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# **Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)**

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# Program Overview



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# Welcome to ECI

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- ECI is a statewide program.
- ECI serves children birth up to 36 months with a disability or developmental delay.
- ECI provides services in the child's natural environment.
- ECI uses a coaching approach to build the capacity of parents and caregivers.



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# Eligibility

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- Qualifying medical diagnosis
- Deaf or hard of hearing/visual impairment
- Developmental delay





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# The Value of ECI

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- Encourages collaboration between caregivers and professionals.
- Facilitates coordination among community resources.
- Increases rate of growth in developmental areas.
- Reduces need for special education.



# ECI Structure



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# ECI State Office

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## HHSC ECI Office

- Office of the Director
- Performance and Oversight
- Policy and Support

## 41 ECI Contractors

- Community MHMR centers
- Private non-profit agencies
- Education service centers
- Independent school districts





# Data and Reports



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# Consumer Profile

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## ECI Consumer Profiles

This profile describes the characteristics of the children and families served by the ECI program in a given fiscal year.

- [ECI Consumer Profile Fiscal Year 2020 \(Excel\)](#)
- [ECI Consumer Profile Fiscal Year 2019 \(Excel\)](#)
- [ECI Consumer Profile Fiscal Year 2018 \(Excel\)](#)

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/assistive-services-providers/early-childhood-intervention-programs/eci-data-reports>



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# ECI County Statistics

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## ECI County Statistics

These statistics present the number of children served by the ECI program, statewide and by county, in a given fiscal year. It also includes the number of children served as a percentage of the birth-to-three population in Texas.

- [ECI Served by County Fiscal Year 2019 \(Excel\)](#)



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# Performance Report

## Performance Reports

Part C Annual Performance Report describes the progress in meeting the targets established in the state Performance Plan for the period from September 2018 through August 2019. It includes the State Systemic Improvement plan.

- [Part C \(as submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs\)](#)

## ECI Local Performance Reports

The performance of each local ECI program is reported on a number of indicators from the Annual Performance Report.

- [Federal Fiscal Year 2018](#)

# Infographics



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# 5 Reasons Why ECI Is Valuable

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## 5 Reasons Why Early Childhood Intervention Is Valuable



For years early intervention has helped families learn how to be the best teachers for their children with developmental delays or disabilities. Early intervention's evidence-based practice of helping families incorporate intervention strategies into daily routines increases children's rate of growth in key developmental areas, multiplies the opportunities for and effects of intervention, and increases the return on every dollar spent.

Discover how early intervention can help the children and families in your community and healthcare practice.

"Investing in the continuum of learning from birth to age 5 not only impacts each child, but it also strengthens our country's workforce today and prepares future generations to be competitive in the global economy tomorrow."

Professor James Heckman  
University of Chicago

### 1 Reduces Need for Special Education

The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NELS) Special Education and Part C Programs tracked children with a developmental delay and found 46% did not need special education by the time they reached kindergarten as a result of early intervention services.<sup>1</sup>



**36%** had no disability, and were not receiving special education services.

**10%** were reported to have a disability, but were not receiving special education.

### 2 Positive Results for Children

Studies found that children who participate in high-quality early intervention/early childhood development programs tend to have:

- Less need for special education and other remedial work.
- Greater language abilities.
- Improved nutrition and health.
- Experienced less child abuse and neglect.<sup>2, 3, 4</sup>



### 3 Works with Brain Development

Neural circuits create the foundation for learning, behavior and health. These circuits are most flexible from birth to three.

Early social/emotional development provides the foundation upon which cognitive and language skills develop.

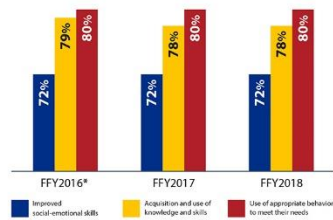
High-quality early intervention services can change a child's developmental trajectory and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Intervention is likely to be more effective and less costly when it is provided earlier in life rather than later.<sup>5</sup>



### 4 Improves Child Outcomes

Texas child outcomes in Early Childhood Intervention consistently exceed the national average.



