

HELP ME GROW EARLY INTERVENTION

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Revised SFY25 Q4



**Department of
Children & Youth**

Help Me Grow Early Intervention

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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to provide Help Me Grow Early Intervention (EI) service coordination agencies, along with Help Me Grow Central Intake & Referral (CIR), with foundational messaging, templates, and resources to be able to consistently raise awareness and build outreach efforts for EI services across the state. This toolkit is organized in three sections:

1. Awareness Building & Outreach Materials
2. Marketing & Communications
3. Peer-to-Peer Learning & Collaboration

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit is designed for Help Me Grow Early Intervention service coordination agencies and Help Me Grow Central Intake & Referral. Whether your agency has a dedicated marketing/communications position or not, the resources are designed to provide you with a framework and allow for flexibility as you customize your communications efforts to your community and stakeholders.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS TOOLKIT?

- Key messaging framework and audience-specific messages
- Examples of family and provider referral materials
- Ideas for promotional products
- Launching a local advertising and media relations campaign
 - Sample Public Service Announcement (PSA)
 - Sample print ads – color and black/white
 - Sample billboard ads
 - Sample social media content and graphics
 - Sample press release
 - Sample blog post/newsletter article
 - Tips for working with the media
- Ideas for supporting peer-to-peer collaboration
 - Family peer networks
 - Professional peer networks
 - Parent/family events
 - Local provider agency/organization collaboration

WHAT HAS BEEN CHANGED IN THIS EDITION OF THE TOOLKIT?

- Ohio's *Heart of it All* branding
- Audience-specific messages
- Key messaging framework content
- Additional materials about specific developmental delays, elevated blood lead levels (EBLL), neonatal abstinence or opioid withdrawal syndromes (NAS/NOWS), and hearing loss.

HOW TO ACCESS THE RESOURCES

To access all of the resources and templates in this toolkit, go to www.helpmegrow.org/EIToolkit. You will also find a webinar offering an overview of the toolkit and an order form for promotional materials.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about the resources in this toolkit, please contact communications@helpmegrow.org and a member of the CIR marketing and communications team will respond.

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE

The objective for this campaign is to increase public awareness and outreach efforts within local communities about Help Me Grow Early Intervention (EI) services and initiatives, including the referral process.

SUCCESS METRICS

Public Awareness

- Increase in EI website traffic (visits, downloads, etc.)
- Increase in social media engagement
- Secure positive media coverage

Outreach

- Increase in the number of referrals
- Increase in percentage of referrals leading to eligibility
- Increase in attendance at local events
- Increase in number of local and regional partnerships

TARGET AUDIENCES

- Parents and families
- Early learning caregivers/providers (in-home and childcare centers)
- Physicians and other medical professionals

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure consistent use of the EI brand and messaging across Ohio, including recognizing Help Me Grow as the ‘umbrella’ system of supports.
2. Educate and empower families and early learning caregivers/providers to increase their comfort and confidence in making EI referrals.
3. Shift the ‘wait and see’ culture among physicians and other medical professionals and increase knowledge of the value of EI and how to make a referral to EI.
4. Enhance local service coordination agencies’ ability to collaborate to share stories, examples, and ideas about effective outreach efforts and impact.
5. Leverage local and regional partnerships to help disseminate information about EI and build brand champions/ambassadors.

AWARENESS BUILDING & OUTREACH MATERIALS

KEY MESSAGING AND AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC MESSAGES

Purpose: The message framework and audience-specific messages are designed to ensure consistency and continuity around how to communicate about what EI is, its benefits, and how to refer a child to EI.

Intended Audience: All of the messaging is designed for service coordination agencies and Help Me Grow Central Intake & Referral to use with parents/families, early learning caregivers/providers, and physicians and medical professionals.

Suggested Uses: The messaging can be integrated into all of your communications related to EI services, including your website, eNewsletters, blog posts, eblasts, social media, event promotions, presentations, etc.

Tagline: Concerned? Act early!

Topline Messages/Elevator Speech:

Early Intervention (EI) supports families of children birth to age three who have developmental delays or disabilities so they have the best possible start in life.

EI professionals support a child's family to identify strengths and needs and address concerns as early as possible. Services are provided where families live, play, and spend their day.

If you're concerned that a child may have a delay or disability, it's important to refer them for EI as soon as possible. You don't need to be a doctor or teacher to refer. All it takes is a simple phone call or completing a short form online. Developmental experts will determine if a child is eligible for services and will support the family in addressing the child's specific developmental, physical, social, and emotional needs.

Anyone can and should refer a family to EI if they have concerns that a child is experiencing a possible delay or disability. There is no need to "wait and see."

EI is part of the Help Me Grow system of supports.

