

Regional Center of the East Bay Prevention Plan

The Prevention Program at Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB) is based on trailer bill language ABX4, enacted in the Budget Act of 2009. It is intended for infants and toddlers from birth through 35 months of age who meet criteria indicating that they are at high risk for a developmental disability, or that they have a delay of between 33% and 49% in one area of development. These eligible children will be provided with intake, assessment, monitoring, education and case management, which includes referral to community services.

The primary contact for this program at Regional Center of the East Bay is the Associate Director of Infant and Young Children's Services. She will have overall responsibility for the Prevention Program in addition to her responsibilities for RCEB's Early Start Program.

The goals of the Prevention Program are to fully assess the potential for developmental delays for those children who are determined eligible for the program, to determine appropriate avenues of prevention and to enable an eligible child to reach the highest possible developmental potential via intensive developmental monitoring, family education and training, referrals to generic resources and actions taken by the family. It is intended that the Prevention Program staff follow closely the development of each child so that should developmental levels not progress as expected, the child can be assessed for eligibility for Early Start (via LEA or RC), other regional center services or other community programs.

Research has shown that the interactions children have with their parents and other caregivers in the first years of life have a powerful lifelong influence on their development. RCEB's prevention staff will assist parents in building positive relationships with their infant or toddler by providing developmental information tailored specifically to their child's needs. Regional Center of the East Bay will build on the strength of the family system by ensuring that parents have knowledge of available programs/activities provided by generic agencies within their community. RCEB will provide referral information, guidance and support in accessing these resources.

RCEB will provide funds to our local Family Resource Centers, Family Resource Network (FRN) in Alameda County and CARE Parent Network in Contra Costa County, to enhance their ability to serve eligible Prevention Program children. They will take a strong supportive role in providing information, parent classes on specific topics, developmental tool kits, and parent to parent support for families throughout each child's eligibility in the Prevention program.

RCEB has worked collaboratively with First Five in Alameda County and has received written confirmation of funding for focused service needs (for insurance coordination and play groups) within the Prevention Program. Although a final budget has not yet been determined we anticipate funding of approximately \$80,000 to enhance these services.

Intake and Assessment

All infants/toddlers under the age of 36 months will have a single point of entry for services through the Regional Center of the East Bay. All referrals for both Early Start and the Prevention Program will go through the dedicated telephone line for Early Start for eligibility determination.

The single most important factor in ensuring a positive assessment experience is a strong collaborative relationship between specialists and family members. Children will be assessed for eligibility using information obtained from parents, referral sources, medical records and assessments, including developmental assessments provided by qualified professionals. All children will receive a comprehensive evaluation in five developmental areas (communication, cognition, social emotional, self help/adaptive and physical) with further specialty assessments based on identified need. The eligibility determination is completed by a multidisciplinary team

and each individual accepted into the Prevention Program will receive a summary of findings and recommendations from this team.

Eligibility

An infant/toddler is eligible for the Prevention Program when:

1. It is determined that an infant/toddler has a combination of two or more of the following factors:
 - (a) Prematurity of less than 32 weeks gestation and/or low birth weight of less than 1500 grams
 - (b) Assistive ventilation for 48 hours or longer during the first 28 days of life
 - (c) Small for gestational age: below the third percentile on the National Center for Health Statistics growth charts
 - (d) Asphyxia neo natorum associated with a 5 minute apgar score of 0 to 5
 - (e) Severe and persistent metabolic abnormality, including but not limited to, hypoglycemia, acidemia and hyperbilirubinemia in excess of the usual exchange transfusion level
 - (f) Neonatal seizures or nonfebrile seizures during the first three years of life
 - (g) Central nervous system lesion or abnormality
 - (h) Central nervous system infections
 - (i) Biomedical insult including, but not limited to, injury, accident or illness which may seriously or permanently effect developmental outcome
 - (j) Multiple or congenital anomalies or genetic disorders which may effect developmental outcomes
 - (k) Prenatal exposure to known teratogens
 - (l) Prenatal substance exposure, positive infant neonatal toxicology screen or systematic neonatal toxicity or withdrawal
 - (m) Clinically significant failure to thrive, including, but not limited to, weight persistently below the third percentile for age on standard growth charts or less than 85% of the ideal weight for age and/or acute weight loss or failure to gain weight with the loss of 2 or more major percentiles on the growth curve
 - (n) Persistent hypo or hypertonia, beyond that otherwise associated with a known diagnostic condition
2. High risk for a developmental disability also exists when a regional center determines that the parent of an infant/toddler is a person with developmental disabilities
3. A toddler is eligible for the Prevention Program when RCEB determines that a toddler is between the age of 24 and 34 months and has a developmental delay in one domain of 33% through 49%. The developmental domains that a regional center must consider are communication, cognition, social emotional, self help/adaptive and physical.

