

Early Start Autism Intervention Program ESAIP



Early Start Autism Intervention Program (ESAIP) is a VMRC service available to Early Start children (under the age of 3) who are diagnosed with Autism, who have been identified as at risk for receiving the diagnosis, or who have behavioral needs requiring more intensive intervention.

ESAIP provides behavioral intervention in a small quiet area in the child's home or day-care environment. Service providers utilize behavioral principles (ABA) to teach a number of pivotal skills which are often limited in children with autism through structured learning trials called "discrete trials." Skills are taught daily and repeated in a very systematic manner until the child has mastered the skill.

During the first 30 days a diagnostic assessment that includes up to 6 hours per week of intervention is conducted. After the diagnostic assessment is completed the IFSP team meets to determine whether ESAIP is an appropriate intervention to meet the child's needs. If the team determines ESAIP intervention is appropriate, program hours are defined and specific goals based on the child's individual needs are developed. Skills taught are individualized to address each child's deficits. Targeted areas may include, but are not limited to, eye contact, play skills, imitation, interaction skills, attention span, comprehension, vocabulary, speech intelligibility, basic conversational skills, preschool readiness, and tolerance of various common sounds and textures s/he may have trouble with.

Several different behavioral therapists may be assigned to each child's team. Sessions are conducted in a naturalized one-on-one environment with the child, and will range from 2-3 hours per day (with frequent breaks and play time given through out) for 4-5 days a week; sessions are usually conducted at a consistent time.

Parent training is an important component of this program and is integrated in various ways by the service provider.

To learn more about ESAIP, please contact your service coordinator directly.