SUPPORTING MESSAGES:

Providing EI services based on a child's and family's specific strengths and needs is critical to life-long success:

- Research shows that starting EI services early gives a child the best chance to learn and grow.
- Early support can reduce the need for services later in life. In fact, it is more cost effective to provide EI than to wait until the child is older.
- Every child is unique, and EI services are designed based on these specific needs.
- Parents and families are at the center of a child's development. That's why service coordinators and other service providers work closely with the family to help build their skills and confidence in supporting their child and to help them navigate the journey with their child.
- EI can address all types of concerns: some examples include physical development like crawling or walking, speech delays, or social interaction like playing with other children.
- EI is available in every part of the state and to any eligible child, regardless of the family's income.
- Because children learn best with familiar people and in familiar places, EI services are usually provided in the home or a community setting.
- In Ohio, the Early Intervention program fulfills the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C (Early Intervention program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities). The Department of Developmental Disabilities is the lead agency for Part C in Ohio.

Anyone can refer a child to EI—and the earlier the better:

- There is no “downside” to referring a child for EI services. Screening and eligibility determination are free.
- The first three years of a child’s life are the most important. 80% of a child’s brain is developed by age three. Because this is a critical time, parents, families, doctors, and others who are concerned about a child’s development should refer a child to EI as early as possible.
- EI services can be provided side-by-side with other services a family receives in their community. EI focuses on building skills with the family in places where the child already spends time, including at home, childcare, and in the community.
- EI services follow the child, so children in foster care or other placements can participate.

The referral process is simple:

- Anyone can refer a child to EI, and families can self-refer their child if they have concerns. You do not need to be a doctor or teacher to refer a child. All it takes is a simple phone call or filling out a short form online.
- After the referral is made, Help Me Grow will contact the family and connect them with an EI provider. Once assigned, that provider will walk the family through the eligibility process and determine the next steps.
- If the child is eligible for EI services, the family and their service coordinator will develop a plan to support the family on their journey to help their child get their best possible start in life.

AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC MESSAGES**Families**

- You know your child best. Talk to your child’s healthcare provider if you are concerned. If you still have concerns, contact EI. They can help determine if your child needs services or not.
- EI supports you and your child. EI is a partnership with families to support a child who has developmental delays or disabilities.
- Children learn best through everyday experiences and routines in places they know. You don’t have to travel for services or coordinate with different people. Your EI service coordinator and primary service provider support your child where you live, play, and spend your day.

For Medical Professionals

- EI services help address a child’s physical, social, emotional, and other developmental delays in the setting where the child lives, plays, and spends their days.
- EI services support parents and caregivers in understanding a child’s delay or disability.
- The earlier you refer a child, the better. This is a step that you can take as soon as you suspect a delay or disability. You can help the family ensure their child has services that support the best start in life.
- “Wait and see” does not provide peace of mind and is not an answer to a family’s concerns. The earlier you refer, the better. EI services can ONLY help a child.
- EI services are not the same as traditional clinical therapy. EI typically provides services in the child’s home or childcare setting, in the context of everyday routines, based on the family’s priorities.

Early Care and Education Caregivers/Providers

- You spend hours every day with children – and you are an expert.
- In your daily work, when you have concerns about a child’s development, the best thing you can do is discuss those concerns with your supervisor and refer the child to EI.
- The earlier you refer a child, the better. This is a step you can take as soon as you have concerns about a child’s development.
- By referring a family, you give them support and peace of mind that their child has the best start in life.
- It can be a hard conversation, but it is the best thing to do for the child and the family.
- Parents often see their Early Care and Education providers as an expert or resource. This means you are in the unique position of being able to see the child and help the family understand the benefits of EI.

For audiences concerned about lead exposure:

- If a child's blood lead level is five micrograms per deciliter or higher, they are automatically eligible for EI.
- EI supports families with children birth to age three who have elevated blood lead levels so they can have the best possible start in life.
- Any child with a confirmed elevated blood lead level of five micrograms per deciliter or greater or developmental concerns should be referred to EI right away.
- Families or healthcare providers can refer a child for EI. The process is simple.

EI can support families whose child(ren) have elevated blood lead levels by:

- Connecting the family to resources to get rid of lead and access safe housing;
- Supporting the family in improving a child's natural learning environment where the child lives and plays;
- Helping families manage their child's behaviors and physical health concerns;
- Supporting the child's healthy nutrition, hygiene, development, and learning needs; and
- Helping families find pre-K and special education services if their child needs them, or other services when the child transitions out of EI.

For audiences concerned about NAS/NOWS:

- In Ohio, a baby who has a confirmed diagnosis of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) or Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome (NOWS) is automatically eligible for EI.
- EI works with families with children birth to age three who have NAS/NOWS so they have the best possible start in life.
- If a baby has been diagnosed with NAS/NOWS, they should be referred to EI right away. Families or healthcare providers can refer a baby for EI. The process is simple.

EI can support families whose child(ren) have been diagnosed NAS/NOWS by:

- Helping with any concerns about the baby's development;
- Helping the family provide the best learning environment for their baby that fits in with the family's daily routines and activities;
- Supporting families through the challenges many babies born with NAS/NOWS have with feeding, learning, sleeping, and playing with others; and
- Connecting families to resources for mental health, medical care, and other supports and services.

