

# Speech-Language Pathology

SERVICES IN THE HOME

(EARLY INTERVENTION)

**Speech-language pathologists (SLPs)** work with **children** in their homes on communication and feeding/swallowing skills.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Early Intervention (EI) is available in every state and in the District of Columbia under federal law—often at **no or low cost to families and caregivers.**



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### (EARLY INTERVENTION)



#### WHO:

SLPs work with children ages birth to 3 and their families. In some states, early intervention (EI) programs may continue until a child is 5 years old.

#### WHAT:

SLPs support families and caregivers in helping young children with their:

- **speech and language skills** (e.g., gesturing, talking, listening, understanding);
- **cognitive skills** (thinking, learning, problem solving);
- **social-emotional skills** (playing, understanding feelings, making friends);
- **early reading and writing skills** (e.g., recognizing sounds and words, connecting pictures to words); and
- **feeding and swallowing skills** (e.g., improving how well they can suck from a bottle or drink from a cup, helping them chew foods).

EI services support the beliefs and customs of families and caregivers—in the language that the family is most comfortable using.

#### WHERE:

SLPs may come to a child's home—or to another location in their natural environment, like the child's daycare or even a park—to provide services.

#### HOW:

Families/caregivers who are concerned about their child's development may contact their local EI program directly to ask for an evaluation. **Families and caregivers do not need a referral.**

- **Families and caregivers can connect with their local program** by asking their child's pediatrician, child care provider, or teacher; calling their state's department of health or education; or searching online for the [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#) or [Parent Training and Information Center](#).
- **If a child qualifies for services**, an EI team writes an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that defines goals for the child and family/caregivers to meet—along with the services and supports that will be provided. Qualification is based on the evaluation of the child's developmental skills—not income.
- **A child's progress toward their goal(s) is measured by the IFSP team**, which includes the family and caregivers. This helps determine whether services will continue or change—or, if a child has made sufficient progress, when they can end.

#### WHY:

A lot happens in the first few years of life. For children who are not meeting their expected milestones, **getting help from an SLP early can make a big difference—setting them on a path to academic, social, and life success.**