



What is Early Childhood Intervention?

Bragg Creek Education Services Association (BCESA)

The Early Years, Birth to Age 6

These are an extremely important time for healthy growth and development. This is when a child's brain and body are developing at a rapid rate. Children grow and develop at different rates, making each child unique. Parents and care givers may notice delays or differences in children when compared to developmental milestone guidelines or that set them apart from their peers (children of similar age). This can be worrisome for parents.

What is Early Childhood Programming?

Bragg Creek Education Services Association (BCESA) partners with various schools and day cares to administer funding for children who qualify. We collaborate with sites to provide services to children and their families such as speech, language, occupational, physical and behavioural therapy.

Why bother with an Early Childhood Screen anyway?

This Early Childhood "check-up" (like taking your child to the doctor, an eye check-up and the dentist) is an important first step to detect developmental delays, health concerns, or disabilities. Seeking out help early is better than the "see if they grow out of it" approach. Research indicates that early intervention is very effective in supporting a child's overall development in; learning, regulation, readiness for school, and play and social skills.

Early intervention is a collaborative process aimed at helping children grow and develop along with their families and extended support systems (i.e. day homes/daycare, teachers, extended family). Alberta Education provides Early Childhood funding for 3-5 year olds to support these formative years.

What is Developmental Screening?

In August/September, parents of all children 4 years of age who are starting their Pre-Kindergarten year are invited to fill out consent forms allowing their child to be screened by an SLP (Speech Language Pathologist) and/or an OT (Occupational Therapist). Parents of children who are 3 years of age who are identified by a parent, provider or teacher as having significant delays (or are not meeting developmental milestones as expected) are also encouraged to fill out a consent form for screening.

Children participate in free 15-minute screens with an SLP and/or an OT to measure and assess their communication and fine motor skills development. Children who require further assessment or supports are identified and parents are contacted with next steps in the process. **Parents may withdraw at any time.**

What is a Speech & Language screen/assessment?

Bragg Creek Education Services Association

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An SLP will assess development in communication speech sounds, expressive language [vocabulary], grammar, fluency, sentence length), language comprehension (following directions, answering questions), stuttering, voice, social, and play skills (greet, engage with adults and peers, turn-taking).

What is an Occupational Therapy screen/assessment?

The OT will screen a child's fine motor skills (upper body strength, coordination, grasping, dexterity, use of 2 hands together) and school readiness activities such as drawing/coloring/cutting. Self-regulation skills will also be observed during the screening i.e. attention, focus, emotional and impulse control, organization, following instructions, and transitioning between activities. Should delays be identified, the OT may also later assess daily living activities such as: self-care (feeding, dressing, toileting), productivity (play, learning, growing), and leisure (recreational activities, hobbies).

How is a screening booked?

Complete the SLP and OT consent forms and attach a copy of your child's Birth Certificate. Check with your classroom Teacher or day home provider for screening dates schedules.

*If you are not contacted about booking a screening, email BCESA's administrator, Catherine Watson at admin@thelittleschoolhouse.ca or call 403.949.3939. Screens will be booked and completed during September to meet the **Sept. 30 deadline** for full funding. Late screening may occur up to January for pro-rated funding. Parents can withdraw from the process (in writing) at any time throughout the year. If a child qualifies for funding, parents will be contacted by a therapist. To proceed in the process, parents will need to complete a Funding Application form with BCESA. In order to receive funding a child must be attending one of BCESA's sites consistently for the entire school year where they participate in Educational programming provided by the playschool teacher/Ed Consultant /therapists/provider.

How is Early Intervention funded?

If a delay is found, Alberta Education provides funding to help children be prepared for Kindergarten and Grade 1. Screens and programming are provided free to parents if their child is consistently attending a play/preschool or Play Days day home for the school year, parental consent is provided, teacher/provider is on board and educational programming occurs at the site.

Alberta Education (AB ED) funding is either:

- ***Mild & Moderate (M&M)**: Up to two years, Pre-K year (4 years old) and Kindergarten year, or
- ***Program Unit Funding (PUF)**: Available for severe delays for up to three years for 3-5 year olds (2 years of play/preschool and 1 year in Kindergarten year).

An **IPP (Individual Program Plan)** will be developed for each child with Mild & Moderate or PUF funding and programming outlining the child's background, strengths, areas for growth, recommended strategies, and updates over the year. Parents sign and receive a copy mid-year and a Final Copy in the spring. Team meetings with parents occur three times per year for PUF funded children.