For audiences concerned about specific developmental delays:

If a child is not meeting specific developmental milestones, they might be eligible for EI. Services are designed for each child's specific needs. Children can benefit from an early focus on development because:

- The early years are a critical time for children's brains and body development;
- Children can build skills to meet their unique development goals; and
- EI services can support parents and caregivers in understanding their child's development needs.

Movement/physical development

If your child isn't holding their head up, rolling, sitting, crawling, or walking at the same age as other children, you should talk to your child's doctor about your concerns and EI. EI supports children's movement/physical development by:

- Helping with a child's physical health, mobility (movement), and developmental needs;
- Building families' skills to support their child's movement/physical development;
- Supporting families in figuring out why their child's motor skills are delayed; and
- Adapting the home so the child has more ways to practice movement;
- Helping find preschool or other services after EI

Language/communication

If your child isn't making noises, babbling, or talking at the same age as other children, you should talk to your child's doctor about your concerns and EI. EI supports children's language/communication by:

- Supporting a child's language/communication developmental needs;
- Building families' skills to support their child's language/communication development;
- Supporting families in adapting their home so their child has more ways to practice language/communication skills; and
- Helping find preschool or other services after EI.

Social/emotional development

If you are concerned about how your child reacts, behaves, or plays with others, you should talk to your child's doctor about your concerns and EI. EI supports children's social/emotional development by:

- Helping with a child's social/emotional developmental needs;
- Building families' skills to support their child's social/emotional interactions;
- Supporting families in adapting their home so their child has more ways to practice positive social/emotional skills; and
- Helping find preschool or other services after EI.

For audiences concerned about hearing loss:

- In Ohio, all babies are screened for hearing loss when they are born, and a baby who has a confirmed diagnosis of hearing loss is automatically eligible for EI.
- EI works with families with children birth to age three who have hearing loss so they have the best possible start in life. Hearing loss can affect a child's ability to develop speech, language, and social skills.
- EI professionals, including specialized hearing service providers, support your family to identify strengths and needs and address concerns as early as possible, with services right where you live, play, and spend your day.

EI can support families whose child(ren) have hearing loss by:

- Helping you and your child learn to communicate;
- Helping your family provide the best learning environment for the baby that fits in with your family's daily routines and activities;
- Identifying resources and options to help address your child's hearing needs, such as a hearing aid or assistive technology to support development;
- Supporting your family through the challenges many babies born with hearing loss have with feeding, learning, sleeping, and playing with others;
- Building your skills to support your child's physical development and social/emotional interactions;
- Helping you find pre-K or other services and be an advocate when your child transitions out of EI; and
- Connecting with other parents with children experiencing hearing loss.

AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC REFERRAL MATERIALS

Available for download at www.helpmegrow.org/EIToolkit.

EI POSTER

Purpose: The EI poster provides easy-to-read information about how to make a referral.

Intended Audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers.

Suggested Uses: The EI Poster can be displayed on community bulletin boards and where families gather. Two versions are available, one of which can be customized.



EI FAMILY-FACING BROCHURE

Purpose: The EI Family Facing Brochure provides easy-to-read information about what EI is and how it supports children and families. It is available in English and Spanish.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers.

Suggested uses: The family-facing brochure can be:

- Uploaded to the parent/family section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to community organizations that serve parents/families
- Distributed by your staff at community events



EI DEVELOPMENTAL WHEEL

Purpose: This wheel is a helpful guide covering developmental milestones, including social and emotional, in young children. It can support families in monitoring their child's growth.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers.

Suggested uses: The developmental wheels can be:

- Distributed to community organizations that serve parents and families
- Distributed by your staff at community events



EI ROADMAP

Purpose: This roadmap guides both families and professionals through the Early Intervention process, from referral to service delivery.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers.

Suggested uses: The roadmap can be:

- Uploaded to the parent/family section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers



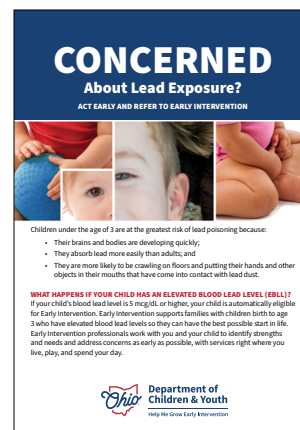
CONCERNED ABOUT LEAD EXPOSURE CARD

Purpose: This card provides easy-to-read information about the benefits of EI for children with elevated blood lead levels.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers concerned about elevated blood lead levels in young children.

Suggested uses: The Concerned about Lead Exposure card can be:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to physician offices/community health centers
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers
- Distributed to community organizations that serve parents/families, including physician offices, community health centers, childcare centers, etc.



CONCERNED ABOUT NAS/NOWS CARD

Purpose: This card provides easy-to-read information about the benefits of EI for children with NAS/NOWS.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals; Early Care and Education providers; parents, families, and other caregivers concerned about opioid-related syndromes in young children.