Citations:

- 1 <https://www.nielson.com/publication/national-early-intervention-longitudinal-study-niels-final-report/>
- 2 [Paying Later - the High Cost of Failing to Invest in Young Children - FEW Center on the States Issue Brief Jan. 2011](https://www.fewer.org/2015/05/15/paying-late-the-high-cost-of-failing-to-invest-in-young-children/)
- 3 [Early Childhood Interventions: Benefits, Costs and Savings - Hand Copation Research Brief](https://www.fewer.org/2015/05/15/early-childhood-interventions-benefits-costs-and-savings-a-hand-copation-research-brief/)
- 4 [Policy Perspectives: Early Childhood Investment Yields Big Payoff by Robert Lynn, Department of Economics, Washington College](https://www.fewer.org/2015/05/15/policy-perspectives-early-childhood-investment-yields-big-payoff-by-robert-lynn/)

### 5 Increases Rate of Return on Investment

The earlier the investment, the greater the return.



As noted by James Heckman: "The highest rate of return in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible, from birth through age 5, in disadvantaged families. Starting at age three or four is too little too late, as it fails to recognize that skills beget skills in a complementary and dynamic way. Efforts should focus on the first years for the greatest efficiency and effectiveness."<sup>6</sup>

- 5 Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2010) — <https://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Foundations-of-Lifelong-Health.pdf>
- 6 <https://www.fewer.org/2015/05/15/policy-perspectives-early-childhood-investment-yields-big-payoff-by-robert-lynn/>

10/2018



# ECI Data – Fiscal Year 2020

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## Early Childhood Intervention Data

Fiscal Year 2020



### Program Information

For more than 30 years, Early Childhood Intervention has helped over 800,000 Texas families learn how to be the best teachers for their children with developmental delays or disabilities. Discover how ECI can help the children and families in your community and healthcare referral sources.

ECI's evidence-based practice of helping families incorporate intervention strategies into daily routines:

- Increases children's rate of growth in key developmental areas.
- Multiplies the opportunities and effects of intervention.
- Increases the return on every dollar spent.

**Number of Children Referred**  
79,252



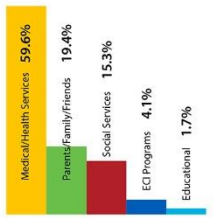
**Number of Children Served**  
59,234



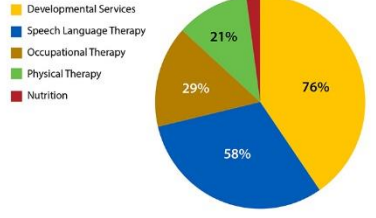
**Number of Family Visits**  
376,163



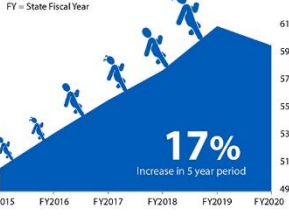
### Referral Sources



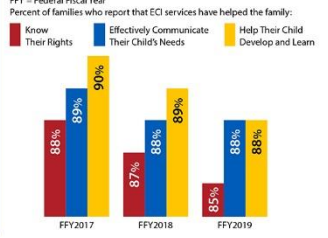
### Delivered Services



### Increase in Number of Children Served



### Family Outcomes





# ECI Sustainability

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## Factors Impacting Sustainability of the Texas Early Childhood Intervention Program



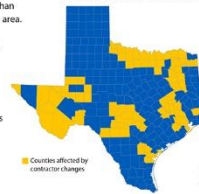
### Background

**What is Early Childhood Intervention?**  
ECI is a statewide program for children with disabilities and developmental delays. ECI services support families to help improve their children's developmental outcomes.  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission contracts with local agencies to provide ECI services across the state.  
ECI contractors are required to offer the full array of federally mandated services, as appropriate, based on the child's and family's needs, and to deliver services in natural environments.  
Federal regulations require all children determined eligible for ECI to be served, creating an entitlement from a federal program perspective without corresponding entitlement funding.

**Who is eligible?**  
All children from birth to 36 months who reside in Texas and have a:  
- Developmental delay greater than or equal to 25% in one domain area.  
- Qualifying medical diagnosis.  
- Auditory or visual impairment.

