



# A PARENTS COMPLETE GUIDE TO BABYNET



## Do you suspect your child may have a developmental delay or a condition that could result in a developmental delay?

There are various South Carolina special needs resources to support your family, including BabyNet. In this guide, we'll tell you everything you need to know about BabyNet and how you can navigate this beneficial resource.



## The Importance of BabyNet

BabyNet is an essential resource for parents, providing them access to professional services and support for their child's development. Through BabyNet, parents can connect with local service providers specializing in early intervention, which is crucial for addressing developmental delays and disabilities in infants and young children.

BabyNet also provides parents with the knowledge and tools they need to support their child's growth and development and access to resources and support networks. It empowers parents to take an active role in their child's development and helps ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.





# Understanding How BabyNet Works

## What Is BabyNet?

BabyNet is South Carolina's interagency early intervention system for children 2 years and under with developmental conditions or delays. The system provides children and their families with the services and information they need to be the best possible caregivers and for the child to thrive in every aspect of their life.

## How Does BabyNet Work?

BabyNet will evaluate your child's developmental progress at no cost to you and assess their eligibility for other additional services. If eligible for additional services, BabyNet will help connect you with providers of professional disability services and resources available.

The early intervention process includes an evaluation, the creation of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), regular monitoring, and ongoing communication. We'll dive into this process in more detail in a bit.



# What Services Are Provided by BabyNet?

BabyNet provides many high-quality services, and each child receives different ones based on their individual needs. Services your child may be eligible to receive through BabyNet include:

## Early Intervention Service Coordination

Early Intervention encompasses a range of services, such as developmental assessments, speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling for families.

BabyNet Early Intervention Service Coordinators help identify any delays and relay them to specialists that are part of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The coordinator will work with families to create an IFSP that outlines the child's specific needs and goals, as well as the services and support that will be provided to the child and family. The Service Coordinator also helps the family connect with service providers and ensures that services are delivered in a coordinated and effective manner.

## Early Intervention Service Coordination

### Family Training and Special Instruction

The goal of family training and special instruction is to help you and any other caregivers better understand your child's developmental delay or disability and the unique needs that come along with it. By giving you the skills you need to succeed, you'll be able to enhance your child's environment for learning and growth every day.

## Additional Services as Needed

Your family may be eligible to receive one or more of the following services:

- Assistive Technology
- Speech, Occupational, and/or Physical Therapy
- Respite Services
- Nursing Services
- Vision or Hearing Services
- Autism Services





# Getting Started with BabyNet

## Making a Referral to BabyNet

To [apply for BabyNet services](#) and see if your child is eligible for the program, a referral will need to be made.

Parents can refer their child to BabyNet, in addition to:

- Caregivers
- Daycare providers
- Doctors
- Friends



## The BabyNet Referral Process

1. To begin a referral to BabyNet, you'll fill out the BabyNet Referral Form online. On the form, you will provide the following information:

- Your contact information
- The reason for the referral
- Date of birth of the child
- Consent to get information about your child

If you need help with this process, you can talk to your child's pediatrician or contact an Early Intervention provider, like [About Play](#). You may also submit a referral via phone by calling the BabyNet Central Referral Team at 1-866-512-8881.

2. Once the referral is in, BabyNet will assess the child and record any developmental delays. If a doctor has already made a diagnosis, this assessment may not need to be done.
3. Next, BabyNet will determine if the child is eligible. If they are, BabyNet will give you a booklet of different early intervention providers to choose from.

If you choose AboutPlay, you can call BabyNet and let them know your decision. BabyNet will then contact us, and we will select an early interventionist (EI) from our team, and they will contact you. This should take about a week to complete.

4. From there, your EI will schedule a home visit where a more in-depth assessment will be completed. The second home visit will be to develop the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP team can talk about your family's resources, priorities, and concerns, as well as the developmental goals for your child and what services will be most helpful to them in reaching those IFSP goals.
5. As your child participates in early intervention with their EI, they will work with you on how to best support your child and how to help them practice developmental skills between early intervention visits throughout your daily routine.



## Determining BabyNet Eligibility

Your child needs to meet a few eligibility criteria for them to have access to BabyNet and all the services that come with it. The first criterion is that they must be under 3 years old.

They must also have a developmental delay of 40% in one area of development or a delay of 25% in two areas of development. These delays are measured with specific diagnostic instruments and procedures to ensure accuracy. The areas of development that are analyzed include:

- Cognitive
- Physical
- Communication
- Social and/or emotional
- Adaptive

If the child does not have a developmental delay as described above, the child must be diagnosed with a physical or mental condition that a physician verifies and has a high probability of leading to a developmental delay, such as:

- Chromosomal abnormalities
- Congenital disorders and infections
- Sensory impairments
- Inborn errors of metabolism
- Nervous system development disturbance
- Severe attachment disorders
- Prematurity complications
- Disorders secondary to exposure to toxic substances, such as fetal alcohol syndrome





## When Should You Refer a Child Through BabyNet?

When signs indicate that a child might have a developmental delay, contacting BabyNet needs to be considered.

