# WHAT IS EARLY START?

A statewide interagency system of coordinated early intervention services for infants and toddlers with or at risk for disabilities or developmental delay and their families. Regional Centers are open and accepting referrals for Early Start during COVID-19. If you suspect that an infant or toddler has a developmental delay or atypical development then:

#### Screen



A child may be eligible for early intervention services if they:

- Show a developmental delay in one or more areas of cognitive, communication, social or emotional, adaptive, or physical and motor development, including vision or hearing;
- · Have an established risk condition of known etiology, with a high probability of resulting in delayed development; or
- Are considered at high risk of having a substantial developmental disability due to a combination of biomedical risk factors that are diagnosed by qualified personnel.

#### Refer



- Local Regional Centers https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc
- Local Educational Agency http://www.cde.ca.gov/ sp/se (for children with solely low incidence visual, hearing, and orthopedic disabilities)
- Within 45 days, the regional center or local educational agency will:
  - Assign a Service Coordinator
- Obtain parental consent
- Schedule & complete evaluations
- Develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to develop strengths and services
- Provide services in home or community setting
- Go to https://www.dds. ca.gov/services/early-start/ what-is-early-start to learn more about the referral process.

## **Get Involved**



- Collaborate with community
- · Participate via conference call;
- · Attend IFSP meetings; or

resources in treatment

planning by providing

written communication;

- · Provide input and receive feedback from the assessment team.
- You can be the link between families and the early intervention process! For information about family support, go to the Family Resource Centers website http://www.frcnca.org

## **See Results**



- · Studies found that children who participate in highquality early intervention/ early childhood development programs tend to have
- Less need for special education and other specialized services;
- Greater language abilities:
- Improved nutrition and health: and
- Experienced less child abuse and neglect.







For more information and/or questions regarding Early Start referrals, please contact the Early Start BabyLine at 1-800-515-BABY or email EarlyStart@dds.ca.gov.