**How is ECI funded?**  
ECI receives funding from:  
- State sources  
- Federal sources  
- Family out-of-pocket payments  
- Medicaid, private insurance/TRICARE, CHIP

**Loss of ECI Contractors**  
The historical funding for ECI has proven inadequate to retain contractors.

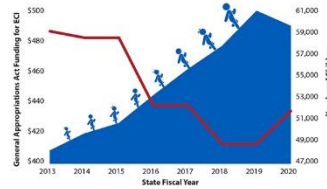


58 counties affected in 2019  
42 counties affected in 2018  
83 counties and 7,622 children have been affected by contractor changes.

\*Texas did transition several service areas in September 2020 following a competitive procurement but has had no provider terminations since 2018.

### Factors Affecting Sustainability

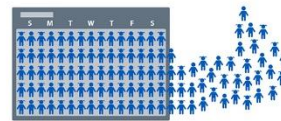
**Increase in Number of Children Served and Decrease in Funding**  
The number of children enrolled in ECI has increased six of the last seven years. Funding from the state appropriation decreased during these same six years, then saw a 5% increase in per child funding in FY2020 over FY2019. However, FY2020 funding levels per child still represent a 10% decrease since 2013.\*



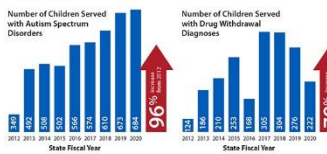
■ Average Monthly Funding Per Child from General Appropriations Act ■ Number of Children Served  
\*FY = Fiscal Year — ECI saw a 2% reduction in the number of children served in FY2020 due to COVID-19.

**ECI Contractors Must Cover Costs of Children Over the Target**  
HHSC funds contractors based on a target number of children served each month. If the number of children determined eligible exceeds the target number of children in the contract, the ECI contractor must still serve those children.

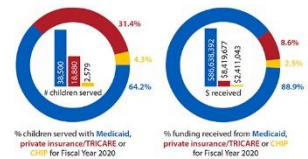
In Fiscal Year 2019, 40% of ECI contractors reported having to contribute additional funds to support their ECI programs.



**Increase in Special Populations Being Served**  
The number of children with certain qualifying medical diagnoses being served in ECI is increasing, such as children with Autism and drug addicted infants, further straining the system since children with more complex needs require more services.



**Lack of Private Insurance Coverage for ECI Services**  
Although more than 30% of ECI families have private insurance, ECI contractors collect less than 10% of the revenue needed to operate their programs from this source due to a lack of insurance coverage of ECI services.



Updated 03/2021



# Resources

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# Information Resources

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**Texas Health and Human Services**

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services>

**Learn the Signs. Act Early**

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/)



# Publications

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## Serving Babies and Toddlers



*Early Childhood Intervention  
helps families with children  
who have developmental  
delays or disabilities*



Early Childhood  
Intervention

## How's Your Baby? Developmental Checklist



Early Childhood  
Intervention

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## Watch Me Grow!

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

My birthday is \_\_\_\_\_

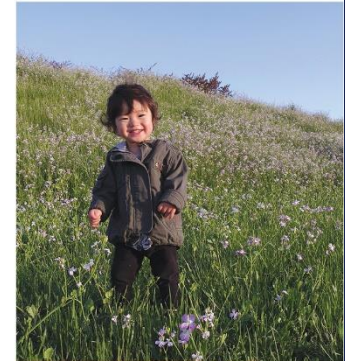
My birth weight was \_\_\_\_\_

My birth length was \_\_\_\_\_

Place bottom of chart 18 inches from the floor. Following each of your child's physical checkups record the date by the inch mark that best indicates your child's height. Once your child is standing, be sure to place the chart on a wall where the child can easily stand and share in the recording of his or her growth.

### 30-36 month old toddlers

- throw a ball overhand
- comfort another child who is crying
- can walk on tiptoes
- combine 2 ideas in sentence ("I want an apple and a banana.")
- ask for help when needed





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**Thank you**

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