

SOONERSTART - EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Special Education Services Division

Oklahoma State Department of Education

PURPOSE

SoonerStart is Oklahoma's early intervention program for families of infants and toddlers, birth to 36 months who have developmental delays, disabilities or both. SoonerStart was established under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). SoonerStart builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members to enhance infant's or toddler's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities. The SoonerStart program provides case management, evaluation, AT devices and services.

CONTACT

Lead Agency:
 Mark Sharp, Exe. Director
 SoonerStart Early Intervention
 Oklahoma State Dept. of Ed.
 2500 N Lincoln, Ste 412
 Oklahoma City, OK 73105
 (405) 521-4880
 FAX: (405) 522-1590
<http://ok.gov/sde/soonerstart>

Service Provision Agency:
 John Corpolongo, Chief
 SoonerStart Early Intervention
 Oklahoma State Dept. of Health
 1000 NE 10th, Rm 803
 Oklahoma City, OK 73117
 (405) 271-9444 ext. 56806
 (405) 271-8333
 FAX: (405) 271-4419
http://www.ok.gov/health/County_Health_Departments/Carter_County_Health_Department/SoonerStart_Early_Intervention/

FINANCIAL CRITERIA

- None

ELIGIBILITY

- Infants and toddlers birth through 36 months of age who:
 - exhibit a delay in their developmental age compared to their chronological age of 50% in one, or 25% in two or more of the following areas: cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional, or adaptive development; or
 - have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in delay. This includes, but is not limited to: chromosomal disorders, neurological abnormalities, inborn errors of metabolism, genetic disorders, congenital malformations of the brain, congenital infections, sensory abnormalities, impairments, or identified syndromes.

AT SERVICES PROVIDED/COVERED

- Assessments & Evaluations
- Locating Alternate Funding
- Case Management
- Training for Consumer & Family
- Information & Referral
- Fabrication of Devices
- Maintenance & Repairs

AT DEVICES PROVIDED/COVERED



Aids for Daily Living



Speech Communication



Aids for Hearing Impaired



Mobility/Seating & Positioning



Aids for Vision Impaired



Recreation & Leisure Devices

APPLICATION PROCESS

- A referral for SoonerStart services can be made by physicians and other health professionals, family members, childcare professionals, neighbors, friends and other interested individuals.
- The referring individual or family member should contact the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Special Education Services at (405) 521-3351 and ask for the phone number to the local SoonerStart office, based upon the county of residence of the child. SoonerStart referral numbers to specific county offices can be found at: <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/2013%20Referral%20Guide%20back.pdf>
- Participation in SoonerStart is voluntary. SoonerStart will complete the developmental screening, evaluation of the child's development or both at no direct cost to the family.
- If the family chooses to accept services, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) identifying the needed services and supports for the child and the family will be developed. The family will participate in identifying these services and supports.



SOONERSTART – EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM, cont. . .

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Program Manager
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Allyson Robinson
SLP, AT Specialist
Oklahoma ABLE Tech
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(888) 885-5588
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<http://abletech.okstate.edu>

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

1. Informal Process: Families should go back to the Early Intervention Coordinator with concerns about services and ask for a meeting to work out the request through local procedures to expedite resolution of the problem. However, families have the right to go through the formal process, in addition to, or in lieu of, the informal process.
2. Formal Process: Complaints must be written and include:
 - how SoonerStart has violated a requirement under Part C of IDEA;
 - the basic facts which lead to the belief that the law has been violated;
 - complaints pertaining to a specific child with a disability that include the child's name, date of birth, and current IFSP; and
 - the signature of person(s) filing the complaint.
3. Upon receipt of a complaint or request for a due process hearing, the Early Intervention Unit will offer mediation within five working days of receiving the complaint or hearing request. A request for a due process hearing must be in writing, signed, and addressed to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (Attention: SoonerStart Early Intervention Program), 2500 N Lincoln Boulevard, Ste 510, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-4599.
4. The Oklahoma Parents Center is available to provide information on federal and state laws regarding the provision of early intervention services, and parent rights and responsibilities to all eligible infants and toddlers and their families.

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

- There is no direct cost to families for early intervention services, regardless of the family's income.
- SoonerStart is a joint effort of the Oklahoma Departments of: Education, Health, Human Services, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Health Care Authority and the Commission on Children and Youth. Its lead agency is the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
- The IFSP is a coordinated plan of service based on the identified needs of the individual child and family. The IFSP is jointly developed by the family and appropriate early intervention personnel.
- The early intervention services identified in the IFSP may include assistive technology devices that are used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.
- AT devices may be provided by SoonerStart when certain criteria have been met. Those requirements are listed in the SoonerStart Operations Manual Section 1800 found at: <http://www.ok.gov/sde/soonerstart-operations-manual> An AT Request form can be found in the Operations Manual.
- AT devices provided by SoonerStart remain the property of the program.
- AT devices are made available to SoonerStart teams statewide for demonstration to help families and caregivers decide if one or more AT devices will meet the child's needs. Many devices are provided for demonstration and short-term loan purposes by ABLE Tech.
- For children who may be eligible for IDEA Part B services, at least 90 days before the child's third birthday, a meeting to ensure a smooth transition from SoonerStart to the preschool program under Part B of IDEA will be held. If the child is eligible for special education services, any needs for AT will be addressed by the Individual Education Plan (IEP). (See Page 63, Special Education Services Division).