

Joe Lombardo
Governor



Richard Whitley
Director

State of Nevada

Department of Health and Human Services

Nevada Early Intervention Services

Fatima Taylor, Clinical Program Manger 2
Sarah Horsman, Health Program Manger 3

July 30, 2024



Department of Health and Human Services

Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



What is Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS)?

- NEIS serves children 0-3 and their families who have been identified as having a documented disability and/or delay. Unless medically eligible, children are made eligible with a multidisciplinary team evaluation and according to a standardized assessment that evaluates the child's abilities in five different developmental domains:
 - Physical (fine motor, gross motor, vision and hearing),
 - Communication (receptive language and expressive language),
 - Cognition,
 - Social and Emotional, and
 - Adaptive
- According to these results, screeners, and the family concerns, an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) is written with the family to determine what services and supports are needed and what outcomes they would like to achieve. Outcomes are written for the child as well as the family as needed.
- NEIS is an educational/developmental program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Services are voluntary and are at no direct cost to families.





Where did NEIS originate?

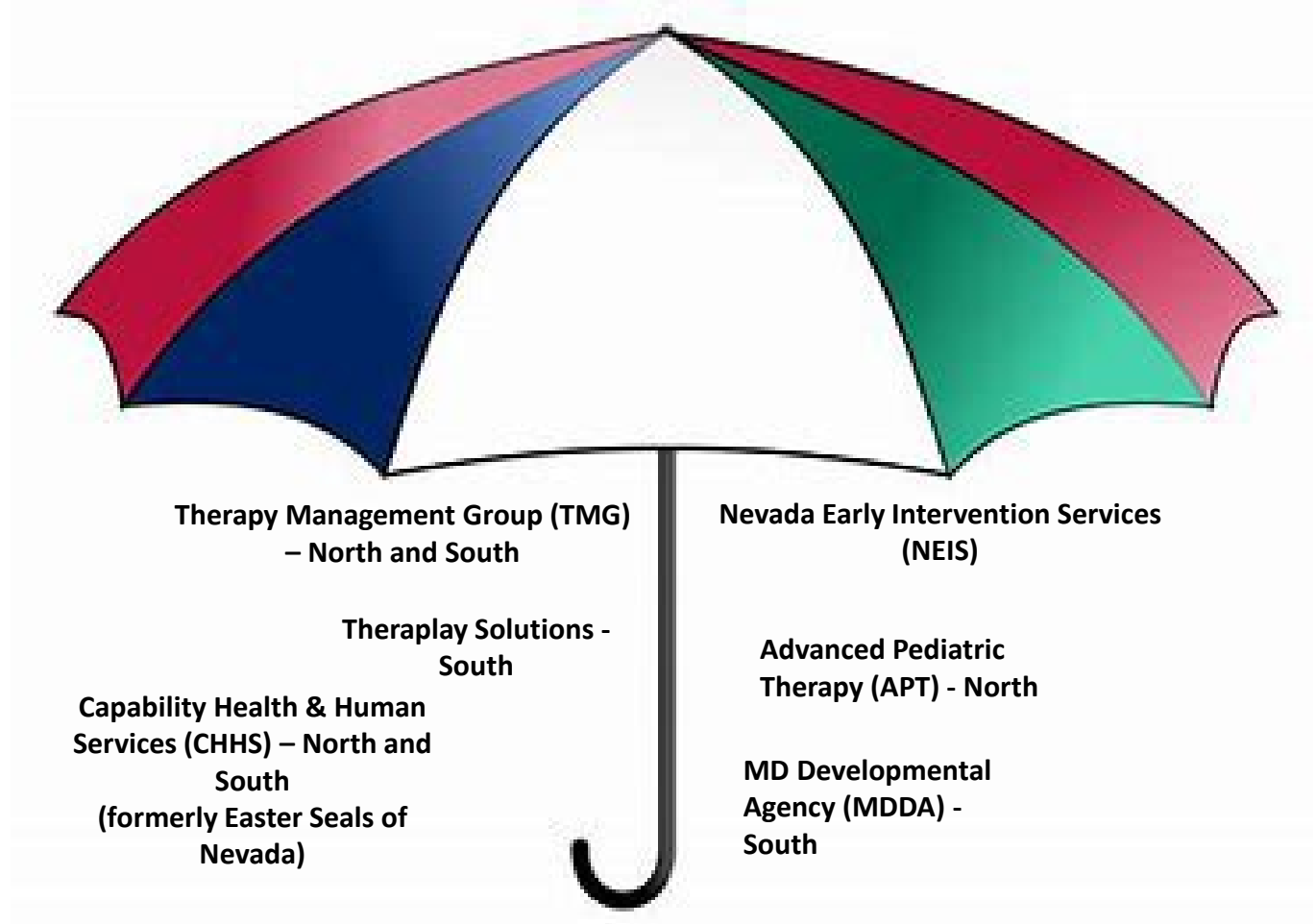
- In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94-142, the landmark legislation that, today, we call IDEA. Early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities **were not part** of the legislation. The early intervention program for our youngest children with disabilities did not become part of the law until its reauthorization in 1986 (Public Law 99-457).
- **In 1986, Congress established the program of early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities** in recognition of “an urgent and substantial need” to:
 - enhance the development of handicapped infants and toddlers and to minimize their potential for developmental delay,
 - reduce the educational costs to our society, including our Nation’s schools, by minimizing the need for special education and related services after handicapped infants and toddlers reach school age,
 - minimize the likelihood of institutionalization of handicapped individuals and maximize the potential for their independent living in society, and
 - enhance the capacity of families to meet the special needs of their infants and toddlers with handicaps.
- NEIS became part of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in Nevada on July 6, 2003. DHHS is the lead agency for the EI system.
- IDEA Part C Office under DHHS is the lead agency for the EI system providing oversight and general supervision.



