

Early Steps/SSIP Motion Graphic: 10-16-17

**The Florida Department of Health's Division of Children's Medical Services is the state lead for Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**

**The name of Florida's program is Early Steps.**

**Early Steps provides support for families of infants and toddlers who have developmental disabilities or delays. We serve children from birth to their third birthday.**

**Early intervention is critical for infants and toddlers with unique needs and delays. Research shows that children's earliest experiences play critical roles in brain development.**

**Early Steps honors the strengths, beliefs, cultures and values of families, and helps them build on a child's individual strengths.**

**Our program supports infants and toddlers where they live, learn and play.**

**The Early Steps state office is located in Tallahassee and provides guidance to 15 local Early Steps programs.**

**The U.S. Department of Education requires each IDEA Part C program to develop a State Systemic Improvement Plan, or SSIP for short.**

**This process began in July 2013 and will continue through June 2019.**

**The purpose of the SSIP is to improve IDEA programs like Florida's Early Steps.**

**Florida is working to improve the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers served by Early Steps.**

**Social-emotional development describes a child's ability to form relationships, experience and express feelings, and explore the world.**

**These skills include enjoying the company of others. . .**

**waiting patiently, figuring out conflicts peacefully. . .**

**showing frustration and anger in healthy ways. . .**

**taking care of someone who's been hurt. . .**

**making friends and following rules. . .**

**The relationship you have with your baby is the foundation for all of these skills.**

**Early Steps' fully supports the unique needs of that pivotal first relationship between a parent, or caregiver, and the child.**

**Researched and proven practices tested at demonstration sites will help Early Steps decide what works best.**

**By working together. . .**

**providers, guided by Florida's SSIP. . .**

**and families, supported by Early Steps. . .**

**can improve the social-emotional development for infants and toddlers so they can live up to their greatest potential.**

**Where they live, learn and play.**