

Vision: Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful

**Hi!** My name is Joey and I'm four years old. This is my brother Anthony, who's two. From the outside you might just think we are like all other kids, and in most ways we are! We love to sing, dance, play at the playground, and read books. What you might not know by looking at us is that we both were born with critical medical conditions. My parents did not realize anything was different about me until around six weeks of age. I was diagnosed with a brain disorder that causes spinal fluid to build up on the inside and outside of my brain. This caused dangerous pressure on my brain and also made my head too heavy for me to do the things other babies were doing.



When Anthony was born he was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect. He had an open heart surgery before he was a week old and he had to stay in the hospital for a long time before he could come live with us at home. The doctors did a great job taking care of him, though, and his heart did very well after surgery. Unfortunately, his vocal cord was paralyzed during surgery. This meant he couldn't coo or cry for a long time and when he drank milk it could go in his lungs if my mommy wasn't very careful.

Times have been hard for my family with our surgeries, many appointments, and health scares. But, with the help of all of our supports we have made it through some very difficult times. One support we couldn't have done without was Early ACCESS! We've had Physical Therapists teaching us to get around, Occupational Therapists working on hand strength and eating, a dietician helping my mommy learn to help my brother gain weight, a teacher and a Speech Pathologist that have helped us learn to tell mommy and daddy what we want and need, and a Service Coordinator who keeps everyone on the same page. A lot of times we are having so much fun playing with them that we do not even realize they are actually teaching us well-planned lessons and teaching my mommy and daddy how to do these things at home! I am happy to say I have 'graduated' from Early ACCESS and go to a Pre-Kindergarten at a nearby church. My brother is making great progress and looks forward to most likely starting in a Part B preschool in the fall to make sure that progress continues.

## Early Intervention Makes a Difference

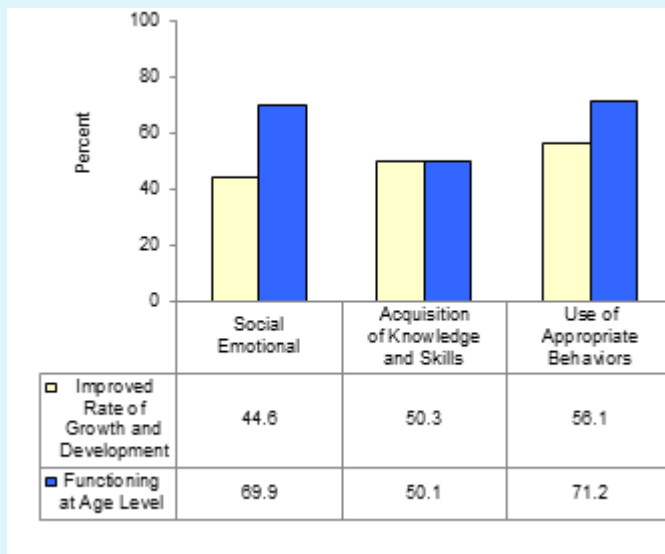
Intervention during the critical first three years of a child's life can:

A newborn's brain develops dramatically in the first 3 years of life



- ↑ Increase the likelihood of a child's:
  - Rate of growth
  - Social and Emotional Development
  - Acquisition of knowledge and skills
  - Use of appropriate behaviors to meet his or her needs
- ↓ Decrease the likelihood of special education
- ↓ Reduce the need for expensive and more intense services in the future

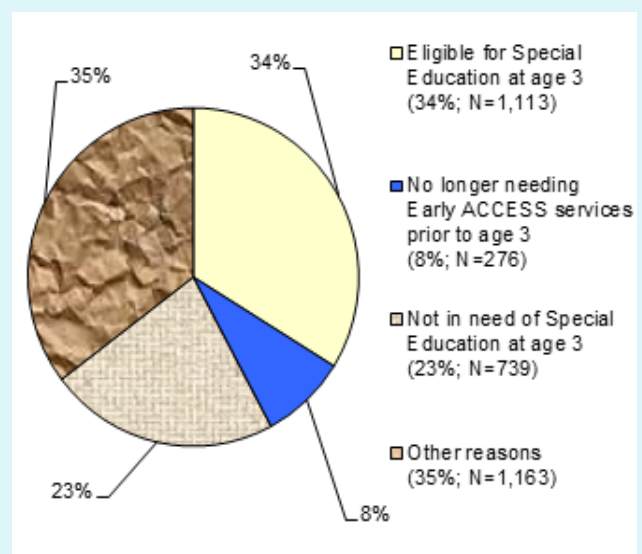
### Early Intervention Services Improve Infant/Toddler Growth and Development



By the time children exit Early ACCESS Services (at age three or earlier):

- 44.6%-56% of the children substantially improved their growth rate
- 69.9%-71.2% of the children were functioning with age expectations for each outcome area

### Exit Data for Children Leaving Early ACCESS



Of the children who exited Early ACCESS:

- 31% of children no longer required early intervention services (8%) or special education services (23%)

To learn more about Early ACCESS contact: Iowa Family Support Network at 1-888-IAKIDS1 or [www.IAFamilySupportNetwork.org](http://www.IAFamilySupportNetwork.org)

**Early ACCESS** is Iowa's IDEA Part C (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) early intervention system for families of children, birth to 3 years of age, who have developmental delay or conditions known to impact development. The purpose of Iowa's Early ACCESS system is to enhance not only the development of infants and toddlers with or at-risk for developmental delays, but also the capacity of families to meet their child's needs.

## Collaboration

Early ACCESS is a coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services offered in partnership with families and other community providers.

Signatory Agencies:

- Iowa Department of Education (Lead Agency) and Regional Grantees: Area Education Agencies (AEAs)
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Child Health Specialty Clinics
- Iowa Department of Human Services



## Services

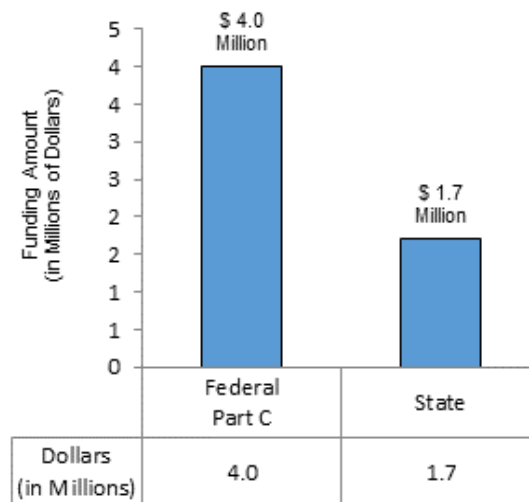
Early ACCESS services begin with a look at the child's strengths, the areas for extra help, and a chance to get to know each child's family. Early ACCESS supports skills such as talking, moving, seeing, listening, thinking, eating and playing. A plan is written to help guide the way families and Early ACCESS staff will work together to support the child. Families work with professionals, such as Speech Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists in a natural environment, where the family feels most comfortable.

## A Look at the Numbers

**5,874** Children birth to 3 Years receiving services 7-1-13 through 6-30-14

**3,488** Children birth to 3 years receiving services on October 2013 Count Day

Early ACCESS Funding Sources



*\* Early ACCESS also receives a significant amount of Part B Federal Funds.*

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