Suggested uses: The Concerned about NAS/NOWS flyer can be:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to physician offices/community health centers
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers
- Distributed to community organizations that serve parents/families, including physician offices, community health centers, childcare centers, etc.



ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL VIDEOS

Available upon request. Contact Help Me Grow Central Intake & Referral.

Purpose: These videos use easy-to-understand language to explain how EI can support children with elevated blood lead levels and their families.

Intended audience: Families, physicians, pediatricians, Early Care and Education providers, and other medical professionals

Suggested uses:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers (eNewsletters, etc.)
- Uploaded to social media pages



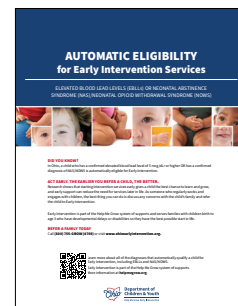
EBLL/NAS PHYSICIAN FLYER

Purpose: The EBLL/NAS physician flyer provides information about referring children with EBLL and NAS to EI.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, childcare providers, and other medical professionals

Suggested uses: The EBLL/NAS Physician flyer can be:

- Distributed to physician offices/community health centers
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers



EI SLIDE DECKS

Purpose: The EI slide decks provide consistent messaging about EI, with slide notes for the presenter.

Intended audience: Physicians, pediatricians, Early Care and Education providers, and other medical professionals; families

Suggested uses:

The slide decks can be used for presentations to family groups, community partners and professionals, as well as other general audiences.



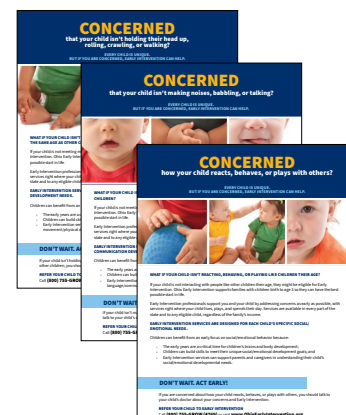
SPECIFIC DELAYS FLYERS

Purpose: The Specific Delays flyers are a set of three flyers that provide easy-to-read information about physical, social-emotional, and communication delays.

Intended audience: Families, physicians, pediatricians, Early Care and Education providers, and other medical professionals

Suggested uses:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to physician offices/community health centers
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers (eNewsletters, etc.)



FAMILY REFERRAL CARD

Purpose: The family referral card provides clear, concise, and reading-level appropriate messaging that communicates the importance of EI, what EI is and its benefits, and how to refer a child to EI.

Intended Audience: Parents, families, and other caregivers who may refer a child to EI.

Suggested Uses: The referral card can be:

- Uploaded to the parent/family section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to community organizations that serve parents/families
- Distributed by your staff at community events
- Shared electronically through digital communications (eNewsletters, etc.)

PROVIDER GUIDANCE CARD

Purpose: The EI provider guidance card is designed to provide information on the importance of EI, how to refer a child to EI, and what to do when given the referral card.

Intended Audience: Physicians, pediatricians, Early Care and Education providers, and other medical professionals who may receive the EI family referral card (referenced above) or make an EI referral.

Suggested Uses: The provider guidance card can be:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to physician offices/community health centers
- Shared electronically through digital communications to physicians, caregivers, and other providers (eNewsletters, etc.)



HEARING LOSS POSTCARD

Purpose: The Hearing Loss postcard provides information on how EI can help families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Intended audience: Families, physicians, pediatricians, Early Care and Education providers, and other medical professionals

Suggested uses:

- Uploaded to the provider section of your website
- Printed and available at your agency office
- Distributed to audiology testing sites, assistive technology sites, pediatrician offices, and hearing clinics



LOGO OPTIONS AND LOGO COLOR PALETTE

The brand guidelines for using the Help Me Grow Early Intervention logo are as follows:



Full Color Logo



Grayscale Logo



Reversed Color Logo

CO-BRANDING EXAMPLES

The Ohio logo should be placed to the right or on bottom of the partner logo, with a single black or white rule should divide the marks with equal distance appearing between, with both logos of equal size.



BUCKEYE BLUE

CMYK Coated (294 CP)	100 74 0 45
CMYK Uncoated (294 UP)	100 68 0 21
Solid Coated	294 C
Solid Uncoated	294 U
HEX	#0E3F75
sRGB	14 63 117

CARDINAL RED

CMYK Coated (200 CP)	0 100 76 13
CMYK Uncoated (200 UP)	0 100 66 11
Solid Coated	200 C
Solid Uncoated	200 U
HEX	#C12637
sRGB	193 38 55

WHITE

CMYK Coated	0 0 0 0
CMYK Uncoated	0 0 0 0
Solid Coated	—
Solid Uncoated	—
HEX	#FFFFFF
sRGB	255 255 255

OTHER BRAND ASSETS & COLLATERAL

Logos and color palettes are available for download at www.hlpemgrow.org/EIToolkit. For other collateral materials, please follow Ohio's brand guidelines for color palette, font use, etc, found here: <https://ohio.org/home/media-resources/brand-assets>.