### Signs a Child Might Have a Developmental Delay

- Learning slower than other children the same age
- Developing slower than other children the same age
- Difficulty with communication or socialization with others
- Lower-than-average IQ test scores
- Significant delays with rolling over, sitting up, crawling, or walking
- Difficulty with talking or not talking at all
- Inability to connect actions with consequences
- Difficulty with problem-solving
- Difficulty with logical thinking
- Trouble learning in school
- Inability to do everyday tasks (getting dressed, using the restroom, etc.)

Signs and symptoms of developmental delays vary from child to child. It's important to remember that children grow and develop at their own rate – and that's okay. When significant issues begin to appear, that's when you should refer a child to BabyNet.





# How the BabyNet Process Works After the Referral

## 1. Early Intervention Family Assessment

After the evaluation and your child is deemed eligible, your child will be assigned an Early Interventionist or EI. The EI will complete a Family Assessment.

This Family Assessment is a semi-structured clinical interview that will discuss the child's day-to-day living and provide an accurate description of the child and family's functioning, so areas of improvement and priorities can be established. It will also help to establish a positive relationship between the family and the early interventionist.

During the assessment, the EI will pay close attention and note where they see opportunities for the child in five key areas:

- **Social engagement** - The ability to interact with others
- **Adaptive skills** - The ability to perform self-care
- **Communication skills** - The ability to understand spoken language and express themselves
- **Motor skills** - The ability to demonstrate gross motor movement and fine motor skills
- **Cognitive skills** - The ability to reason and problem solve

## 2. Creation of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Your EI will work with you to develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The plan will encompass the early intervention services, therapies that will best help your child reach their goals and desired outcomes, and how each service will be delivered and funded.

It's important for parents to understand that services must be included in their child's IFSP for any funding to be provided by BabyNet.

Therapy services and additional resources that the IFSP can feature include:

- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Support groups
- Hearing services
- Vision services
- Nursing services
- Nutrition services



### 3. Implementation of the IFSP

Once the IFSP is established, the child & family will begin to receive services. They'll work closely with professionals that will work diligently with them to help them thrive in all areas of their life. The family of the child will also receive support whenever needed.

### 4. Regular Monitoring & Ongoing Communication

Progress of the child's goals is measured and reported on a regular basis to parents. As the child's progress is monitored, it's also essential for the plan to be reviewed and updated. By law, the IFSP must be reviewed every six months to make changes as needed. You may request an additional review at any time.

### 5. Transition Planning

Transition planning begins before your child's third birthday. The team may determine that your child no longer requires services. Or, they could decide that your child will transition from an IFSP to an individualized education program (IEP) upon their third birthday to continue receiving necessary services.



# Additional Resources and Services For Parents

If you're the parent of a child with a developmental delay, there are various South Carolina services and resources to support your family in addition to BabyNet.

## South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN)

If your child has autism, an intellectual disability, a traumatic brain injury, a spinal cord injury, or conditions related to these disabilities, SCDDSN is a beneficial resource. The mission of SCDDSN is to assist individuals with special needs, both children and adults, and their families to meet their needs, pursue possibilities, and achieve dreams and goals.

One of the valuable services provided through DDSN is Early Intervention services for children ages 3 to 6 years old with developmental delays or a diagnosed condition such as those listed above.

To receive services from SCDDSN, an individual must meet specific requirements. You can call the agency directly for a 15-minute assessment to see if someone qualifies.

## Family Connection of SC

Family Connection of SC is an outstanding organization that provides parents of infants, toddlers, and children with developmental delays resources and services for support, development, health, and education.

Family Connection is happy to provide a top-notch collection of programs to address concerns about healthcare, mental health, and educational systems concerns. Some services include support for children with asthma, a home-school visitation partnership, assistance with Medicaid and other healthcare programs, NICU support, parent-to-parent support, and more.

## The South Carolina Autism Society

The South Carolina Autism Society is a nonprofit organization that offers case management, educational mentoring, outreach, training, and referral services for people with autism and their families.

The array of resources from the South Carolina Autism Society includes parent-school partnerships, case management, advocacy with governmental agencies and state and federal lawmakers, referrals, information about current treatment options, and more.



## About Play

At [About Play](#), we're proud to offer high-quality early intervention services to children with special needs and their families. We work with infants and children birth to six years of age who are eligible through BabyNet or DDSN.

About Play team members focus on activities with your infant or child during everyday routines. These activities promote your child's social-emotional, communication, motor skills, adaptive, and cognitive development. Our early interventionists also assist families in accessing available community resources such as respite care, summer support services, therapy services, autism services, nursing, audiology, assistive technology, and more.

If you believe your child would benefit from early intervention services, we'd love to assist you.

[Contact our knowledgeable team](#) today and discover how we can help.







## A Bright Future Awaits Your Child

If you suspect your child has a developmental delay and would benefit from early intervention services, BabyNet is the ultimate resource, and the benefits are insurmountable. If you need additional support or information getting started, we're here to help. The team at [About Play](#) is extremely knowledgeable in this field and would love to support you and your family.

[Contact About Play](#) today to learn about BabyNet, early intervention, and additional resources and services for children with developmental delays.

