

# Support for the early identification of special needs enhances child development

Kids Count in Michigan | March 2023

## What we know

### On-time universal screening allows families to identify and best support children with special needs.

Used by a variety of practitioners, including home visiting programs, developmental screenings identify delays and behavioral concerns. *Early On* is the state's early intervention system. It recognizes the significant brain development that occurs during a child's first three years of life and seeks early identification and early referral to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities.

### Screening, detection and referrals ensure kids receive timely interventions and services.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 100% of infants and toddlers receive a developmental screening at 9, 18 and 30 months of age.

**Just 29%**  
of Michigan children receive a developmental screening—ranking 6th from the bottom nationally.<sup>1</sup>

In fall 2021  
**3.4%**  
of children (11,030) 0-2 years old were enrolled in *Early On*.<sup>2</sup>

Communication delays and physical delays are the **most common reasons** for *Early On* enrollment.<sup>2</sup>

## Recommendations

### To promote on-time universal screening for early detection and intervention, Michigan should:

**Expand state investment in *Early On*:** Continue to expand state investment in *Early On* to fund at the true cost of delivering services, and adequately invest in system supports by expanding MDE's capacity to support ISDs.

**Support timely developmental screenings:** Ensure that children have a developmental screening at 9, 18 and 30 months of age, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.



## Sources

1. Children ages 9 months to 35 months who received a developmental screening in Michigan. Annie E. Casey Foundation.
2. *Early On* Data Set.

### Think Babies Michigan

is a collaborative of more than 2,000 members—leaders, experts, families, organizations and providers—working together to improve the lives of babies prenatally through age 3 in Michigan.

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