

# Welcome



to **ELI**

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# What is Early Start?

The **Early Start** community is made up of agencies and individuals who work together to provide **Early Intervention** services to families of children birth to three years of age who are demonstrating delays, or who are at risk for developmental delays.

**Early Learning Institute** is one of these Early Intervention agency partners. Major funders in the **Early Start** community include **North Bay Regional Center (NBRC)** and **SELPA** who assess and coordinate services, and also purchase services for children and their families through approved vendors such as **Early Learning Institute**. After assessments have been done, examples of services that may be purchased include **Early Intervention** home visiting and group services, as well as other services. Other vendors in the **Early Start** community also provide early intervention expertise. These include speech, occupational and physical therapists, vision counselors, parent educators, and preschool providers. Besides **North Bay Regional Center (NBRC)**, **SELPA**, and private vendors, other important **Early Start** partners include California Children's Services, Public Health Nursing, audiologists, and the medical community. All of these partners try to work closely together, to ensure coordinated support for families.

The central point for referral to **Early Start** services is called the WARM LINE. This begins the process of evaluation if indicated.

**The WARM LINE phone number is: 1 800 646-3268**

# Specialists in the Field of Early Intervention

## SERVICE COORDINATORS

Regional Center and SELPA Service Coordinators help inform parents about available services, manage the coordination of those services, and approve certain services for families through Regional Center or SELPA. Many Service Coordinators can administer developmental assessments as well.

## EARLY INTERVENTION SPECIALIST

A parent/infant educator who works with families to assess, plan, and implement a program which addresses a child's developmental needs.

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

A therapist who works to improve a child's self-help, feeding, and play skills, including their ability to adapt physical behavior to different situations. They also address motor, sensory, oral motor and postural development.

## PHYSICAL THERAPIST

A therapist who works with a child to prevent or alleviate movement dysfunction, including helping a child develop muscle strength, range of motion, coordination, and endurance, as well as acquiring and maintaining positions and movement.

## SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

A therapist who works to improve a child's speech and language skills, including improving oral motor abilities, such as feeding.

## NURSES/PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

Nurses provide a range of medically and developmentally based services for infants, pregnant women, and children. They can assess children and families to help identify programs to assist them and also make follow-up home visits.

## AUDIOLOGISTS

Audiologists provide hearing assessments and often work closely with speech therapists. Assessments are often done in their offices, however some hearing assessments are done in the hospital setting on an outpatient basis.

# Who is on my Early Start Early Intervention Team

## NBRC or SELPA:

My Service Coordinator is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number is:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Early Learning Institute (eli) :

My Early Intervention Specialist **Home Visitor** is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone number is:

\_\_\_\_\_

## My Child's Therapists:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Therapy: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Medical Specialists/Doctors:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Other Service Providers

Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*Who is the...*

# Early Learning Institute?

The Early Learning Institute was founded on the philosophy that the first 5 years of life constitute a critical learning period, both for children and for those caring for them. It is during this time that a child's potential for growth in the cognitive, physical and social-emotional realms of development can be profoundly influenced by the coordinated intervention efforts of professionals and family members/caregivers. It is also a critical time in the growth and development of the family unit. Support and education are often needed to foster positive relationships, especially for a family dealing with the unexpected stresses of a child who may have special developmental needs.

The Early Learning Institute offers families full scope early intervention services provided by experienced, dedicated professionals. The institute is responsive to the immediate and ever changing needs of young children and their families. Most of our programs are available to families at no charge or for only a minimal fee. The Institute also offers the community a place to access information about child development in general, or information specific to a child's diagnosis. There are ongoing support groups, as well as a variety of children's peer play groups.

The senior staff at ELI has over 100 years of experience between them. They are among the most respected early interventionists in the state and are active in far reaching legislative or educational policy-making activities. The educational background of staff includes university and advanced degrees, certificates and licensures, and degrees in progress. All staff receive ongoing in-service training. 50% of ELI's staff is bilingual Spanish, and many staff members are also parents of children with special needs who were recipients of early intervention services themselves.



