

early  
*intervention*



Discovering the unique potential  
within every child

# early intervention

Promoting early learning and development of infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities, and supporting their families



Discovering the unique potential  
within every child

## Services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) has identified that “there is an urgent and substantial need to identify as early as possible those infants and toddlers in need of services to ensure that intervention is provided when the developing brain is most capable of change”. NECTAC further reports that high quality early intervention programs for vulnerable infants and toddlers can reduce the incidence of future problems in their learning, behavior, and health status; and intervention is likely to be more effective and less costly when it is provided earlier in life rather than later.



Early intervention services are family-driven, serving the entire family. Eligible families have children birth-3 years of age, diagnosed with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, seizure disorders, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), communication disabilities, and genetic anomalies or identified with undiagnosed developmental delays. Typically, these conditions have a high predictability of later problems; e.g., intellectual disabilities, learning problems, difficulties with communication, physical disabilities, and other challenges to growth and development.

### **P.G. Chambers School Comprehensive Early Intervention Program**

The PGCS Comprehensive Early Intervention Program focuses on helping infants and toddlers learn the skills that typically develop during the first three years of life, such as:

- Physical mobility (reaching, rolling, crawling and walking)
- Cognition (thinking, learning, solving problems)
- Communication (talking, listening, understanding)
- Social/Emotional well-being (playing, feeling secure and happy)
- Self-help habits (eating, dressing)



### **Goals**

The overarching goals of the PGCS Comprehensive Early Intervention Program are:

- to improve the motor, language, learning, social, and emotional development of each child
- to provide the foundation for success in school and in life
- to provide support, information, and education to families
- to increase the connections to community resources for each family

Our program provides a holistic approach to early intervention services, with special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, and child development specialists, as well as families, all participating to ensure a child's growth and success throughout the duration of the program.

## Components

The Comprehensive Early Intervention Program has three components:

- **Home-based** educational and therapy services that enhance children's developmental skills and assist their families
- **Center-based parent-child groups** for toddlers with disabilities, addressing the expressed needs of families for education, support, and socialization experiences for toddlers
- **Assistive Technology Program** to provide important assessments and interventions that identify technology supports to help children move, communicate, and learn

## Our Approach

In the home-based educational and therapeutic program, infants, toddlers, and families receive weekly home visits. Typically, a developmental specialist works with parents and the child to help parents understand and respond to the needs of their child with a disability,

understand the disability, and how best to help their child learn, grow, and function. The developmental specialist's work may be supported by home visits from licensed and certified occupational, physical, and speech therapists to help with specific areas of developmental delays. Visits are one hour in length and the frequency of services may vary from one session per month to multiple sessions each week.

While home-based services are critically important, particularly during the child's first year, families begin to seek socialization experiences for their toddlers. The PGCS model provides these opportunities for socialization and the development of readiness skills for preschool through school-based parent-child groups. The program's group sessions have been highly successful in preparing toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays for preschool. These groups are funded through a combination of foundation grants, individual contributions, and small fees charged to families.

When a family is also in need of child care, PGCS is uniquely positioned to provide services through our Kids Count child care program. Kids Count provides an inclusive environment where all children can learn and grow together. Children enrolled in Early Intervention may also receive their individual educational and therapeutic services within the child care.



