Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - Part C
Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program

PURPOSE

The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act – Part C Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program provides grants to states to develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system that provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through 2 years, and their families.

WHO RECEIVES FUNDING

All states participate voluntarily. Funds under this authority are received and administered by a lead agency appointed by the governor of the state, with the participation of a state interagency coordinating council also appointed by the governor.

ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED

Federal funds under this program are used for the planning, development, and implementation of a statewide system for the provision of early intervention services. Funds may also be used for the general expansion and improvement of early intervention services.

Infants and toddlers are eligible for this program if they have a developmental delay or a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. At state discretion, children who are at risk for developmental delay may also be included in the target population for the program.

Early intervention services for each eligible child and family are based on a multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment and determined by a written Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) developed by a multidisciplinary team which includes the parents. Services are available to each child and his or her family as stated in the IFSP.

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Since 1998, the national one day child count in Part C has increased by 86% with an increase of 17% in the last 5 years. However, federal funding for this program has declined in the last decade, despite widely accepted recognition of the importance of investing in high quality early intervention programs. Over the last decade, 20% of states have narrowed their eligibility criteria and states are increasingly enacting systems that charge families for services. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided an historic infusion of funding for Part C by doubling the program’s appropriation for FFY 2009. Unfortunately, with the expiration of ARRA funds, Part C programs are struggling to provide services and supports to children and families.