

FAQs - Early Intervention Programme for Infants & Children

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General enquiries

1. How are children with developmental needs identified and referred for EIPIC? How will this change with the introduction of the continuum of EI services?

Children with developmental needs will continue to be identified through the existing touchpoints.

Parents and caregivers would most likely be first to realise if the child shows signs of or has developmental issues and can take their children to the nearest polyclinic for assessment. The developmental milestones in the Health Booklet can be used as reference points.

Another touchpoint occurs during screenings and medical check-ups. Healthcare professionals in the polyclinics, paediatricians and GPs may also detect delays in the child's development, and if so, they can refer the child to the Department of Child Development at KKH or Child Development Unit at NUH for diagnosis of developmental concerns.

Preschool teachers may also flag children with suspected developmental delays to specially-trained Learning Support Educators who will in turn screen the children, and work with paediatricians from KKH and NUH to determine the needs of the children and for referral to suitable EI services.

Children at risk of moderate to severe developmental delays will be referred by a paediatrician to the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) for early intervention services.

Within EIPIC, children may be placed into a suitable EI sub-programme depending on the level of support the child needs. With the introduction of the continuum of EI services, those who have made significant progress within EIPIC.

2. My child is a foreigner but not a PR. Where can my child go for early intervention programmes?

You are advised to check with your paediatrician for recommendations on early intervention programmes offered by private intervention centres, as only Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents are eligible for EIPIC at government-funded centres.

3. What is SG Enable's role in the EIPIC process?

SG Enable will provide you with information that will help you make an informed decision regarding the choice of EI centre for your child. Information shared will include location of centres, types of services offered by centres (e.g. therapy, transport), estimated wait time to enrolment, and caregiver presence requirement. Thereafter SG Enable will submit a referral to the EI centre on your behalf.

4. Which EI centres will be involved in offering the enhanced continuum of EI services? How will parents be informed if their child is eligible for EI services?

The three pilot EI providers (AWWA, SPD, Thye Hua Kwan) will continue to offer the enhanced continuum of EI services, which includes the DS-Plus programme, while the remaining EI centres will launch the enhanced continuum of EI services progressively, with 13 EI centres commencing in July 2019 and the remaining eight EI centres by 2021. (The full list can be found here: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Documents/Annexes%20and%20supplementary%20FAQs.pdf>).

EI centres which have launched the continuum of EI services will identify children for suitable EI programmes that are tailored to their developmental needs, through the use of the Early Intervention Benchmarking Framework. Parents will be kept up-to-date on their child's progress in EI, and the child's suitability for a change in the level of intensity of EI, through the child's six-monthly progress reviews.

EI centres will engage parents on the placement on specific programmes such as DS-Plus or EIPIC Under-2s, at least two months ahead of the target start date for the change in programme.

EIPIC

5. How soon can my child be enrolled in an EI centre?

It depends on the centre's wait list. Centres' estimated wait times can be found in the Guide to EIPIC (PDF).

6. Is EIPIC a full-day programme with a childcare facility?

No. Generally, the duration of each EIPIC session ranges from 2 to 4 hours. The session frequency ranges from 2 to 5 days per week, depending on the centre's assessment of your child's needs.

7. Do I get to choose whether my child attends the morning or afternoon session or the number of sessions I would like my child to undergo?

You may raise your preference for the morning or afternoon session with the centre during your child's screening at the centre. However, such requests are subject to the centre's assessment and discretion. With regard to the session frequency, the centre's therapist will assess your child and advise on the suitable programme and its frequency

8. Do I get to choose the type of therapy that my child undergoes?

No. All the EI centres offer a holistic programme that focusses on developmental, functional, social, motor, cognitive, language, communication and self-help skills. If you only want a certain component of the programme, you may want to explore private intervention instead.

9. How will I know which centres have transport facilities or whether the transport network covers my residential area?

Availability of transport services can be found in the [Guide to EIPIC](#) (PDF). Transport services are provided by external transport operators. Please contact the individual centres directly to enquire on transport fees and whether the transport network covers your residential area. You can also let the centre know if you have any special requests on transport arrangements

10. Can I visit the centre before deciding on my preferred choice for my child?

Yes. As it is up to the centres to decide if they allow visitors, you are advised to contact them to schedule a visit. The centres' contact details are available in the [Guide to EIPIC](#) (PDF).

11. Can I place my child on the waiting lists of different EI centres at the same time?

No. Your child may only be referred to one EI centre at any given time.