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

NOTE: Any and all DCY branded materials are required to be approved by DCY. Please email proof materials to EI@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov prior to production.

Purpose: Promotional products are items that can be imprinted with an organization's name, logo, or message. They are designed to increase brand awareness among key audiences and can be a powerful communications tool when used with other marketing efforts.

Intended Audience: Focusing on the campaign's three priority audiences—parents/families, early learning caregivers/providers, and physicians/medical professionals—following are ideas for your consideration. Or, feel free to come up with your own ideas depending on audience preferences and budget.

Suggested Uses: Items can be used or distributed at:

- Your office
- Events (meetings, conferences, parades, fairs, etc.)
- Physician/pediatrician or other provider offices
- Anywhere you and your staff are sharing information about EI services

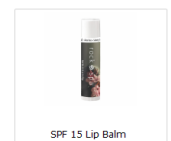
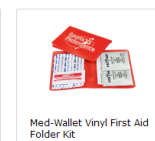
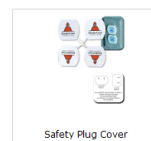
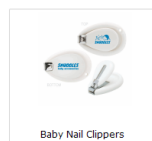
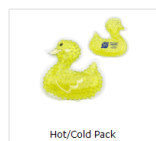
Note: All promotional products will need to adhere to the state's brand standards (e.g., color palette, fonts, etc.). If the product selected is not offered in colors that align with the brand standards, you may use black or white as a secondary option.

To ensure consistency across the state, please use the Help Me Grow Early Intervention logo, URL, and 800-number in all promotional products. These include: www.ohioearlyintervention.org and (800) 755-GROW (4769).

**Each agency will be responsible for working with vendors in their respective communities to create and pay for their promotional products.*

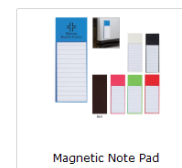
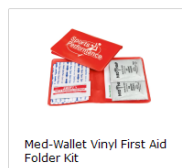
FOR PARENTS/FAMILIES

- Hot/cold packs
- Age-appropriate board books
- Easy-grip baby toothbrush
- Baby nail clippers
- Safety plug covers
- Vinyl medi-wallet/first-aid kit
- Hand sanitizer



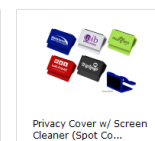
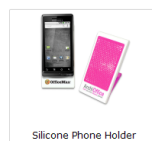
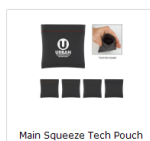
FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION CAREGIVERS/PROVIDERS

- Vinyl medi-wallet/first-aid kit
- Hand sanitizer
- Magnetic notepad
- House clip with sticky notes
- Hot/cold packs



PHYSICIANS/MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

- Small tin containers
- Squeeze tech pouch
- Silicone phone holder
- Microfiber cloth
- Privacy cover with screen cleaner
- Metallic stylus pen
- Hand sanitizer



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

LAUNCHING A LOCAL ADVERTISING & MEDIA RELATIONS CAMPAIGN (PRINT, RADIO, TV)

NOTE: Any and all DCY campaign materials are required to be approved by DCY. Please email drafts to EI@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov prior to submission.

Purpose: An advertising campaign is designed to build brand awareness around a product, social issue, political candidate, and more. Using thoughtful strategies, you can target messaging to specific audiences through the channels they use most. Those communication channels may include local newspapers and publications, radio PSAs, television ads, billboard ads, transit ads, etc. A comprehensive approach works best. That means utilizing different communication channels to reach your audience.

As a service coordination agency, you know your stakeholders and communities best. The resources in this toolkit, along with key considerations outlined below, are designed to build the foundation for local advertising and media efforts.

Intended Audiences: The target audiences for the EI Public Awareness Campaign include:

- Parents and families
- Early learning caregivers/providers (in-home and childcare centers)
- Physicians and other medical professionals
- Other community organizations that serve parents/families

Things to Consider Before Launching

As you plan your local efforts, keep in mind the overarching objective of this campaign, which is to increase public awareness within local communities about EI services and initiatives, including the referral process. Before getting started, consider the following:

- **Know your audiences, your budget, and how they like to receive information.** If you're working with a limited budget, it helps to know how and where your audiences receive their information. That way, you can make the most of your budget by targeting those communication channels.
- **Tailor your message to your audience.** The key messaging and audience-specific messaging has already been provided for you. Consider the communication channel you'll be using and tailor the messaging accordingly, if necessary.
- **Consider partnering with other local agencies or EI programs in neighboring counties.** By partnering with others, you will likely be able to reach a broader audience and reduce your expenses.
- **Consider who will be responsible for supporting the campaign efforts.** Think about someone who has marketing/communications experience or someone who is interested in learning more about marketing/communications. Be mindful that it will take time to organize the messaging and materials, and coordinate efforts to work with local newspapers, radio stations, etc. So plan accordingly for staff time.
- **Consider your timeline.** When do you want to launch your local efforts? Is there a community event or celebration that you can tag onto or is there an awareness month to align with?
- **Monitor impact.** Monitor the communication channels you're using to gauge what's having an impact and what's not. Be sure to review website traffic, social media engagement, local media coverage, etc.

