

Comparing Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Services

	Early Intervention	Special Education
Governing federal laws	Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004).	Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004).
Ages for services	Birth through 3	3 through 21
Goal of the program	Helping the family meet the developmental needs of their child with a delay or disability.	A team of professionals completes an evaluation in the area(s) of suspected disability.
Evaluation	Two or more professionals from different disciplines complete a developmental evaluation of all five areas of development.	A team of professionals completes an evaluation in the area(s) of suspected disability.
Eligibility	A child must have 30 percent delay in one area of development or documented medical condition, as determined by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.	A child is found eligible using one of the eligibility categories for special education and related services.
Service delivery model	Parents and caregivers enroll their child in EL services. The type(s), frequency, location and duration of services, including individuals providing services, are determined through the IESP process.	Local education agencies (LEAs) are required to provide special education and related services to eligible individuals, ages 3 through 21 years. Services are determined by the IEP team.
Family involvement	Families must be involved in the process to develop the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).	Parents must be a member of any team (e.g. planning and placement) that makes decisions regarding the education of their child.