12. Can I request for my child to be transferred to another EI centre, after my child has already been enrolled?

You may contact the assigned SG Enable staff and request for a transfer if there is a valid reason for doing so, for instance, if you are moving house. Please note that your child would be required to serve a notice period at the existing centre and has to be discharged first before he/she is able to enrol in the new centre.

13. I had previously withdrawn my child from EIPIC. Can my child's application be reinstated?

Yes. The assigned SG Enable staff will advise if the medical report is valid for reinstatement (medical reports are valid for 1 year only.) If the medical report is no longer valid, an updated medical report will be required from your child's paediatrician.

14. I might not be able to afford the fees for EIPIC. How much subsidy am I entitled to, and how do I request for further financial assistance?

All government-funded EI centres have subsidy schemes in place to help families defray the programme fees. National means-testing will be conducted to decide how much subsidy should be given. You may also tap on the Baby Bonus scheme to offset the EIPIC fees. If you need further financial assistance, you should discuss it with the centre during your child's screening. You may also approach your nearest Family Service Centre (FSC) or Social Service Office (SSO) to apply for financial aid

EIPIC Under-2s

15. What is EIPIC Under-2s?

All children under two years old enrolled in EIPIC will receive intervention under a new **EIPIC-Under 2s** programme with an emphasis on upskilling parents and caregivers. At the age of two, the child will transit into the EIPIC@Centre programme.

16. How is the EIPIC Under-2s programme structured to enable the skilling parents and caregivers? Are there examples of how parents can embed intervention techniques in their daily routines?

Unlike the other EIPIC programmes, the EIPIC Under-2s programme requires that the parent/caregiver to accompany the child, as the programme focuses on training the parent/caregiver to carry out intervention strategies into the child's daily routines within their home setting. This has been found to be effective in embedding learning opportunities throughout the child's daily life.

Parents/caregivers of a child with cerebral palsy may be taught how to embed intervention strategies into the child's daily routines, e.g. positioning the child properly for functional activities (e.g. feeding/swallowing), doing appropriate strengthening exercises and building in sensory and cognitive stimulation into the child's daily activities. As another example, parents/caregivers of a non-verbal child with suspected Autism Spectrum Disorder would receive training on how to help their child communicate their preferences using visual supports, gestures, or signs.

DS-Plus

17. What is DS-Plus?

Children who have made sufficient progress under EIPIC@Centre will benefit from an enhanced Development Support (DS) programme, **DS-Plus**, which will help them transit into receiving intervention in their preschools. Under DS-Plus, EI professionals from the EI centre will work with the child in his/her preschool up to twice a week, co-teaching the child alongside the preschool teacher. This mode of intervention helps the child to adapt to the mainstream preschool setting, so that they can continue learning and be equipped with skills within a larger class setting.

18. How is DS-Plus different from EIPIC or the existing DS programme?

EIPIC, DS-Plus and DS differ in terms of the intensity of the EI provided, and the setting in which the child receives EI. Some children, such as those with multiple developmental needs, may be recommended an EIPIC programme which provides more intensive and customised support. These programmes will be based at EI centres, where there is a team of EI professionals to support the child's developmental needs, such as early intervention teachers, therapists, psychologists and social workers. The intensity of EI support would typically be about 5-12 hours per week on average.

As the child makes progress, and requires less intensive support, he or she may be recommended a preschool-based programme, where the emphasis is on building adaptive skills to access learning in

a larger group setting. The intensity of EI support under the DS-Plus programme for children with mild-moderate developmental needs is about 2-4 hours per week on average.

Children assessed to require DS programme have mild-moderate developmental needs, and receive EI within a preschool-setting, but at a reduced intensity of about 1-2 hours per week on average.

The setting in which the child receives EI depends on the needs of the child, and on the intensity of support that the child would benefit most from.

19. Can children be referred directly into the DS-Plus programme?

Children who are referred to EIPIC by the paediatricians at the hospitals or by private paediatricians, will be assessed at intake into the EI centre for suitability for the DS-Plus programme.

20. Which preschools will offer the enhanced DS programme (DS-Plus)?

The DS-Plus programme is provided on-site at preschools which have enrolled children who are assessed as being suitable for the programme by their EI provider. With the parent's consent, EI providers will contact the child's preschool principal to explain the DS-Plus programme, and seek the preschool's agreement for the EI professional to support the child within the preschool.