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (PSA) SCRIPT

PSAs are designed to generate awareness or create a shift in public opinion about important topics. Most PSAs are: 30 seconds (approximately 65-90 words in length) or: 60 seconds (approximately 150-180 words in length). The following script uses wording from the messaging framework and is approximately 30 seconds (73 words in length).

You know your child best.

If you have concerns that your child has a delay or disability, talk to your healthcare provider about Early Intervention as early as possible.

Early Intervention supports families with children birth to age three who have developmental delays or disabilities so that they have the best possible start in life.

To learn more, contact Help Me Grow Early Intervention at (800) 755-GROW (4769) or visit www.ohioearlyintervention.org.

SAMPLE PRINT ADS

Print ads can be published in your local or community newspapers or in partner organization's publications (e.g., magazines, newspapers, etc.). Following are examples of color and black/white ads using the key messaging.

Sizing may vary depending upon the publication. The design files, including dimensions, fonts, colors, etc. for the ads are included with this toolkit.



SAMPLE BILLBOARDS

Billboards are a great way to have people see your message and they're often strategically placed to receive attention (e.g., busy intersections, along highways, etc.). This also allows your message to be exposed to more than one audience. Following are two examples of billboard ads.

Sizing may vary depending upon the vendor. The design files, including dimensions, fonts, colors, etc. for the ads are included with this toolkit.



SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Social media is a great way to share important information and announcements about services, events, and resources. Using your organization's social media accounts, here are a few basics to get you started:

Using Hashtags

A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#) and used on social media websites and applications to identify messages on a specific topic. Incorporating hashtags in your social media content helps your organization/services to be found by people who are interested in what you're offering or posting about. For EI services, considering incorporating #HelpMeGrow and #EarlyIntervention into your posts.

Using Graphics

Social media posts that use graphics, photos, or videos are more likely to grab people's attention and have them remember your logo or image compared to a text-only post. Social media graphic sizes vary depending on the channel. Sample graphics have been included below and will be shared.

For additional information on how to use Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, check out the following:

[How to Post and Share Facebook Content](#)

[Get your business started on Instagram](#)

[How to Market on LinkedIn](#)

Following is sample social media content that can be used for social media channels. Feel free to edit the content to fit specific channel requirements, including character counts, hashtags, etc.

- #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention (EI) supports families with children birth to age three who have developmental delays or disabilities so that they have the best possible start in life. Learn more and refer early.
- Concerned that your child may have a delay or disability? If so, it's important to refer them to #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention as soon as possible. We'd love to help you.
- Did you know that anyone can refer a family to #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention (EI) if they have concerns that a child is experiencing a possible delay or disability? There is no need to "wait and see."
- You know your child best. If you have concerns about your child's development, talk to your child's healthcare provider. However, if you still have concerns, contact us. #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention can help.
- Anyone can refer a child to #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention, and families can self-refer their child if they have concerns. You do not need to be a doctor or teacher to refer a child. All it takes is a simple phone call or filling out a short form online.
- Concerns about your child's development? There is no "downside" to referring a child to #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention services. Screening and eligibility determination are free.
- The first three years of a child's life are the most important since 80% of a child's brain is developed by age three. Because this is a critical time, parents, families, doctors, and others who are concerned about a child's development should refer a child to #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention as early as possible.
- Because children learn best with familiar people and in familiar places, #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention (EI) services are usually provided in the home or a community setting.
- Every child is unique, and #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention (EI) services are designed based on these specific needs. EI can address all types of concerns: some examples include physical development like crawling or walking, speech delays, or social interaction like playing with other children. Learn more.
- Research shows that starting #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention services early gives a child the best chance to learn and grow. Early support can reduce the need for services later in life.
- Even a small amount of lead is dangerous to a child. If your child is under age three and has a confirmed [elevated blood lead levels/ NAS/NOWS diagnosis/hearing loss diagnosis], they are automatically eligible for Early Intervention. #HelpMeGrow #EarlyIntervention supports families by connecting them to resources and providing services for developmental concerns!

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS



* Design files for these graphics and other EI related campaigns are available for download with this toolkit at helpmegrow.org/EIToolkit.

