Stages Questionnaire” will be sent to the parent in the future so that there can be ongoing monitoring.

### **Changes in the Referral Process**

In addition to the changes in the form, there is a new process for submitting the referral. Beginning November 20, 2006, all referrals for children with suspected delays (or known delays and disabilities) should be faxed directly to the Regional Office in the borough of the child’s residence. If the referral is for an “at-risk” child, the form should be faxed directly to Child Find. The fax numbers for all of these offices can be found at the top of the referral form.

While the form indicates that referrals can still be made by phone (call 311 and ask for Early Intervention or Child Find), we would strongly recommend sending written referrals so that you have written documentation that a referral was made. This can be done by keeping a copy of the completed form in your record, together with a fax confirmation sheet showing the time and date when the referral was sent.

If you are interested in hosting a more in-depth training on the Early Intervention Program and Child Find, the Children’s Services Education Unit would be happy to provide it. Please contact Katherine Locker at [Katherine.locker@dfa.state.ny.us](mailto:Katherine.locker@dfa.state.ny.us) to arrange a time.

cc: Commissioner John B. Mattingly  
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