# An Overview of the PGCS Comprehensive Early Intervention Program



Program Component	Eligible Children & Families	Staffing	Services	Program Objectives
Home-based Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children birth-3 years of age with a diagnosed disability or a developmental delay and their families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developmental Specialist</li> <li>Physical Therapist</li> <li>Occupational Therapist</li> <li>Speech-Language Pathologist</li> <li>Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education and Therapy</li> <li>Services in a “natural environment”— home, child care facility, or wherever a child and family feel most comfortable and “at home”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>95% of children will show progress in overall development as measured annually by improved Battelle Developmental Inventory 2 (BDI-2) scores</li> <li>100% of families will integrate therapeutic exercises and educational activities into the family’s daily routines, as measured by annual parent survey</li> </ul>
Center-based Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children 12 months-3 years with or without diagnosed disabilities and their families</li> <li>Children and families enrolled with other early intervention service providers welcome</li> <li>Families from Morris and surrounding counties</li> <li>Do not need to be enrolled in early intervention services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher</li> <li>Developmental Specialist</li> <li>Social Worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School-based parent-child groups highlighting:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socialization</li> <li>Music and Art</li> <li>Movement</li> <li>Sensory Integration</li> <li>Preschool Readiness</li> </ul> </li> <li>Informal parent discussion groups led by a social worker</li> <li>Information and parent-to-parent support on general topics of interest — parenting, transition to preschool, childrens’ rights, and advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15% of children transitioning will demonstrate significant improvements in their developmental skills and no longer be eligible for special services</li> <li>90% of families will demonstrate increased understanding of their child’s disability, the risk factors that contribute to developmental delays, and the advocacy skills needed to plan for their child’s future, as measured by annual parent survey</li> </ul>
Assistive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children birth-3 years of age with a diagnosed disability or a developmental delay and their families</li> <li>Children and families enrolled with other early intervention service providers welcome</li> <li>Families from Morris and surrounding counties</li> <li>Do not need to be enrolled in early intervention services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Therapist</li> <li>Occupational Therapists</li> <li>Speech-Language Pathologists</li> <li>Equipment Vendors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluations for equipment, orthotics, splints, communication devices, and other technology</li> <li>Measuring, ordering, and/or fabricating equipment, orthotics, splints, communication devices, and other technology</li> <li>Fitting and repairs of equipment and devices</li> <li>On-site equipment inventory for viewing and trialing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of the children receiving assistive technology services will demonstrate improved independence with mobility, communication, and activities of daily living as measured annually by achievement of IFSP goals and objectives</li> </ul>



Another component of the PGCS approach is family education and support, family rights to education for their child, family support strategies, and family access to community resources. PGCS family support groups, offered as part of our group sessions for toddlers, address the need for providing information and resources that families struggle to understand and navigate. PGCS groups have demonstrated a measurable impact on the lives of children and families in key areas essential to long-term family well-being, confidence, and the family's ability to develop life skills for planning and advocacy, all critical to successful outcomes for children with disabilities and their families.

Finally, technology plays an important role in helping children with disabilities develop skills, particularly around communication, learning, and mobility. **PGCS Assistive Technology Program** is available to early intervention families for assessing and matching children with appropriate assistive devices and equipment, and supporting children and their families to integrate technology into their daily routines and activities.

## What parents are saying about P.G. Chambers School Comprehensive Early Intervention Program

- 81% Strongly Agree and 19% Agree that their child has shown progress with his or her development.
- 65% Strongly Agree and 35% Agree that, after participating in the program, they have a clearer picture of their child's needs and abilities.
- 81% Strongly Agree and 19% Agree that they can help their child develop and learn by integrating activities and exercises from early intervention sessions into their family's routine.
- 48% Strongly Agree and 52% Agree that they are more knowledgeable about how to support and advocate for their child.

Source: 2015 Parent Satisfaction Survey of Families



**Your answers to the following statements may help you in deciding if your child could benefit from P.G. Chambers School Comprehensive Early Intervention Services.**

As a parent of a young child with challenges, I would like more information and support.

- Yes       No

I would like to meet with other parents who have concerns about their young children.

- Yes       No

I am concerned about my child's development or behavior. He is not doing things that his brother did at his age.

- Yes       No

My child will not or does not play well with other children his age.

- Yes       No

My child has a disability that impacts his ability to move and I feel that there might be more that we can do to help him move and explore on his own.

- Yes       No

My child seems to know what she wants, but can't always find a way to tell us.

- Yes       No

If you answered the majority of statements "Yes", P.G. Chambers School Comprehensive Early Intervention Program may be the place for your child. For a free developmental evaluation you may call the New Jersey Early Intervention System at **1.888.653.4463** to refer your child.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is early intervention important?

Activities in early intervention are designed to help a child develop the skills that a typical child develops “automatically”. For example, at 6 months old, an infant is sitting up relatively on her own. The 6-month-old with a disability might not reach this developmental milestone until 12 months old. Because areas of development are so interrelated, reaching other developmental milestones might be contingent upon being able to sit up. Therefore, when a child is not reaching milestones in a typical pattern, intervention must provide support, materials, equipment, and activities that will compensate for these areas of concern or delay.

### How do I enroll in early intervention?

Call **1.888.653.4463** to refer your child to the New Jersey Early Intervention System.

### Can I enroll in PGCS groups if I am receiving early intervention services from another agency?

Our early intervention groups are open to all children under 3 years of age. Siblings, friends, and children who have or are at risk for developmental delays are welcome to participate in our group programs. If your child is currently enrolled in early intervention, ~~reach out to~~ your service coordinator to discuss adding group sessions as part of your child’s plan, or call PGCS.

### How long are the PGCS groups and how many times are they held each week?

Groups are typically one hour long and held in the morning. Please see our website for specific group offerings and times.

