



Department of
Children & Youth

Early Intervention Forum

Wednesday, September 16, 2026 (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Sponsored by OACB in collaboration with DCY Early Intervention

Join OACB and DCY, along with Part C providers, partners, and families throughout Ohio to hear the latest topics and research on best practices for Early Intervention!

All Part C Providers and families are welcome to attend!

The forum is divided into four sessions. Please select all sessions you wish to attend. Registration is free for families. Families should use comp code **EIFAMILY** when registering to have the registration fee waived.

[REGISTER FOR THE EI FORUM](#)

[REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS](#)

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. [EI Forum Introduction \(Part of Session 1\)](#)

Welcome and Day Overview: Erica Wallace, Children and Families Advisor
Welcome, instructions for obtaining CPDUs, and an overview of the day's schedule.

Welcome from OACB: Erin Simmons, OACB Trustee and Seneca DD Board Member

Welcome from the Ohio Department of Children and Youth: Assistant Director
Jeffery Van Deusen

To see opening remarks for the forum, you must register for session 1.

For questions, please contact Erica Wallace (ewallace@oacbdds.org).

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9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Connecting Ohio Early Intervention Professionals to the Division for Early Childhood

This session will introduce participants to the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the resources, connections, and professional learning opportunities it offers Early Intervention professionals. Troy Hunter will provide an overview of DEC's history, mission, and role in the broader early childhood special education field, with a closer look at its presence and work in Ohio.

Participants will explore DEC's Recommended Practices and learn how they can be applied to strengthen evidence-based, family-centered services. The session will also highlight opportunities to engage with DEC through professional learning, advocacy, resources, and networking to support continued growth and stronger outcomes for young children and families.

Presenter: *Troy Hunter, President & CEO (ElevateDD).*

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Strategies for Effective Early Intervention in the Early Care & Education Setting

Early care and education settings offer valuable opportunities to support young children with developmental delays in the environments where they learn, play, and build relationships every day. Providing effective Early Intervention services in these settings, however, requires thoughtful collaboration with both families and early childhood educators.

This session will explore practical, evidence-based strategies for delivering EI services in child care settings while building strong, respectful partnerships with educators. Participants will examine recent Ohio research on the importance of high-quality child care, learn how resources such as Ohio PROMISE can help connect families with child care options, and explore ways to adapt family coaching strategies when working with child care teachers.

Attendees will leave with practical tools and strategies to strengthen collaboration, support educators in embedding interventions into everyday routines, and promote consistent, meaningful learning opportunities for young children across home and child care environments.

Presenter: *Kathy Lawton, Director of Early Childhood Education (Franklin DD).*

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12:30 - 1:30 p.m. **From Family Priorities to Practice: Oral-Motor, Sensory and Self-Feeding Strategies for Effective Coaching Without Overwhelm**

Feeding can be a significant priority for families of infants and toddlers, but addressing oral-motor, sensory, and self-feeding needs in Early Intervention can sometimes feel overwhelming for both families and professionals. This session will focus on practical ways to turn family priorities into manageable strategies that fit naturally into everyday routines.

Participants will explore family-centered approaches for supporting oral-motor development, sensory needs, and emerging self-feeding skills while learning how to coach caregivers without adding unnecessary stress or complexity. Emphasis will be placed on identifying achievable next steps, building on what families are already doing, and creating opportunities for learning and participation during everyday meals and routines.

Attendees will leave with practical coaching strategies and actionable tools they can begin using with children and families the very next day.

Presenter: *Jaclyn Burke, Speech-Language Pathologist and Angela Fares, Occupational Therapist (Cuyahoga DD).*

1:45 - 2:45 p.m. **Every Family Has a Story: Using Documentation to Capture the Early Intervention Journey**

Effective documentation is more than a requirement—it should tell the story of a child and family's Early Intervention journey and show how services are supporting the priorities and outcomes that matter to them.

This session will provide an overview of Ohio Early Intervention documentation requirements while exploring practical strategies for creating and reviewing meaningful documentation as part of ongoing service coordination and monitoring. Participants will consider how providers and Early Intervention Service Coordinators (EISCs) can work together to create a clear, cohesive record that reflects the family's priorities, the purpose and quality of services provided, and the progress made over time.

Attendees will leave with strategies for strengthening documentation so it supports team collaboration, demonstrates how services are responding to the child and family's evolving needs, and captures the family's unique EI experience from beginning to end.

Presenter: *Karen Kincaid, Regional Early Intervention Program Consultant and Erin Hale, Early Intervention Monitoring Consultant (Ohio Department of Children and Youth).*