



MAKE THE
**FIRST FIVE
COUNT**SM

State of Early Intervention: District of Columbia

Every year, we as a nation fail to identify 1.45 million¹ young children at risk for developmental delays or disabilities—children who will enter school already far behind other kids their age. But with the right treatment and therapy before the age of five, we can change the state of early intervention for thousands of kids in the District of Columbia.

Through *Make the First Five Count*SM, Easter Seals is raising awareness and activating the American public to demand that all young children get the support they need before the age of five. Make life better for children in your community—those at risk for autism, developmental delays and other disabilities—and help us achieve \$100 million in additional federal funding for Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This is the federal program that provides critical services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and to their families.

Funding for Part C will help kids like Catherine.



Catherine, age 4

Easter Seals Greater Washington-Baltimore Region

Catherine began attending the Easter Seals Child Development Center in Washington, D.C. when she was two and a half years old. A developmental evaluation conducted prior to her enrollment indicated cognitive skills that were in the “significantly developmentally delayed range of ability.” Her expressive communication skills and speech output were limited. When she started at the center, she rarely spoke and what she did say was not understandable. In addition to full-day child development at Easter Seals, Catherine also started receiving on-site speech/language therapy and occupational therapy.

After attending the center for one year, Catherine became an incredibly different child. She was much more talkative and observant. She became a leader in her classroom and an active participant in weekly yoga sessions. A year later, Catherine graduated from the Easter Seals pre-K program. In the fall, she started kindergarten in a general education classroom with no support services!





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The State of Funding

Today, it's harder than ever for families to access care, because essential programs to treat young children with disabilities are chronically underfunded and in danger of being scaled back even further this year and in 2012.

Through *Make the First Five Count*, Easter Seals is calling on Congress to protect and grow funding for Part C by \$100 million, for a total of \$538 million, in the years to come.

- **Federal funding:** Currently, the District of Columbia receives \$2.2 million from the federal government to support early intervention services under Part C. This is a slight increase of \$3,000 from the previous year.⁴
- **State funding:** The District of Columbia does not fund early intervention.

Investing in early diagnosis and treatment now will save in future care costs—there is no better investment than in our children.

To learn more, log onto
MaketheFirstFiveCount.org today!

The Numbers in the District of Columbia

- There are 23,335 kids in the District of Columbia ages 0-3.^{2,3,4}
- On average, fewer than 25% of young children are properly screened to identify their special need, or approximately 5,834 children in the District of Columbia.^{2,3,4}
- In the District of Columbia, 3,034 kids are at risk of developmental delays or disabilities that will set them back when they start school, yet only 331 are currently receiving early intervention services through Part C of IDEA.^{2,3,4}
- To be eligible for early intervention services in Washington, D.C., you must have a 50 percent delay in at least one developmental area.

¹*The National Survey of Children's Health, 2007.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, (2009). Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved on January 7, 2010, from <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/nsch07>.

^{2,3}<https://www.ideadata.org/PopulationData.asp>

⁴http://www.nectac.org/pubs/titlelist.asp#eifactsheet_2pg.

⁵<http://cfo.dc.gov/cfo/cwp/view,a,1321,q,646397.asp>