### Does PGCS Comprehensive Early Intervention Program staff have expertise with children who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Yes. PGCS uses a NJ Early Intervention System approved curriculum for children with a diagnosis of ASD and our staff has particular expertise in working with children on the autism spectrum.

### Can my child receive therapy (physical, occupational, or speech) at PGCS?

We have talented teachers and therapists who specialize in evaluation and treatment for children with developmental delays or disabilities. Services are available on a fee-for-service basis.

### Once my child turns 3 years of age, what other services can PGCS provide?

P. G. Chambers School provides child care for children up to 5 years of age; a special education program for children with disabilities, 3 through 14 years of age; physical, occupational, and speech therapy;



and assistive technology evaluations and services. We also provide services in public and private schools through our Community Services Program. For detailed information about our programs and services, please visit our website at [www.chambersschool.org](http://www.chambersschool.org).

### **What are the benefits of the Comprehensive Early Intervention Program being part of the same organization as a school for children with disabilities?**

Meeting the needs of children with disabilities has been the single focus of PGCS for more than 60 years, positioning us as a leader and innovator in the field of special education in New Jersey. With staff of over 180 experienced educators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, and social workers we can provide a diverse range of specialized services and approaches, knowledge of best practice, and professional support. Our Kids Count Child Care is an inclusive placement option for preschool children with disabilities.

### **Eligibility**

Children who have an identified disability or a diagnosis that puts them at risk for developmental delay are eligible for services through the NJ Early Intervention System (NJEIS).

Additionally, infants and toddlers with significant developmental delays as measured by the Battelle

Developmental Inventory-2, an approved developmental screening instrument, are also eligible for services.

Assistive technology services are available privately and to children enrolled in NJEIS.

All infants and toddlers, regardless of whether they have a diagnosis or disability, are welcome to participate in P.G. Chambers School's on-site groups.

### **Enrollment**

Families can refer their child for early intervention services through the NJEIS by calling **1.888.653.4463**. Families cannot apply directly for participation in the home-based portion of the P.G. Chambers School's Comprehensive Early Intervention Program.

All families with infants and toddlers can participate in our weekly, center-based, parent-child groups through either early intervention funding or for a small fee.





### **Here's what families are saying about P.G. Chambers School Comprehensive Early Intervention**

“P.G. Chambers School has a wonderful team—they are very knowledgeable, affectionate, and caring. We are thankful to the for the tremendous improvement we've seen in our child.”

“Kitty is just fabulous. She is upbeat, energetic, empathetic, knowledgeable, and an amazing teacher to our family. We feel so lucky to have her as our therapist. Linda has been awesome to work with as well. She brings a new perspective and way to do things with our child and we love her.”

“We are so happy with the progress that our daughter, Madelyn, has made. We love to incorporate the different activities from therapy into our daily routine. Our therapists have become part of our family.”

P.G. Chambers School is a 501 (c) (3) organization that provides education and therapy services for children with complex, multiple disabilities, or those at risk for disabilities and developmental delays, and child care for children with and without disabilities. The school's mission statement is “**Discovering the unique potential within every child.**” At P.G. Chambers School, “discovering potential” inspires us to provide the best, most comprehensive early childhood education for children with and without disabilities, and special education and therapy programs for children with disabilities and developmental delays. Since 1954, P.G. Chambers School has been changing the lives of children by helping them to develop a love of learning, to strive for independence, and most importantly, to develop unshakeable self-confidence.

Each year, P.G. Chambers School (PGCS), located in Morris County, NJ, provides services for more than 800 children and their families in Morris County and nine other surrounding counties in northern New Jersey. The school's programs reach children of all ages including typically developing infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and infants at-risk for developmental disabilities; school-age children eligible for special education services; and children diagnosed with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, seizure disorders, autism, and communication disabilities. Services are provided both on-site at the school's state-of-the-art facility in Cedar Knolls, and off-site in schools, homes, and child care centers throughout the region. Important partnerships with local school districts and community organizations help support PGCS students in their own communities. The school is accredited as an Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities and an Approved Clinic and Agency by the State of New Jersey, Department of Education.

Funding for early intervention services is provided by the NJ Department of Health, The F.M. Kirby Family Foundation, The Maude and Irving Laurie Foundation, the Summit Area Public Foundation, The George Ohl Foundation, and the P.G. Chambers School Annual Fund.

“My son has made **such** progress since being in Early Intervention. Our family is truly grateful. Our son’s therapists have been amazing.”

- P.G. Chambers School  
Early Intervention Parent



For more information,  
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