# Our Mission...

The Early Learning Institute is dedicated to providing and promoting Developmental Services, Education and Support to young children and their families.

## We Believe:

- **PARENTS** are their child's first and Best teachers.
- **Children** have the best chance for developmental success if interventions begin as early as possible.
- **Developmental Services** promote family stability by providing parent support and education.

Professional services are most effective when offered as a collaborative effort. The best way to meet the individual needs and interests of children and their families is for parents and professionals to work together.

# Did you know that ELI offers various programs to Sonoma County Families?



## Early Intervention Home Visits

ELI's **Early Intervention** services through **Early Start** are available to children 0-3 who have been identified as having a developmental delay or disability. For those qualifying through **Early Start** (information available), children may be provided with such services as therapeutic playgroups, home visits from an **Early Intervention Specialist**, or occupational and physical therapy. Using a plan developed with the child's family, ELI staff work with parents and caregivers to engage children in targeted play activities that promote optimal developmental growth. Assistance with referrals for developmental assessments is also available.



## Group Services

Educationally based playgroups offer a child and his/her family the opportunity to meet and interact with other children and families in a safe and supportive environment. Children practice social skills, sharing, problem solving, routines, turn-taking, separation, etc. and have fun doing it! A variety of special focus therapeutic playgroups have been designed to enhance, augment and expand a child and family's early intervention experience. ELI also offers playgroups for typically developing 0-3 year olds. In these groups, slots are saved specifically for children with special needs to provide inclusive experiences. A new group for children 2-4 years with mild speech delays is also now available.



## Watch Me Grow!

Watch Me Grow provides FREE social/emotional and developmental screenings to children throughout Sonoma County ages Birth-5 who would otherwise not be screened. WMG staff connects families to community services, and can facilitate referrals to mental health or developmental services if there is a need and the family is interested. Included in the Watch Me Grow program is our **PEAS** Program:

## PEAS Parent Education and Support



ELI offers three specific programs under our parent education and support umbrella. The PEAS program is available to families of children 0-5 with developmental needs who are currently receiving services. This is a 6-week series that offers reflection, support and referrals as needed to parents. The Triple P program is an evidence-based program of parent education that targets specific behavioral changes parents would like to make with their 0-5 child. This program is available to parents of typically developing children as well as those with special needs



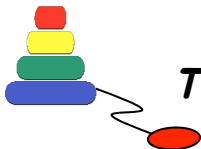
## Consultation Project

FREE on-site consultation services to childcare providers and preschool teachers serving children birth through age 5 who have not yet begun Kindergarten. The Consultation Project works together with providers and families to address behavioral, developmental and/or mental health issues, share ideas, and plan for a child's success in his or her program. The Consultation Project Consultants can also connect families and programs to community resources and services.

## Wee Play Preschool



Wee Play Community Preschool is a small, inclusive preschool play program designed especially for children who are not quite ready for larger preschool environments. A progressive approach to the early education of children guides the curriculum which is based on developmentally appropriate, child-centered interests. Classes meet two afternoons per week from 1-4 pm. Morning classes coming. (For 3-5 year olds. Monthly tuition)



## Tech n' Tots

*Tech n Tots* helps families make living and learning environments more user friendly for their very young children with special needs. Consultants work with families in the home and in group settings to design and implement communication and play strategies that are compatible with the individual needs and abilities of each child and family.

## Therapists



This individualized service is designed to support a child's needs focusing on a specific area of development such as: Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Self-Regulation, Sensory Motor, Postural Development, Oral muscle development, feeding and communication. Such services may be provided by an Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist or Speech and Language Pathologist depending on the need of the child.