Appeal for Denial of Eligibility

When it is determined that a child is not eligible for the Prevention Program, RCEB will provide the family or legally responsible person with a written notice of the denial of eligibility. The written notice will provide information regarding the appeal process and include the reason for denial and a copy of the eligibility factors.

The family can appeal a denial of eligibility for the Prevention Program by submitting a written request to the Executive Director of RCEB stating the reason for disagreement and including any additional information that supports their position. RCEB will convene a review panel consisting of one RCEB clinician, an Early Intervention supervisor or manager, and one external person selected by the Executive Director of RCEB. This panel shall not include any of the RCEB staff who directly participated in the original eligibility determination. Upon review of available information including the information provided by the family, RCEB will issue a written decision within 30 days of receipt of the family's written request for appeal. The decision from RCEB will be final.

Prevention Program Case Management

RCEB believes that good case management is the heart of the Prevention Program and that it is a crucial component in ensuring that children and families are effectively served through this critical period of a child's life.

It is estimated that the Prevention Program will have between 5 and 6 Prevention Case Managers to be supervised by a Prevention/EI Supervisor. Oversight for the Prevention Program will be provided by the Associate Director for Infant and Young Children's Services. The case load size will be 45 consumers to 1 Prevention Case Manager. Clinical direction for the Prevention Case Managers will be provided by RCEB clinical staff (physician, psychologist and specialized consultants including a nurse, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist). Additionally there will be secretarial and accounting staff to provide administrative support. Other personnel will provide generic resource development and training as needed. The Family Resource Network, Alameda County First Five, and CARE will also provide assistance to families in this program.

Well supported and knowledgeable staff are essential to growing supportive and positive relationships with families. Prevention case managers will have substantial knowledge of child development and expertise in identifying generic programs available to eligible children in the Regional Center of the East Bay service area, in addition to meeting minimum established requirements for service coordination (see attached job qualifications for case management). Prevention case managers will be competent in the use of developmental screening tools (such as the ASQ® Screening Tool and/or other similar instruments), have the skills to recognize developmental red flags and demonstrate knowledge sufficient to provide developmental education and guidance to families.

Once eligible for the Prevention Program, each child & family will be assigned a Prevention Case Manager. The Prevention Case Manager will ensure that families are an integral part of the planning process and participate fully in the development of a Prevention Program Plan (PPP). The Prevention Program Plan will contain:

1. Factors supporting eligibility for the Prevention Program
2. Date of the PPP development
3. Name of the Prevention Case Manager
4. Frequency that contact will be made (at a minimum each family will be contacted within 90 days after development of the PPP and every six months thereafter)
5. Identification of resources for referral
6. Type and frequency of monitoring and screening to occur
7. Type of assessment
8. Referrals to be made to community resources or intervention services, as appropriate
9. Additional services the child will receive.

The RCEB service area is one of the most ethnically diverse in the state of California. We have a strong commitment to respecting cultural preferences and/or values, including providing bicultural/bilingual case management to consumers and families. The Prevention Program will give consideration to the cultural preference, values and particular family lifestyle when providing resource information, developmental activities, and educational materials to families. An Early Start case manager may be assigned to a family instead of a Prevention case manager if there is an identified need for bicultural/bilingual case management that is not available within the Prevention Program. In that situation the Prevention Supervisor will provide support to ensure that the Prevention Program guidelines are followed for the particular child and family.

The Prevention case manager will provide emotional support and guidance to families as it pertains to early childhood development. They will help to identify strengths within the family and provide information about ways families can enhance and create natural learning opportunities in

the home and community for their child. They will also assist families with coordination among public and private systems such as education, medical services and First Five.