Tips for Leveraging Earned Media

Earned media is known as publicity or media relations. It's about getting your name in print, having a newspaper write about you, appearing on the noon news to talk about your organization and its services, etc. Here are a few tips to consider as you think about securing earned media coverage:

1. **Write a compelling and relevant press release.** The release should include the 'who, what, when, where and why' and be explained in the first two sentences or lead. The audience for the press release is the reporter/journalist, so it's important to think about the content from their perspective and what's in it for them and why they should care.
2. **Know the media.** Who are the reporters and key media outlets in your community? If you don't know them, get to know them and develop a relationship. Knowing their beat and the types of stories they cover is also important. Establishing a relationship with them will help you when you have something important to share and would like to see covered. Develop a media list and update it regularly.
3. **Pitch and sell your story.** Sending the press release is the first step. It's important to follow up with reporters to pitch and sell your story. What's in a pitch? First, highlight the most important points and tailor it to the reporter's beat and/or publication. Second, share why this story is relevant and why people should care. Third, offer an interview opportunity with your organization's spokesperson, and don't forget to include contact information.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [List contact person's name, telephone number, and/or email address]

Help Me Grow Early Intervention Supports Families Concerned about Their Child's Development

If you're concerned that a child may have a delay or disability, it's important to refer them for Early Intervention (EI) as soon as possible. Early Intervention can address all types of concerns, like crawling or walking, speech delays, or social interactions like playing with other children. Parents and families are the center of a child's development. Early Intervention professionals work closely with the family to help build their skills and confidence in supporting their child and to help them navigate the journey with their child.

Help Me Grow Early Intervention, offered through local EI teams, is evidence-based, statewide, and supports families of young children birth to age three with developmental delays and disabilities, including children with elevated blood lead levels and those diagnosed with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS).

Early Intervention remains critical for children and families. Research shows that starting Early Intervention services early gives a child the best chance to learn and grow, and can reduce the need for services later in life.

Don't wait. Act early!

The referral process is simple. Anyone can refer a child, and families can self-refer their child if they have concerns. You do not need to be a doctor or teacher to refer a child. All it takes is a simple phone call to (800) 755-GROW (4769) or filling out an [online form](#). After the referral is made, Help Me Grow will contact the family and connect them with an Early Intervention provider. There is no downside to referring a child; screening and eligibility determination come at no cost to the family.

[Insert family testimonial]

Help Me Grow Early Intervention is a part of the Help Me Grow system of supports. Learn more at www.ohioearlyintervention.org.



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* The press release above has been approved for use by local EI providers. Any variation should be submitted to and approved by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY).

Tips for Leveraging Paid Media

Paid media doesn't always refer to big, fancy commercials and highly creative print ads. On the contrary, a lot of today's paid media includes social media advertising, sponsored content, display and video ads, pop-ups, and email marketing. Think Facebook ads and LinkedIn video ads. Paid social media campaigns can be a great way to extend your reach, get more clicks, and generate more traffic. Here are a few tips to consider when using paid media:

1. **Know your audience and what communication channels they use.** When you know the demographics of your audience and where they're spending time, you can more effectively target your budget for greater impact.
2. **Know your budget.** You don't have to have thousands of dollars to make an impact. Boosting social media content is an easy and effective way to get your message in front of your audience for even a small budget.
3. **Monitor.** If you're investing in paid social media or larger scale advertising efforts, be sure to monitor your analytics and reports. Use that information to see where traffic is coming from. You can use this information to adjust your efforts accordingly.

BEYOND THE MEDIA: BE AN EXPERT RESOURCE

Pursuing opportunities to share information with your key audiences outside of traditional media is another way to spread the word. Consider looking for opportunities to write a guest blog or newsletter article for another community organization. Consider seeking opportunities to share content in partner publications and electronic communications.

SAMPLE BLOG/NEWSLETTER ARTICLE*

There is No Need to 'Wait and See'

The first three years of a child's life are the most important. Did you know that 80% of a child's brain is developed by age three? Because this is a critical time, parents, families, doctors, and others who are concerned about a child's development should refer a child for Early Intervention (EI) as early as possible.

Early Intervention (EI) supports families with children birth to age three who have developmental delays or disabilities, so they have the best possible start in life. Early Intervention professionals support a child's family to identify strengths and needs and address concerns as early as possible. EI can address all types of concerns: some examples include physical development like crawling or walking, speech delays, or social interaction like playing with other children. Every child is unique, and EI services are designed based on these specific needs.

Anyone can refer a child to EI—and the earlier the better.

There is no "downside" to referring a child to Early Intervention services. Screening and eligibility determination are free. EI services can be provided side-by-side with other services a family receives in their community. EI focuses on building skills with the family in places where the child already spends time, including at home, childcare, and in the community.

The referral process is simple.

Anyone can refer a child to EI, and families can self-refer their child if they have concerns. You do not need to be a doctor or teacher to refer a child. All it takes is a simple phone call or filling out a short form online.

To learn more and to start the referral process, call (800) 755-GROW (4769) or visit www.ohioearlyintervention.org.

* The blog/newsletter article above has been approved for use by local EI providers. Any variation should be submitted to and approved by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY).

SPEAKING AT LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Purpose: Speaking or exhibiting at local events is also a great way to share information with larger audiences about EI and the resources you offer. Consider seeking opportunities at local fairs, school events, chamber of commerce, Rotary meetings, etc.

Intended Audience: Depending on the event, the audience could include business and community members, parents/families, etc.

