

What is Help Me Grow?

Help Me Grow is a coordinated, community-based infrastructure that promotes trans-disciplinary, family centered services for expectant parents, newborns, infants, toddlers and their families. Help Me Grow:

- Identifies children with or at risk for developmental delays or disabilities;
- Provides up-to-date information during a newborn visit from a registered nurse to parents on child health, development, safety and community resources; during the visit, a registered nurse conducts a physical assessment of the newborn and mother.
- Provides screenings for health, hearing, vision and development;
- Provides parents with information about their child's social and emotional development that lays the foundation for later school success;
- Assures parents have information on the importance of early childhood immunizations and routine pediatric health care.
- Connects children at age three with appropriate services.

Who is eligible for Help Me Grow services?

Any child, from birth to three years old may be determined eligible based on the following:

- If an evaluation of your child's development is shown to be delayed,
 - If child has a medically diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high chance of resulting in a developmental delay in one or more of the following areas:
 - [Cognitive Development](#),
 - [Physical Development, including vision, hearing and nutrition screenings](#),
 - [Communication Development](#),
 - [Social or emotional Development, and](#)
 - [Adaptive Development](#)
- OR
- If your child has four or more [risk factors](#) present in the child and/or family, which could interfere with care giving, health or development of the child.

How do I get services for my child? How can I tell if my child is eligible for such services?

In Ohio, counties are required to effectively find a way to reach out and evaluate children who might be in need of early intervention services. This is called [Child](#)

[Find](#). Help Me Grow finds children through many different areas of public outreach including announcements, flyers and posters. Often, many hospitals, physicians, clinics and daycare centers will inform parents of services or make a referral on behalf of the child/family to Help Me Grow providers in that county.

If your child does not have a diagnosed medical condition that results in a delay, then he or she may receive professional screening to determine if a child is eligible for services. These evaluations are measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures and are provided at no cost to families.

What happens if my child is determined to be eligible for services?

After your child is evaluated and determined to be eligible for Help Me Grow, a [Service Coordinator](#) will be provided in partnership with your family. The Service Coordinator will help maximize the family's resources from numerous resources and systems to meet the particular needs of your child and family. The Service Coordinator will also help you fill out a written plan for your child's services.

What services are available to my child?

Services Available at No Cost:

- [Child find](#)
- [Family assessment](#)
- [Transition services](#)
- [Family support system](#)
- [Development, review and evaluation of IFSPs](#)
- [Developmental screening](#)
- [Developmental evaluation and ongoing assessments](#)
- [Service coordination](#)

Specialized Services-Services that **may** be subject to a system of payment, fees or use of private insurance:

- [Family training, counseling and home visits](#)
- [Nutrition](#)
- [Nursing](#)
- [Special instruction](#)
- [Occupational therapy](#)
- [Speech-language pathology and audiology services](#)

INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SERVICE PLAN

What is an IFSP?

An IFSP, or Individual Family Service Plan is the foundation of which Help me Grow services are built upon for families. This is a time where the Service Coordinator and the family get together to decide on child outcomes based on the concerns and priorities of the family. The plan also includes supports, services and any strategies developed by the team that will be used to achieve those decisions.

The plan is based on your child's natural environments where the child feels the most comfortable. It also considers your child's learning opportunities within these environments such as the child's home routines, family interaction and the community activities your child participates in.

The family always has an equal responsibility in developing the IFSP with the Service Coordinator. The IFSP is in place to document any decisions made about the child's course of action and changes as the needs of the child and/or family changes. You decide what information should be shared, how much and when.

Who develops the IFSP?

Developing the IFSP is an undertaking that requires the help of a multidisciplinary team. That is, the parents and the service coordinators should certainly be involved, as well as any other providers, teachers, physicians, evaluators, parental advisors or persons parents feel need to be present.

The initial IFSP should be developed within 45 days of your referral to Help Me Grow services. At this meeting, the procedures of the plan will be explained. At least once a year a review of the IFSP will be held to note any progress or changes concerning the plan and to share any current information about your child.

The team will work together in meetings to compose a plan and outcomes that satisfy the needs of the child as well as the goals of the family. As an equal partner, this is your opportunity to talk and decide on what will be best for you and your family. You may change anything you like on the IFSP just by calling your Service Coordinator.

What should be included in my child's IFSP?

The IFSP should include:

- A statement of child's current functioning in the levels of development
- A statement of major outcomes expected for your child/family and how they will be achieved
- Information about your family's resources, concerns, and priorities as they relate to the child (Only with your permission—although it is encouraged)
- A statement of the [natural environment](#) in which services will be provided

- A statement of the resources and services that will be provided to your child and family in order to provide support for your outcomes
- A statement of "other services" that are needed but not required to be provided
- An inclusion of the dates services will begin; as well as how long the services will last, where the service will be and how often services will be provided
- The name of the Service Coordinator
- The signatures of parent(s) and providers
- A statement addressing the needed transition services for your family and child.
- Other "specifics" including method of provision, frequency and intensity of service, persons responsible for providing service and source of payment

TRANSITIONS

What do you mean by transitions?

[Transition services](#) are very important to the Help Me Grow program. They ensure the child is taken care of as they go between services and changes in providers, moving from one program to another.

Two types of transitions take place in Help Me Grow:

- Those that occur during Early Intervention Services
- Those that occur from Early Intervention Services to preschool

How can I plan a successful transition for my child?

What goes into the IFSP regarding your child's transition is really up to you. If the child is moving between services while in Help Me Grow, the IFSP usually includes support and planning to move a child between different physical environments, and will change along with the needs and actions of the child to ensure that they are still meeting their developmental goals in this different environment.

If the child is transitioning out of Help Me Grow, then he or she must be considered for services beyond those of Help Me Grow such as special education preschool programs, Head Start and others in their school system. Your service coordinator and IFSP team will assist you with a plan of action to be taken prior to your child's third birthday. This plan will outline the steps, services and supports for your child's transition to their appropriate setting.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Is there a place where I or my family can go if we need help or support with this?

In order for your child to grow, we understand they have to grow within the context of the family, and the family must grow within the community. This is why we have [Family Information Network](#) (FIN) in Help Me Grow. FIN is a network designed to give you a strong voice and perspective within Help Me Grow. Being vocal allows public and private agencies to better address the needs, concerns and priorities of your family.

How can the Family Information Network Help Me?

The Family Information Network provides the following for consumers/families:

- Workshops that cover topics designed to expand a family's understanding and knowledge of themselves and Help Me Grow.
- Opportunities for consumers to provide feedback to state and local Help Me Grow efforts about supports and services they need and/or receive.
- Occasions for interaction with community members around issues of concern to families who have newborns, infants and toddlers.

MISC.

Who can I contact about Help Me Grow services?

If you have a question or want to refer your child for Help Me Grow Services, click [here](#) to get your county contact information.