# Home Visits

## EARLY INTERVENTION HOME VISITS CAN HELP

One of Early Learning Institute's developmental services is **Early Intervention**. **Early Intervention home visits are often made weekly but may be less frequent depending on needs and schedules**. This service has been purchased for you with the help of your **Early Start** Service Coordinator at either **North Bay Regional Center (NBRC)** or at **SELPA**. **There is no cost to you for this service**.

Home visits are almost always provided on a weekly basis. They may be less frequent depending on the child's need; but **never exceeds 4 visits** within the same month. ELI observes most major holidays. If your regular visit falls on a Holiday your visit may need to be canceled. Your **Early Intervention Specialist** may schedule vacation days on your regular home visiting day; visits will be canceled as well.

## HOME VISITING AND YOU

During home visits, Parents and **Early Intervention Specialists** use toys and activities to:

- 1. Help children progress in their development by learning through play, and**
- 2. Help caregivers grow in their role as their child's most important teachers.**

On home visits you'll be right there playing, talking, and working with your child and **Early Intervention Specialist**. At the end of each home visit, you will talk with your **Early Intervention Specialist** about how things went. Then, every six months, you'll help create your child's **report**, which will be a roadmap of your child's strengths and needs, and a way to monitor your child's progress. Reports will be written every six months, and will be given to you and to the agency (**NBRC** or **SELPA**), who is purchasing Early Learning Institute's services for you.

Your **Early Intervention Specialist** will also participate as a team member at your child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings, where you, as an important member of that team, will help decide what comes next for your child and family. Over time your **Early Intervention Specialist** and your **NBRC** or **SELPA** Service Coordinator will help you understand the **Early Start** system, and when your child graduates from **Early Start** early intervention services, typically by age 3, you will be an informed consumer and advocate for your child. You will also know how other service systems work, if needed.

# What your Early Intervention Specialist Can and Cannot do

## Your ELI Early Intervention Specialist CAN:

- Be a trusted partner, support, and developmental consultant for you, to help your family meet your child's developmental needs.
- Help you learn who to talk to about finding resources such as transportation, financial support, and emotional support.
- Assist you in making contacts with your team of **Early Start** developmental specialists.
- Give you information you may need to make decisions about your child's developmental needs.
- Show you and your whole family activities to help your child develop, using toys and daily routines.
- Attend meetings with you to help you move smoothly between services, when and if that is needed.

**Because of insurance and legal issues, and to support you in the most professional manner, it is important that you know....**

## Your Early Intervention Specialist CANNOT:

- Directly provide transportation.
- Provide direct financial assistance.
- Make phone calls for you without your participation.
- Feed your child or change your child's diaper.
- Be alone with your child or provide childcare for your family.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR EARLY INTERVENTION HOME VISITOR.**

Due to family and cultural differences communication between you and your **Early Intervention Specialist** is essential. It is important that you are able to build trust with your **Early Intervention Specialist** so that you can comfortably communicate your concerns regarding your child's needs. This can sometimes be difficult, but our **Early Intervention Specialists** are very flexible and any suggestions to improve home visits is welcomed.

# Making the most of the Home Visit

A home visit is a fun time when together you, your child, and your **Early Intervention Specialist** work, play, and learn from each other. In order to make the most of your home visits, it is important to create a suitable and comfortable teaching environment for your child. This will increase your child's sense of security and safety, and will help ensure the most participation, cooperation, and enjoyment.

We can't always create the ideal learning environment or perfect situation, but we can make a difference, sometimes just by starting with questions such as:

## ***WHAT DOES A HOME VISIT LOOK LIKE?***

Just like most of the services for children this age, home visits are play based. Your **Early Intervention Specialist** will work through games and developmentally appropriate activities. Your **Early Intervention Specialist** may have his/her own rules in regards to toys and activities and with your help they will be explained to the child with the idea of preparing your child for pre-school. Your **Early Intervention Specialist** may introduce new activities which will always be developmentally appropriate for your child. Your child's skills will be supported and monitored by your **Early Intervention Specialist**.

