



# 2024 New York State Priorities

## Priority 1

*Increase Early Intervention rates by 11% for all services delivered in person.*

Approximately 65,000 young children across New York State are found eligible for Early Intervention annually, but thousands are not receiving timely and comprehensive services, because there are not enough providers to meet their needs. Similarly, preschoolers with disabilities in New York State are too often left waiting for the services they need due to inadequate funding.

85% of brain development occurs before children start school. Without the right kind of support, children with delays or disabilities lose their chance to reach their full potential.



**New York State should provide an 11% increase in reimbursement rates for all Early Intervention services delivered in person.**

Infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities across New York State are not receiving services guaranteed to them under state and federal laws. An audit by the New York State Comptroller found that about half of New York families wait longer than the legal 30-day deadline for services to start. Other data sources indicate that a significant portion of services are offered only via telehealth even when there's agreement that the child needs in-person services. Black and Hispanic families face disproportionately high rates of delays.

The primary cause of these delays and lack of in-person services is a severe shortage of therapists and other Early Intervention professionals that is a result of decades of stagnant payment rates, coupled with a payment system that is not providing increased compensation for the added costs, such as transportation and travel time, of delivering services in person at a child's home or child care program.



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## Priority 2

*Ensure long-term investments in Early Intervention that keep up with rising costs.*

**New York State should reform the methodology for Early Intervention reimbursement rates, as the current method is outdated and inadequate.**

The current methodology for determining rates is based on a formula largely unchanged since the mid-1990s. New York State must re-imagine its Early Intervention program to better serve families and children. While a rate increase is urgently needed now, the State should also conduct a comprehensive assessment of the methodology used to determine payment for all evaluations, services and service coordination and publish a report within 12 months. The report must include a plan to revise rates so that the program can attract and retain providers sufficient to meet the needs of all eligible families and comply with federal law.



## Priority 3

*Create a student loan forgiveness program for Early Intervention professionals.*

**New York State should create a student loan forgiveness program to attract new Early Intervention providers.**

To address the growing waitlists and workforce challenges plaguing Early Intervention, the State should incentivize recruitment of providers by offering a student loan forgiveness program for graduates of higher education institutions preparing Early Intervention professionals. The program should offer loan forgiveness to providers willing to provide in-person Early Intervention services in Medically Underserved and/or Health Care Provider Shortage Areas.

