

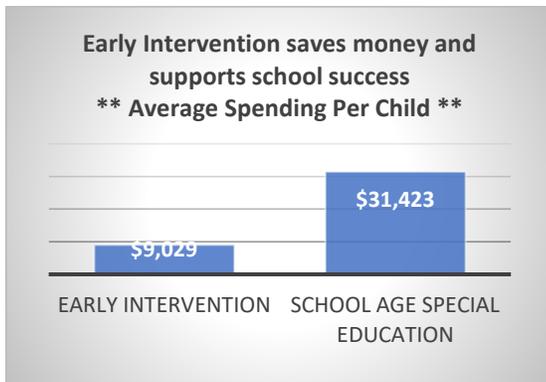
# KIDS CAN'T WAIT!

## No more delays in Early Intervention services

*When services are available early and on time, young children with developmental delays or disabilities are more likely to develop to their full potential, and the cost is significantly less than waiting until children reach school age.*

When young children (ages birth – 5 years old) are not developing typically, they are eligible to receive services, such as physical, occupational and speech therapy.

Federal law mandates that appropriate, timely services be available to children of all ages. Infants and toddlers are served by the Early Intervention program and preschoolers are served by the Preschool Special Education program.



**IN MONROE COUNTY:** On any given day, 1200-1300 children in Monroe County are receiving EI services. There are 200 – 300 referrals per month to Monroe County’s EI program. In June 2019 there were 200 children waiting for EI services.

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

These programs are funded with local, state and federal dollars. Right now, inadequate funding in New York State is driving professionals out of this field. With providers not available, children are waiting weeks or even months for support they need to thrive and grow.

For example, nearly one out of 5 infants and toddlers in New York State are forced onto waiting lists now – and that’s growing. In Monroe County,

one-third of children birth to three years old spent time on a waiting list to receive these critical services in 2016. Since then, the number of children waiting for services has increased substantially.

### WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

We must urge our elected officials to take action to ensure that New Yorkers ages birth to 5 with developmental delays and disabilities are receiving services to which they are entitled, such as evaluations, speech/language therapy, physical therapy, and other services. To reach this goal, they must:

1. Increase payment rates for Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education providers in New York State’s 2020-21 budget so more therapists will enter and stay in this field, allowing more children to be served.
2. Improve the system serving these vulnerable young children by aligning and better coordinating the Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education programs.



### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Speak up! Tell your friends, neighbors and – most importantly – your NYS legislator about this crisis, and what action is needed to help kids get the services they need, when they need them.
- Join the “Kids Can’t Wait” campaign at [www.thechildrensagenda.org](http://www.thechildrensagenda.org). Once you’re a member, you’ll be informed about opportunities to take action.
- If you are involved in a faith-based organization or congregation, sign up to advocate for kids in need during the Children’s Interfaith Weekend at [www.thechildrensagenda.org/partnerships/interfaith/](http://www.thechildrensagenda.org/partnerships/interfaith/)