## ***WHAT IS MY ROLE DURING THE HOME VISIT?***

Your **Early Intervention Specialist** is there to support you and give you ideas of how you can help your child. Thus it is expected of you to participate during the visit. You can help your child by modeling the presented activities, exploring new activities and providing new information to your home visitor.

## ***WHAT IS THE BEST TIME FOR MY CHILD AND FOR ME TO HAVE OUR HOME VISIT?***

We all have busy schedules, so agreeing upon a mutually workable day and time may take some flexibility. When you and your **Early Intervention Specialist** find a good day and time, try to be consistent. It will be easier for everyone to plan around, and you may find that your young one starts developing a sense of the rhythm of the week. We hope that you and your child will come to look forward to your regular home visits. Since your **Early Intervention Specialist** will be a guest in your home for only a brief session, we respectfully suggest a few other things you may wish to consider:

## ***WHEN MY EARLY INTERVENTION SPECIALIST ARRIVES I SHOULD CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING...***

- Is my child *rested*?
- Is my child *fed*?

- Is my child *dry*?
- Is my child *comfortable*?
- Is my environment *clean* and *safe* for my child to play in and explore?
- How is the *temperature* in my house? Is it comfortable for my child?
- Is there *fresh air* circulating? Are there windows or doors that can be opened?

***HAVE I LIMITED THOSE THINGS THAT COULD DISTRACT ME OR MY CHILD, SUCH AS:***

- TV
- Phone Calls
- Music or Loud Sounds
- People Who Might Distract
- Toys that can distract my child

**WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE MORE CHILDREN IN THE HOME?**

Depending on the maturity and age of children, sometimes they can be good helpers or models for the child in services. But if the brother/relative or friend takes control of the toys or activity causing a distraction it may be best to seek an alternative activity/space for the other child present. Remember that the **Early Intervention Specialist** is only there once a week and your child is best served when the focus is directed towards him/her.

Children, like adults, can feel stress with new or unfamiliar situations, such as being introduced to a new **Early Intervention Specialist** and new activities. You can ease into and increase the benefit of your home visits, by doing what you can to create a positive learning environment. Lastly, by continuing your play throughout the week with your family or friends, you will be making the most of your home visits.

# Guidelines for Canceling Home Visits

Germs and illness travel fast, especially among young children. If your child or someone in your household seems sick, please call your **Early Intervention Specialist** ahead of the scheduled appointment to discuss if a home visit is appropriate. We do appreciate your cooperation in considering these guidelines. We will do the same; we will not come to your home if we are sick. **Please check with your Early Intervention Specialist, in advance, if you are not sure whether to cancel a home visit.**

**Below are some reasons for canceling.**

1. Elevated **temperature** 100 or above, within the last 24 hours.
2. **Diarrhea or vomiting.**
3. **Severe coughing.** This would include if the child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched croupy or whooping sound when coughing.
4. **Nasal discharge that is green** in color.
5. Labored or rapid breathing. (Especially significant in infants less than 6 months old).
6. **Tearing, irritation, and redness to the eyelid lining.** This may be followed by swelling or discharge of pus.
7. **Rashes** that itch or are blister-like or weeping.
8. **Sore throat or difficulty swallowing,** or sudden and severe sore throat.
9. Any infected area of the skin with a crusty bright yellow, dry or gummy area.
10. **Headache or stiff neck.**
11. **Unusual behaviors:** i.e. crankiness, listlessness, crying more than usual or obvious discomfort.
12. **Loss of appetite.**
13. Pinworms, scabies, or lice.
14. **Flu or a contagious condition in the household.**

**Remember, if you have any concerns about wellness,  
PLEASE CALL YOUR EARLY INTERVENTION SPECIALIST TO DISCUSS THIS,  
IN ADVANCE OF YOUR HOME VISIT**

**You can leave a message for your Early Intervention Specialist  
From 7:00 am to 10:00 pm**

# Understanding Your: Child's Reports

With your input, your **Early Intervention Specialist** will be writing reports about your child usually every six months. **Your Early Intervention Specialist will set aside one day to review goals, skills and updates with you and will not bring toys on this particular day.** These reports will address your child's current developmental skills and needs. These reports will be reviewed and updated with you, so that your child's strengths and progress can be recognized and celebrated, and developmental needs identified.

