

Transition: Leaving *Early On*[®]



PART **3** OF THE *EARLY ON* GUIDEBOOK

This is Part 3 of the *Early On*[®] Guidebook. It introduces you to *Early On*. It gives details about how you can get help for your child. It explains how your family can be a part of the process. It lets you know what to expect while your child and family work with *Early On*.

As you go through this part of the guidebook, you will find underlined words. These are words commonly used in *Early On*. They are defined within the text the first time you see them, and/or you can find them in the Glossary at the end of the book.

You will also find **bold type** in this section. These are the rights that you have while working with *Early On*. There is also an *Early On Your Family Has Rights* brochure. This is a document for families that explains your rights while your family is in *Early On*. **Your local *Early On* contact will give it to you.**

PART

3

YOUR LOCAL *EARLY ON* CONTACT

For additional copies, contact the above *Early On* Coordinator.

Transition: Leaving Early On





When Will My Child Leave *Early On*?

Many children stay eligible for *Early On* until they turn three. At this age, *Early On* ends for every child. Your child's needs may then be met through other people and/or resources.

However, some children leave *Early On* before they turn three. This happens when:

- Children catch up to other children their age. When this happens, *Early On* will end because it is no longer needed.
- Families move and leave their current *Early On* team. They can choose to join a new *Early On* team in their new area (community, town, or city). Whether *Early On* ends or keeps going depends on what the family wants.
- Families feel they don't need *Early On* anymore. **You can start or stop *Early On* anytime you want.**

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What Happens When *Early On* Ends?

No matter what the reason is for leaving, there will be a time when you will transition out of *Early On*. Transition means leaving *Early On* to go to a new program, activity, or area (community, town, or city). Before you leave *Early On*, you and your team will make a transition plan. Your transition plan:

- Will help make leaving easier.
- Will list the next steps you will take to continue to support your child's development.
- Will include how the next steps will happen.

If you are leaving *Early On* because:

- your child has grown and caught up
- you are moving
- you feel you don't need *Early On* anymore

Early On can work with you to think about what you would like to have happen next for your child. You can make a transition plan. The transition plan can list the options you will look at as you make decisions about your next steps beyond *Early On*.

If you are leaving *Early On* because:

- your child is turning three

you and your *Early On* team will look at what should happen next for your child. Plans will be made for your transition from *Early On*. **This planning must start at least 90 days and no more than six months before your child's third birthday.**

If your child has been receiving special education services and needs these services to continue, your service coordinator will help you to contact your local school district and send them information on your child's abilities and services. The school district will work with you and *Early On* to see if your child is eligible for preschool special education services, and if so, what services are appropriate.

If your child is not eligible for preschool special education, your service coordinator will work with you to identify other options that may be appropriate for you and your child.

There are choices for children leaving *Early On* at age three, whether or not the child receives special education preschool services. Some children will go to:

- A private or church preschool.
- Head Start.
- Other activities near their home.

Some of these children will keep some of the same supports and services (such as special education services) that were listed on their Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). These supports and services may link to the program or activity they attend.

Where children go and what they do when *Early On* ends is individualized. Individualized means it is about you and your child's unique situation and needs. It is individualized because each family and child is different.

Early On will ask if you would like to hold a transition conference (a meeting to plan your child's transition). This is your choice. If you choose to do so, your team will bring everyone together (from your *Early On* team and your new program or activity) at a time and place convenient to you. If you choose to not hold a transition planning conference, you will work with your service coordinator. In either case you will create a transition plan. Your plan will include:

- What you want next and how it could happen.
- Ways to help your child get ready for changes. This includes steps to help your child adjust to and learn in a new setting.
- What you want to happen to your record (including your IFSP). Your record can be given to the new program or activity. **No one in *Early On* can share your information with anyone else without your written consent.**
- The who, what, where, and when of any actions you choose.

Whether you leave *Early On* earlier or at age three, your team must talk to you about your *Early On* record. You can choose what happens to your papers and plans when you leave *Early On*. You and your team will list, on your transition plan, what you want to do with your *Early On* record.

- You might choose to have part or all of your record sent to a new program, activity, or area.
- You also might choose to have your record “destroyed.” This means taking out all personal information (like your child’s name, address, and date of birth).

When our daughter was almost two, we started thinking about what came next. Our older kids went to our church preschool, so that’s what we wanted for her, too. We made plans to get the teacher access to people and information she needed to help make preschool a success for all of us.

— Dad of a three-year-old

You may have mixed feelings about leaving *Early On*. You may miss the people who have been helping you, or you may feel unsure of what to do or expect next.

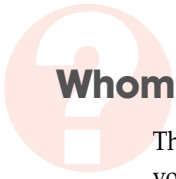
The good thing is that you're more prepared to help your child in the coming years.

You've learned a lot about the activities, supports, and services in your community. You've learned a lot about your child and yourself. Your time in *Early On* has helped to prepare you to work with others and as a team. You will always have these skills and the know-how from your time in *Early On*.

You may even feel ready to help others. There are new families in *Early On* all the time. You may share your experiences and learning with them.

Be sure to read the other parts of the guidebook to learn more about your time in *Early On*.

- **Part 1: Welcome to *Early On***
- **Part 2: Our Individualized Family Service Plan**
- **Part 4: *Early On* Family Rights**



Whom Can I Call With Questions?