For Parents of Children Identified for DS-Plus

21. My child's preschool currently does not provide DS-Plus. Does this mean that he/she cannot be served through this programme? Will I need to send my child to another preschool in order to access DS-Plus? How long will it take for my child to begin the DS-Plus intervention?

The EI professional working with your child will assess his/her suitability for DS-Plus using the [Early Intervention Benchmarking Framework](#). If he/she is suitable, the EI centre will first obtain parents' consent, before contacting your child's preschool principal to share more about the programme and to seek the preschool's agreement for the EI professional to support the child within his/her existing preschool. It will take about two months or less from the time parents' consent is given, for the intervention to commence. If the preschool requires more time to make internal adjustments to support DS-Plus, your child will continue to be supported at the EI centre so that continuing intervention is assured.

22. How will my child's daily preschool routine be affected if he/she is placed on DS-Plus?

The child's preschool routine will not be affected, as the EI professional will work within the child's preschool schedule to integrate the intervention sessions within the preschool activities. For example, the EI professional may extend theme-based activities planned by the classroom teacher, to work on the child's specific developmental goals (e.g. improving his attention span, expressive language skills, or encouraging appropriate behaviour to help meet the child's needs). As the early childhood teacher conducts the general class, the EI professional will also be in the class to guide the child to support and facilitate his/her learning in a larger group setting.

23. If my child is recommended for the DS-Plus programmes, does this mean he/she will be able to attend mainstream primary school?

The DS and DS-Plus programmes are designed to equip children to access learning in a larger-group setting as compared to within EIPIC.

However, placement into a particular EI programme does not entail a guarantee or recommendation for either mainstream or special education school, as children's developmental needs may change over time, and each child responds differently to EI.

In general, children with mild special educational needs, i.e. they have adequate cognitive ability and adaptive skills to learn in a large group setting, may be able to cope with the required demands of mainstream schools. These could be children with dyslexia, mild autism or ADHD. However, children who require more intensive and customised support would be more appropriately supported in a Special Education (SPED) school.

Parents are advised to speak to the allied health professionals (e.g. psychologists) working with their child to better understand their child's needs, and discuss the school options that parents should consider for their child.

Early Intervention Benchmarking Framework (EIBF)

24. What is EIBF?

This is a common assessment framework which will be used across EI centres with effect from Jul 2019, to assess a child's developmental outcomes and determine the suitable EI. The EIBF is set out by the Community Psychology Hub.

25. How is EIBF used?

The common assessment framework is used to assess children in early intervention services, at entry and exit, and periodically in between.

Other Questions

26. How do I know if my child is ready to progress to Primary 1 in a mainstream school?

Your child will have an Individualised Education Plan (IEP) drawn up by the EI centre to track his/her progress. The centre will share this information periodically with you. When your child reaches the age of 5.5 to 6 years, the centre psychologist will assess your child or recommend an assessment with the hospital's psychologist to determine if he/she is suitable and ready for mainstream education.

If your child is found unsuitable for mainstream education, the psychologist may recommend that you enrol your child in a Special Education school. More information on Special Education schools can be found in the Ministry of Education's website. If your child is assessed suitable, but not yet ready for mainstream education, the hospital may recommend a deferment from Primary 1 for up to a year.

27. Where can I find information on private therapy centres?

Information on Baby Bonus-Approved Institutions that provide early intervention services and therapies is available in the Baby Bonus website by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). Fees at these centres could be offset by your child's Child Development Account (CDA). Please approach the centres directly if you are keen to engage their services.

28. My child is between 7 and 18 years old, and has special needs. Who can I approach for help?

Please consult your child's paediatrician or specialist doctor for professional advice on your child's needs. He or she would be able to refer your child to a Special Education (SPED) School and/or other services if assessed suitable. If your child does not have any prior medical follow-up, and you would like to seek subsidised consultation services, please visit a polyclinic for a referral to a relevant specialist doctor.

29. Is there an early intervention programme for older children? If so, how do I enrol my child for this programme?

Older children with special needs may enrol in Special Education (SPED) schools. Please check with MOE directly or refer to its website for more details. Alternatively, you may contact the SPED schools directly for more information. For older children who are enrolled in mainstream schools, you may wish to approach your child's school for advice. Please refer to MOE's website for more information. Alternatively, you may consult your child's paediatrician or specialist doctor for professional advice on your child's needs.