Some of the developmental terms used in your child's reports may be familiar to you, and others may be new. As an expert on your own child, you have much to teach your **Early Intervention Specialist**. Our hope for your partnership is that your background, expertise, and experience, coupled with that of your **Early Intervention Specialist's**, will combine to help create current reports about your child and his/her family.

The developmental areas that are covered in your child's Reports include:

- **Sensory Motor and Sensory Organization**
- **Cognition**
- **Communication including Language Reception and Language Expression**
- **Preliteracy**
- **Gross Motor**
- **Fine Motor**
- **Social Emotional**
- **Self Help**

The following is a list of brief descriptions of these developmental areas (adapted from the *Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)*, a developmental curriculum which many **Early Intervention Specialists** use):

# Areas of Development

## **SENSORY MOTOR:**

This area addresses your child's responses to the environment and to movement. Outcomes written in this area offer your child opportunities to respond to information received through the five senses (seeing, touching, hearing, tasting, and smelling), as well as offers experiences with moving through space on one's own, and being moved through space by someone else.

## **COGNITIVE:**

This area is often thought of as the problem solving area, however it is more than that, because we solve problems or "figure stuff out" in lots of ways. Some of these ways can be understood and explored by looking at:

- Symbolic play (I use this just like mommy uses it)
- Gesture imitation (I can make my body move that way too!)
- Awareness of sounds (I heard that AND I know where that sound came from)
- Cause and Effect (when I do this... look what happens)
- Means and Ends (I can get that by pulling on this)
- Spatial Awareness (this fits here but not there) and so on...

## **COMMUNICATION Receptive and Expressive Language:**

This area addresses the many ways we make our needs known and show what we understand. It also includes the social, practical aspects of good communication, such as making and sustaining eye contact with people. The Receptive Language area focuses on what we "receive" or understand, including what our responses are to words, gestures, signs, and to directions. The Expressive Language area focuses on how we send our messages or "express" ourselves. This may not always be in words; there are other ways to be expressive. These include crying, making sounds, using gestures and sign language, etc.

## **LANGUAGE-PRELITERACY**

This area covers the variety of ways we can help children develop foundational skills for later reading and writing by participating in these activities together. PRE literacy activities which include rhythm, nursery rhymes and songs, coloring, reading, and looking at printed material together.

## **GROSS MOTOR:**

This area offers activities for developing large motor skills beginning with head control, and progressing through rolling, sitting, standing, walking, running, and balance activities.

## **FINE MOTOR:**

This area focuses on small muscle control starting with the tiny muscles of the eyes, and progressing through the more and more refined movements of the hands and fingers. Activities here might begin with grasping and releasing objects, and stacking blocks, and then eventually address the finer control needed for stringing beads, copying designs using a pencil on paper, and cutting construction paper using safety scissors.

