

P3 Policy Priorities & Action Team Toolkit: Early Intervention

Can Michigan really help 41,750 more families with infants and toddlers get the early childhood services they need? With your voice, we can!

Thank you for taking action!

As an early childhood expert and a member of the Pritzker-funded Michigan Prenatal-to-Three Collaborative, you know that the first three years of a child's life are critical — a formative period that can lay the groundwork for the best possible outcomes throughout a child's life.

Across Michigan, tens of thousands of families with infants and toddlers are not able to access the high-quality programs, services and opportunities they need to raise healthy and thriving children. You can make a difference.

This **P3 Policy Priorities & Action Team Toolkit** will facilitate conversations on five infant-toddler policy priority areas. Together, we'll gather input, insight and ideas from as many parents, caregivers, providers, teachers, health care professionals, administrators, community leaders, advocates and agency directors as possible.

If you have questions or additional needs during this important and powerful process, please contact us: ta@ecic4kids.org | 855.790.4900. Additional resources and information can be found at ecic4kids.org/p3action.

Thank you for helping craft Michigan's Prenatal-to-Three policy agenda. Let's make Michigan the top state to have a baby and raise a child!

Taking action is as easy as 1, 2, 3 ...

Step 1: Host a discussion using the sample agendas and discussion questions in this toolkit, either in existing meetings or at a new gathering.

Step 2: Take notes on your group's ideas and submit them online at ecic4kids.org/p3action.

Step 3: Save the date for Jan. 23, 2020, when we release the final policy report. See how your voice made a difference and learn about steps you can take in 2020 to help Michigan achieve our collective goals.

Suggested Agendas

**If you have 30 minutes:**

- Review **Michigan by the Numbers** data.
- Facilitate three to five **Discussion Questions** with parents and/or providers.
- Take notes and report at www.ecic4kids.org/p3action.

**If you have 60 minutes:**

- Review **Michigan by the Numbers** data.
- Facilitate three to five **Discussion Questions** with parents and/or providers.
- Select three to five **Potential Policy Solutions** for reflection.
- Take notes and report at www.ecic4kids.org/p3action.

**If you have 90 minutes:**

- Review **Michigan by the Numbers** data.
- Facilitate five to eight **Discussion Questions** with parents and/or providers.
- Facilitate reflection on all **Potential Policy Solutions**.
- Take notes and report at www.ecic4kids.org/p3action.

Michigan by the Numbers: Early Intervention

In Michigan, there are currently

167,000 infants and toddlers

in families who live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.



12,567

Infants and toddlers in qualifying families that currently receive Early Intervention services.

(Source: CEPI FY17, MDE and U.S. Census)

21,700



total infants and toddlers in families that currently qualify and potentially need early intervention services.

THE GAP

9,133

infants and toddlers in families not currently receiving early intervention services.

What is Michigan's Early Intervention Program, or Early On?

I didn't know my child needed early intervention services ...

I didn't know we could get help for my child's disability ...

The Early On process was really confusing ...

Early intervention is the term used to describe the services and supports that are available to babies and young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. Services may include speech, physical or occupational therapy and other types of services based on the needs of the child and family, and they can have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn new skills and overcome challenges to increase success in school and life.

Early On Michigan offers early intervention services for infants and toddlers, birth to 3 years old, with developmental delay(s) and/or disabilities, and their families. These publicly funded programs provide services for free or at reduced cost for any child who is eligible.

(Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Early On Michigan)

**We want to increase the number of families using
Michigan's Early On services.**

The following questions are intended to be asked directly of parents and providers.

Submit your input at www.ecic4kids.org/p3action.

Questions for Parents:

1. If you have a child with a disability or a developmental delay, or if you have concerns about your child's development, have you used Early On services?
 - a. If yes, how did you find out about Early On?
 - i. What was your experience?
 - ii. Were you satisfied with your Early On experience?
 1. The approach, the frequency of services, the interactions with you and your child, etc.?
 - b. If no, why not?
 - i. What services other than Early On did you use to support your child?
2. What barriers, if any, made it difficult for you to access Early On services?
 - a. Consider every step of the process: the referral, the Early On evaluation, developing an Individualized Family Service Plan, and receiving services.
 - b. What suggestions do you have that might help remove or reduce the barriers you faced?
3. If you have used early intervention services, did you feel that the service providers who worked with you were knowledgeable and respectful of your family culture?
4. From your perspective, what's working well in your community for Early On and other early intervention services?

Questions for Providers:

1. What's working well for Early On in your community?
2. What are your challenges?
3. What would it take to remove or reduce these challenges?
4. Does your community have sufficient resources to provide adequate Early On services to families and children?
5. Does your community provide distinctly separate services to Early On-only children versus Michigan Mandatory Special Education children?
 - a. If so, do you feel that all children are getting the appropriate intensity/level of services they need? Why or why not?
 - b. If not, what would help mitigate this problem?
6. Are you experiencing any challenges related to the workforce?
 - a. Are Early On staff adequately compensated?
 - b. Are you seeing staff turnover issues?
 - c. Would your community be able to hire new staff if Early On received additional funding?
 - d. What would it take to stabilize the Early On workforce?
7. Has your community developed local solutions, such as doing things to work around the system, local funding, etc., to help families who need early intervention services?
 - a. What are those?

The following questions are intended to spark a discussion with your groups.

These **Potential Policy Solutions** are the result of Michigan's Prenatal-to-Three Collaborative working sessions and need your expert experiences to make them as actionable and realistic as possible.

Things to think about and record:

- What are your reactions to these **Potential Policy Solutions**?
- How do each of these solutions make you feel?
- Would these address your challenges?
- If you had to prioritize the solutions, what order would you place them in?
- What holes would you poke in these potential solutions?
- What aren't we asking or thinking about?

Submit your input at www.ecic4kids.org/p3action.

Solution One

Increase early intervention/Early On funding gradually over three years to adequately serve 100% of eligible children.

Solution Two

Increase the availability of infant mental health services, both within the Community Mental Health system and other settings.

Solution Three

Explore postpartum visits for all women and their infants to identify prevention and intervention needs.

Solution Four

Increase earnings for the infant-toddler early childhood workforce.

Solution Five

Examine geographic and racial/ethnic disparities and cultural concerns that may deter or prevent families from enrolling in early intervention services.

Solution Six

Tell us your ideas! What policy solutions would you suggest?

Facilitators: Interested in more policy ideas and information?

Visit <https://www.ecic4kids.org/toolkits/>.

Contact Us: ta@ecic4kids.org | 855.790.4900

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