The Prevention case manager will provide periodic developmental monitoring using information received from the medical provider and other medical/developmental resources (Neonatal follow-up, First Five, CCS, etc.) If developmental information is not available through another source RCEB will conduct periodic developmental screening according to the frequency identified in the individualized Prevention Plan using Ages and Stages and/or other appropriate instruments. The Prevention case manager will make periodic calls and home visits to monitor the child's developmental progress and to determine whether further evaluation is needed, will obtain those evaluations, will provide information on promoting development and will follow-up on referrals to generic agencies. The Prevention case manager will also assist the family in obtaining services from generic agencies.

The Prevention Program provided by RCEB will include supporting the family to obtain necessary information to:

1. Understand their child's current development, promote a supportive developmental environment and recognize other indicators that further developmental assessment is needed;
2. Find or link with community resources that assist eligible children and their families, including general opportunities open to all children;
3. Develop effective family advocacy strategies
4. Connect with other parents of eligible children

Clinical staff at RCEB will collaborate in assessing the developmental status of the child, in providing education and in determining which generic programs can be most helpful to the child and how they can work best to assist the child. It is also expected that the Prevention case manager may consult with the clinical staff in facilitating communication with generic programs or in reviewing developmental monitoring results to determine next steps with the child/family. Families may have access to periodic direct consultation with specialists to the extent that funds are available to do so.

Purchase of Direct Services

Direct Services shall not be purchased through the Prevention Program unless generic services have first been pursued and determined to be unavailable or inappropriate and sufficient funds are available within the constraints of the allotted funds for the Prevention Program. Decisions regarding purchase of direct services (i.e., consultation time) will be reviewed, prioritized, and authorized by the Associate Director of Infant and Young Children's Services, the Director of Consumer Services, and the Director of Finance and Administration. It is expected that purchases of Direct Services will be extremely limited.

Proposed Collaborative Activities with other Public and Private Agencies Offering Services to Prevention Program Children

Coordination among agencies, providers and disciplines create early care systems that are cost effective, comprehensive, cohesive and easily accessed. Relevant generic services in the RCEB service area with which RCEB intends to collaborate for the Prevention Program include the following:

1. Local NICU Follow-up Programs
2. The Local First Five services (developmental play groups)
3. Local mental health agencies (such as the SEED program)
4. Local agencies of the Early Head Start Program
5. Parks and Recreation programs in the RCEB area, including "Mommy and Me" and social interaction programs
6. Local learning and activities/training classes

RCEB has a long history of working effectively with the agencies described above and is familiar with the types and quality of service provided. In addition, RCEB will seek to form new relationships with organizations related to early childhood development.

Program Transfers

Should the developmental status of a child in the Prevention Program change and it is determined that the child is most likely manifesting a delay or disability, the Prevention case manager will immediately facilitate a referral for eligibility determination for Early Start services, the Local Education Agency (LEA), or for general regional center services(Lanterman Act). RCEB staff will make every effort to support the family in this transition process,

Once eligibility is confirmed for Early Start services, for the LEA, or for regional center services under Lanterman, a new case manager will be assigned to the child. The Prevention case manager shall attend the initial planning meeting (with parental consent) to assist in making the transfer as seamless as possible.

Transfers to other Regional Centers

If an individual in the Prevention Program at Regional Center of the East Bay moves, requiring transfer to another regional center, procedures will be followed to affect the transfer as for any other service program. It is the intent of Regional Center of the East Bay to make the transfer as smooth as possible and to work with the family to give them information they will need for the transfer. With permission of the family, Prevention Program staff will make contact with the new Regional Center and forward information they will need to continue providing Service Coordination and to effect new referrals to generic agencies in the new Regional Center area. However no money will be transferred from Regional Center of the East Bay to cover the costs of providing the Prevention Program at the new center.

Data Tracking

RCEB will track infants and toddlers served in the Prevention Program using existing data systems (SANDIS/Early Start Report) adapted as needed for this Program by DDS. The following data will be tracked:

1. Prevention Program entry and exit date;
2. Factors qualifying the infant or toddler for entry into and exit from the Prevention Program;
3. Referral source;
4. Purchase of Service (POS) if provided;
5. Generic services to which the family has been referred;
6. Transition data, including final developmental information, for transitions such as to the Early Start Program, Lanterman Act Program, or LEA services or complete exit from the regional center service delivery.

RCEB's Prevention Plan will be updated annually as required by the Department of Developmental Services.

All expenses attributable to the Prevention Program will be claimed in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined by DDS. Expenses and claims will be carefully monitored to ensure that they do not exceed the Prevention Program Block Grant.