### **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL:**

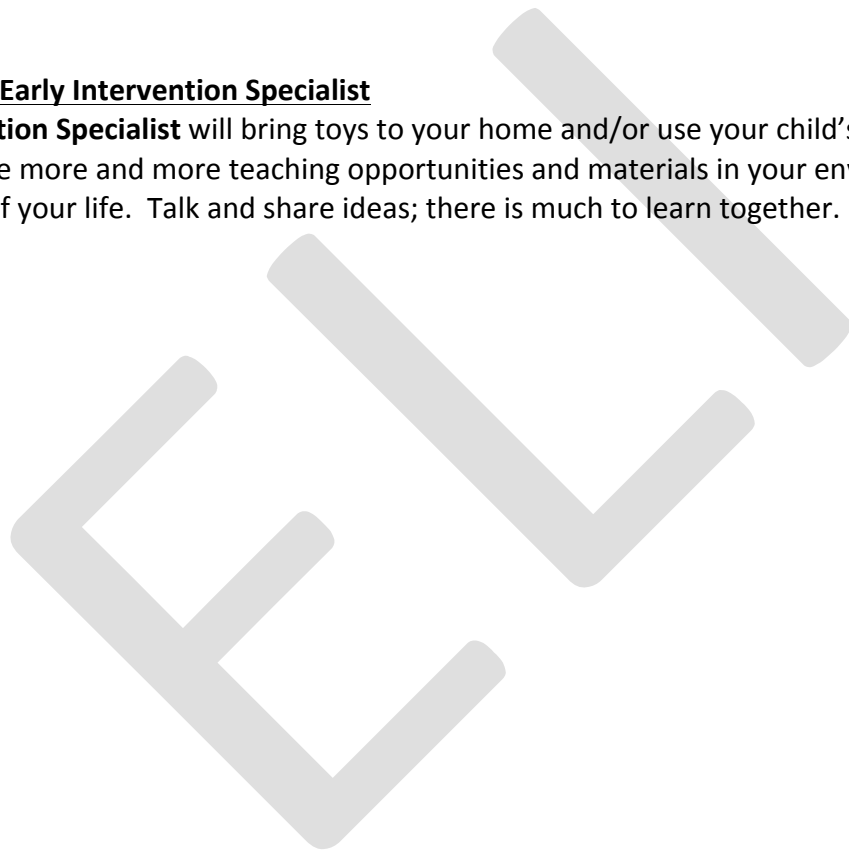
This area looks at children's attachment and their connection to those special people in their lives, as well as at their sense of security and development as individuals. Opportunities for children to spend time with other children are often eventually included in a child's outcomes for social emotional development.

### **SELF-REGULATION**

This area offers opportunities for children to develop independence in areas such as feeding, dressing and toileting. Independence in these self-help activities can be achieved in small increments, and can boost confidence in all areas of development, as children feel the success of being able to do more on their own.

### **Working with Your Early Intervention Specialist**

Your **Early Intervention Specialist** will bring toys to your home and/or use your child's toys, but you will also begin to see more and more teaching opportunities and materials in your environment and in the daily activities of your life. Talk and share ideas; there is much to learn together.





# Early Intervention Agencies by their Acronym

**ELI - Early Learning Institute - 591-0170**

Early Intervention-Home Visits, Groups, Parent Ed., Support, 0-5 yrs.

**NBRC-North Bay Regional Center-569-2000-Warm Line 1800 646-3268**

Information, assessment, referrals, services 0-3 years

**SELPA - Special Education Local Plan Area-524-2750**

Treatment, support for children birth -22 years

**MATRIX Parent Network/Family Resource Center 1800 578-2592**

Parents rights, advocacy, support 0-26 years

**ESIDP - Easter Seals Northern California -584-1443**

Early intervention, parent education, group activities

**CCS - California Children's Services -565-4500**

Medical diagnosis, treatment, physical/occupational therapy 0-21 yrs.