There are many people and places you can call that can give you help and information.

- ☎ You can call your service coordinator. His or her name and phone number are on your IFSP. You can also find them in the front of this guidebook. Your service coordinator will try to answer your questions and help you find answers. He or she can also help you work out problems.
- ☎ In each area, *Early On* has a person in charge called the Early On Coordinator. You can get your local *Early On* Coordinator's name and phone number from your service coordinator, or you can call 1-800-EARLY ON (1-800-327-5966).
- ☎ *Early On* has Local Interagency Coordinating Councils (LICCs). These are found in each county or counties. LICCs make sure *Early On* is meeting the needs of children and families. Your service coordinator or *Early On* Coordinator can share more about your LICC.

We asked our service coordinator to help us find other parents we could talk to. We wanted more information on what they had decided for their children and how we could do things too.

— Parents of a three-year-old

- ☎ Parents on the LICC get a lot of information that they can share. You may want to talk to one of them. You can also join the LICC if you wish. It is another way to learn, and you can help make choices about *Early On* for your area. Your service coordinator or *Early On* Coordinator can help you contact the parents on your LICC.
- ☎ You can talk to families who are in *Early On*. They may have good information to share and can be a support to you. Ask your service coordinator to share your name with other families.
- ☎ You can contact support groups and advocacy organizations. Ask your service coordinator for information on support groups and advocacy organizations.
- ☎ If you have any questions, look at the *Early On* Family Rights guidebook part 4 or the *Your Family Has Rights* brochure. If you didn't receive copies, ask your service coordinator.
- ☎ You can call 1-800-EARLY ON (1-800-327-5966). This is a free phone call in Michigan. This phone is answered by people who can help with answers and help you figure out other places to call. Additional information about *Early On* is also available at www.1800earlyon.org.
- ☎ You can receive information about being in *Early On* by calling the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services at (517) 373-8483.



Process Check

This Process Check is to help you follow the steps in the *Early On* process. Use this Process Check to be sure each step is done.

- Our *Early On* team talked with us about our Early On record. We chose what happened to those papers and plans when we left *Early On*.
- If our child left *Early On* at three years of age, we began planning the transition at least 90 days before the third birthday.
- Our *Early On* team asked us if we wanted a transition conference. This was our choice. If we chose to do so, our *Early On* team brought everyone together (from our *Early On* team and the new program or activity).
- When it was time for our child and family to leave *Early On*, our *Early On* team wrote a transition plan. The transition plan listed the next steps we will take to continue to support our child's development. The plan also included how the next steps will happen.
- We asked questions. We made sure we understood what was said. We made sure we knew what was going to happen for our child and family.

If any of these steps did not happen, talk to your service coordinator. You can also look at the *Early On Family Rights* guidebook part 4 or the *Early On Your Family Has Rights* brochure.

Activities: The things a family does day-to-day or programs where children can play and learn with others.

Advocacy Organizations: Groups that can help families understand their rights. They can also speak or act on a family's behalf.

Early On: Michigan's system of early intervention. It is not one single "program." It's a collection of activities, supports, services, and resources provided by many programs.

Early On Coordinator: A person in charge of *Early On* in a local county or counties.

Early On Your Family Has Rights Brochure: A document for families that explains their rights while working with *Early On*.

Early On Record: All the papers and plans from your time in *Early On*. It is also all the information you gave and that was gathered from others.

Early On Team: A team that includes the parents and the service coordinator. It also includes people who provide services. Everyone will work together to support the growth and learning of a child.

Eligible: When a child qualifies to receive supports and services from *Early On*. To be eligible for *Early On*, your child must have a developmental delay. Your child may also be eligible if he or she has a health issue that is likely to lead to a developmental delay.

Individualized: It is about you and your child's own life and needs. Every child and family is different.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A written plan of action that guides everything a child and family will do while involved with *Early On*. It lists what activities, supports, and services are needed by the child and family.

Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC): A group of professionals and parents from an area who suggest how *Early On* should be run. An LICC can be found in each county or counties.

Michigan Department of Education: The unit that oversees *Early On* in all intermediate and local school districts around Michigan. *Early On* funding comes through the Michigan Department of Education.

Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services: A division in the Michigan Department of Education. It specifically oversees programs for early childhood from birth to six years of age and *Early On* Michigan.

Parent: Any person responsible for the care and well-being of a child. It could include birth parents, adoptive parents, single parents, guardians, grandparents, or foster parents.

Service Coordinator: The family's main contact in *Early On*. This person supports and assists the family the entire time they are in *Early On*. He or she knows about and has worked with children with developmental delays.

Services: A specialized form of support from a trained professional who works with you to help you learn how to support the development of your child.

Support Groups: Groups who meet to support each other.

Supports: Help, resources, or information.

Transition: When a child and family leaves *Early On* to go to a new program, activity, or area.

Transition Conference: A meeting to plan your child's transition.

Transition Plan: This plan lists the next steps. It also includes how the next steps will happen. If your child is leaving *Early On* at age three, this plan must be made at least 90 days before your child's third birthday.



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Understanding This Guidebook

If you need help reading or understanding the contents of this guidebook,
please contact 1-800-EARLY ON (1-800-327-5966).

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STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW

The Michigan Department of Education complies with all
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