



Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

FY 2026 NJ State Budget

Annualized Cost of Living Increase for Early Intervention Providers

One-Offs Won't Solve a Problem 15 Years in the Making¹

Don't Stop Now.

Undervaluing and underpricing Early Intervention over the last few decades has:

- Eroded our workforce to such an extent that physical, occupational and speech/language therapists opt to work in hospitals, nursing homes and schools which, unlike EI, have been able to keep pace with wage growth.
- Resulted in untold numbers of infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities who have missed a narrow window of opportunity to minimize and prevent barriers to their development, undermining their capacity to realize their full potential.
- Resulted in services that have been unavailable to numerous eligible, minority, low income, rural, urban and foster care children.²
- Prevented a 300-800% combined rate of return from avoided costs in the already formidable public cost of the K-12 educational, Medicaid and Medicare systems, and from increased income taxes of adults who benefited from EI as children.³

The state must commit at least as much time to building EI back up as it did to wearing it down.

Don't stop now. Two-year-olds can't wait for life-altering therapies and interventions.

August 28, 2024

¹ Prior to the Early Intervention rate increases of 5% on July 1, 2021, 2.5% on January 1, 2022, and 7.5% on July 1, 2023, since 2004 the rates increased a cumulative total of 1.78%, compared to the cumulative inflation rate of over 70% for this 20-year period.

² Prenatal to 3; Policy Impact Center. 2023. *Early Intervention Services*. <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/us/early-intervention/#:~:text=EI%20Services%20Can%20Save%20States,million%20depending%20on%20the%20state>

³Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. \$4-\$9 dollars in returns for every \$1 invested in early childhood programs. www.developingchild.harvard.edu