Suggestions for Getting Started

- Be proactive and reach out to various community organizations to offer your agency up as a possible speaker or exhibitor.
- Seek community/school fairs/events to display a booth and distribute information and promotional products.

SAMPLE EMAIL TO REFERRAL SOURCES

Purpose: Sharing information and updates with your referral sources is a great way to keep them up-to-date on the latest information. If you're not already sending regular updates, consider doing so on a regular basis.

Intended Audience: Referral organizations/agencies

Subject line: Refer to Help Me Grow Early Intervention

If you're concerned that a child may have a delay or disability, it's important to refer them for Early Intervention as soon as possible. Early Intervention can address all types of concerns, like crawling or walking, speech delays, or social interactions like playing with other children.

The referral process is simple:

- *Anyone can refer a child to Early Intervention, and families can self-refer their child if they have concerns. You do not need to be a doctor or teacher to refer a child.*
- *All it takes is a simple phone call to (800) 755-GROW (4769) or filling out a [short form online](#).*
- *After the referral is made, Help Me Grow will contact the family and connect them with the Early Intervention provider.*

I can provide you and your staff with a virtual presentation about Help Me Grow Early Intervention at your convenience. I will touch base with you in the coming days or feel free to contact me at [Sender's telephone number and/or email address].

If you have questions about Early Intervention services in [County's name] County, please contact [Agency name] at [Agency's EI telephone number].

Help Me Grow Early Intervention is a part of the Help Me Grow system of supports. Learn more at www.ohioearlyintervention.org.



PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING & COLLABORATION

FAMILY PEER NETWORKS

Purpose: Peer-to-peer conversations and networking are effective ways for parents and families to feel support, share concerns, and ask questions. Peer networks often offer a ‘safe’ place for parents and families because there is a trust factor and comfort level between peers who share their experiences and feelings.

Examples: Sharing and collaborating with other agencies across the state are great ways to get new ideas on what’s working well or what’s not and how you might adapt an idea to best meet the needs in your community. If you’re not already connecting with other EI programs, we encourage you to reach out to learn and share. Following are a few ideas of how other service coordination agencies around the state are helping to connect families:

- Hosting play groups
- Organizing support groups for parents or other caregivers
- Engaging with their local schools to distribute information and/or partner with parent mentors
- Encouraging the concept of ‘refer a friend’ to spread the word between other families

Suggested materials:

- Specific Delays flyers
- Family-facing brochure
- Family referral card
- EI Short Intro slide deck
- EI Core Slides slide deck
- EI Family Presentation slide deck
- EBLL and NAS/NOWS cards
- Hearing Loss postcard
- Developmental Wheels

PROFESSIONAL PEER NETWORKS

Purpose: Like family peer-to-peer networks, professional networks for social workers, and medical and Early Care and Education providers are effective ways for professionals to feel support, share concerns, and ask questions.

Examples: Following are a few ideas for professionals:

- Hosting lunch-n-learn sessions
- Organizing professional learning events
- Sharing information with local committees
- Presenting at local conferences

Suggested materials:

- Family Referral Card
- Provider Guidance card for the Family Referral Card
- Automatic eligibility flyer
- Specific delays flyers
- EI Medical Professional slide deck
- EI Core slide deck
- Hearing loss postcard

PARENT/FAMILY EVENTS

Purpose: Parent and family-friendly events often gather larger groups of people and are great opportunities for service coordination agencies to share information. Consider meeting parents/families where they already gather or host your own events for them.

Examples: Following are a few event ideas that other service coordination agencies have shared:

- Hosting special events to celebrate moms and dads (e.g., Moms or Dads Day/Night Out with pampering services, fun activities, etc.)
- Offering special classes or learning events at local libraries, hospitals, community centers, etc.
- Hosting a booth and distributing information at various community events, including fairs, festivals, baby/child events, women's expos, etc.
- Participating in community-based baby/child events, such as car seat fitting events, etc. and being on hand to talk with families and distribute information

Suggested materials:

- Family-facing brochure
- Specific delays flyers
- EBL and NAS/NOWS cards
- EI Family Presentation slide deck
- Family referral card
- Hearing Loss postcard
- Developmental Wheels

LOCAL PROVIDER AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION COLLABORATION

Purpose: Collaborating with other community agencies and organizations are great ways to connect and share updated EI messaging, materials, and other resources available. It's also a great way to encourage cross-agency information and idea sharing.

Examples: Following are a few ideas that other service coordination agencies have shared about who they are partnering with in their communities:

- Community centers/organizations, such as the YMCA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, community recreation centers, WIC, home visiting, local Job and Family Service agencies, etc.
- Healthcare entities, such as hospitals, clinics, local health departments, etc.
- Faith-based organizations, including churches, cultural centers, etc.
- Organizations that serve and support families, including Ohio Family and Children First, Ohio P2P, Kinship Care Network, etc.

Suggested materials:

- Family Referral card
- Provider Guidance card for the Family Referral Card
- Automatic eligibility flyer
- Specific delays flyers
- EI Core slide deck