



Dear Families, Caregivers and Providers,

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit Early Intervention (CAIU EI) program provides special education services to children from age 3 years until Kindergarten entry. Our program is frequently referred to as “preschool”. The CAIU EI program provides only special education services for preschool-age children with eligible delays. Eligibility is determined based on federal and state guidelines through an evaluation process that results in an Evaluation Report (ER).

Eligible children have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed. Children may be in need of services such as special instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy. Our EI 3-5 years program provides these services in locations where the family has their child participate, such as at home, or in the community at daycare or community preschool programs, including Head Start and Pre-K Counts. Some children may receive services in other environments such as early childhood special education classrooms or service provider locations. Our program does not provide a “preschool” classroom for every eligible child.

Similarities between Early Intervention 0-3 years and Early Intervention 3-5 years programs include:

EI 0-3 Years & EI 3-5 Years	
Regulated by OCDEL* at state level	
Provide special services to young children for eligible delays/needs	
Utilize coaching and collaboration with all members of the team to provide intervention	
Determine services based on individual needs of child	
Provide services on identified needs, not a specific diagnosis (although services can only be provided if there is a EI diagnosis)	
Provide services where the child is during a typical day	
Conduct comprehensive multi-disciplinary evaluations	
Support child’s participation in typical routines of family and community life	

*Office of Child Development and Early Learning in Pennsylvania

Differences between Early Intervention 0-3 years and Early Intervention 3-5 years programs are:

EI 0-3 years	EI 3-5 years
Regulated by IDEA* Part C at federal level	Regulated by IDEA* Part B at federal level
Follow a 12 months/year calendar	Follow a “stretch” calendar, equivalent to a school year over 12 months
“Natural” environment: home or early childhood environment (community daycare or preschool)	“Least restrictive” environment: home, early childhood environment (community daycare or preschool), service at a CAIU provider location, early childhood special education environment, approved private school, residential school/facility

Documentation: ER and IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan)	Documentation: ER and IEP (Individualized Education Plan)
Age Range: birth – 3 rd birthday	Age Range: 3 rd birthday – kindergarten entry
Eligibility: at least a 25% delay in one or more areas of development OR by informed clinical opinion of a professional OR by a diagnosis of a known medical condition with a high probability for developmental delays	Eligibility: at least a 25% delay in one or more areas of development OR a diagnosed medical or physical disability AND a need for special education and related services

*Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As we look to the future, the CAIU EI Program will continue to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of our population in the most effective ways possible. We look forward to working together towards this goal.

Sincerely,

The CAIU Early Intervention Program

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