**CPI - California Parenting Institute -585-6108**

Parenting classes, support groups, parent/child interaction classes

**BBF - Blind Babies Foundation -501 446-2229**

Vision counseling, home visits

**CPS - Child Protective Services- 565-4300- Reporting Hotline 565-4304**

Social workers for families

**PHN - Sonoma County Public Health- 565-4440**

In-home assessment, intervention, and referral services

## EARLY START SERVICES AND PROFESSIONALS BY ACRONYM

**OT- Occupational therapy or therapist**

**PT- Physical therapy or therapist**

**SLP-Speech Language Pathologist**

**EIS-Early Intervention Specialist**

**PHN-Public Health Nurse**

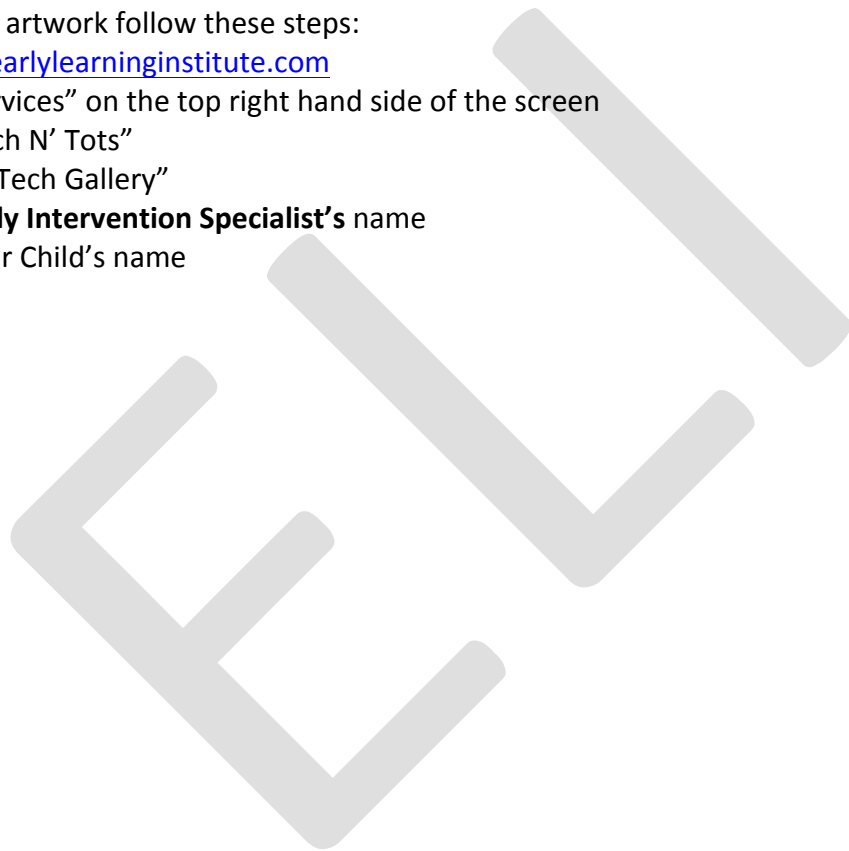
# The use of iPads during Home Visits

Depending on the age, maturity and family rules your **Early Intervention Specialist** may opt to use an iPad to create art or practice a new skill. The applications used by ELI have been carefully selected to support the development of children. If you are interested in a particular application or would like to find out more about it, feel free to ask you **Early Intervention Specialist** for the name of the application being used.

Artwork created by your child on the iPad can be viewed on our website. It may also be emailed directly to you upon request.

To view your child's artwork follow these steps:

1. Go to [www.earlylearninginstitute.com](http://www.earlylearninginstitute.com)
2. Click on "Services" on the top right hand side of the screen
3. Click on "Tech N' Tots"
4. Click on "ARTech Gallery"
5. Click on **Early Intervention Specialist's** name
6. Click on your Child's name



# Events

Throughout the year, ELI organizes several family events and fundraising opportunities with the intent of meeting other families while supporting ELI. These events include, our Winter Celebration, Discovery Day, Human Race, Fireworks booth and Dinner Dances.

It is possible that during these events we may ask for a donation or volunteers. Your participation is important to us and would be greatly appreciated. Your **Early Intervention Specialist** will give you more information on upcoming events.

If you would like to make a donation or be a volunteer during our events please call 707-591-0170 or visit our webpage at [www.earlylearninginstitute.com](http://www.earlylearninginstitute.com)

