

Specialized Skills Training: What Families Need to Know

Early Childhood Intervention helps families with children who have developmental delays or disabilities

Specialized Skills Training increases your ability to help your child learn new skills. SST is a unique early intervention service only offered by Early Childhood Intervention. A child can receive both SST and therapy services. SST and your child's other ECI services work together so you can help your child:



Develop positive social-emotional skills (making and keeping friends).



Learn new developmental skills and know how to use them.



Learn to meet their needs themselves (walking, talking, eating, dressing).

What is Specialized Skills Training?

SST:

- Shows you how to help your child learn with a focus on thinking skills, behavior and social skills. These are all skills your child needs to be ready for school.
- Shows you ways to help your child during your family's everyday activities by using items in your home or childcare center.
- Teaches you about your child's development and what should be happening next.

Who Provides SST?

Early Intervention Specialist

Only an EIS is qualified to provide SST. To receive the EIS credential, ECI professionals are required to have at least a bachelor's degree with coursework related to early childhood intervention. EISs must also successfully complete specialized post-graduate training. EISs have expertise in:

- How infants and toddlers grow and learn, including thinking and social skills.
- How all areas of development are related.
- Common infant and toddler behavior, including biting, picky eating and sleep problems.
- How to use activities you do every day to help your child's development.

What happens at an SST visit?

Your EIS will schedule visits to join you during activities you request help with, either at home or in your community. The skills you learn during SST will help your child meet her specific developmental goals.

The following are a few examples of activities that might happen during an SST visit.

Learning and using words

The EIS shows you how to set up your child's play area to encourage him to use words to ask for his favorite toys.

The EIS shows you ways to use pictures of food to help your child make choices during snack time.

Behavior and reducing tantrums

The EIS suggests ways to help your child know when she needs to stop one activity and move to the next. The EIS supports you as you practice these ideas and offers suggestions on other things to try.

The EIS meets you at the grocery store and teaches you ways to help your child stay calm so you can complete your shopping.

Rolling, sitting and walking

The EIS helps you use your baby's toys to teach him to roll over, sit up, and eventually walk.

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Working Together as a Team

Child

- I learn and develop most rapidly during the first three years of my life.
- I learn best during everyday activities such as bathing, eating or playing.
- I learn best from my family and friends.
- I learn best when the people who care for me practice the activities they have learned from the ECI team with me every day.
- I am an individual with unique needs and strengths.

Parent or Caregiver

- I am my child's first and best teacher.
- I share my concerns and questions about my child's development with the ECI team.
- I am an active team member in helping my child reach his or her next step in development.
- I practice activities the team suggests between ECI visits.

Early Intervention Specialist

- I will observe your family's activities and ask what is important to you.
- I will ask questions to learn how to best support you in daily interactions as you care of your child.
- I will answer your questions about your child's development and how to best meet his or her needs.
- I will ask about activities you tried and help you decide what works and what does not work.
- I will help you plan new activities to help your child. Together, we will plan what you can do between visits.
- My goal is to improve your child's development by showing you activities you can use every day.



To locate an ECI program in your area:

Visit the HHS ECI program search page at citysearch.hhsc.state.tx.us or call the HHS Office of the Ombudsman at 877-787-8999.