Nevada Early Intervention Services System Statewide Providers

Nevada Early Intervention Services contracts with community partners (CP's) to deliver the same services to children and families. There are currently three CP's in the North and three in the South.

There are three community partners interested in joining the early intervention system at this time and are undergoing the readiness review process.





Who is Eligible for NEIS?

In the State of Nevada children are eligible for Early Intervention if they display the following:

- 25% delay in two areas of development, or
- 50% delay in one area of development, or
- A diagnosed physical or mental condition which has a high probability of a developmental delay.
- Informed clinical opinion.

Developmental Domains: Cognition, Social and Emotional, Communication, Physical, and Adaptive
Development Communication has two sub-domains: receptive and expressive language - Physical has two domains: fine motor and large motor



Services are coordinated by a Developmental Specialist; and teams may include Speech & Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Registered Dietitians, Psychological Developmental Counselors, Physicians, Licensed Psychologists, Audiologists, Spanish Interpreters, etc.

Services are provided in the child's Natural Environment, wherever a child learns, plays, and grows and where typically developing children would be.



Other Services...

Other Services offered by NEIS include:

- Autism Clinic
- Audio Testing for Infants that failed the Newborn Hearing Screen
- CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act)
- Screening and Monitoring (SaM)



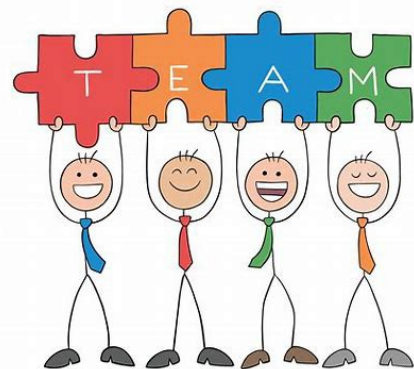


Engaging Families in decision making: Family Centered...

The development of the IFSP must include “a family-directed assessment of the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of that infant or toddler.”



Families know their babies best!



From the first phone call with families, they are part of the EI team. Their reports and feedback are vital in developing a plan that meets the needs of their child and family. NEIS is a family coaching program and a family's feedback, and participation is **instrumental** in the success of their child. We review their rights in the program and stress the importance of communication to ensure proper services are delivered and a proper transition is enacted.



Intended Impacts and Outcomes of Nevada Early Intervention Services...

- The purpose and goal of the early intervention program is to help children with developing independent skills that will help them thrive in their future and in environments with neurotypical peers .
- Another part of that goal is to help families obtain services that they may need, as well as give them the strategies to encourage these skills with their child at home.
- Advocacy! Sometimes families need the tools and the confidence to advocate for their child with disabilities.





Key Decision Makers & Stakeholders

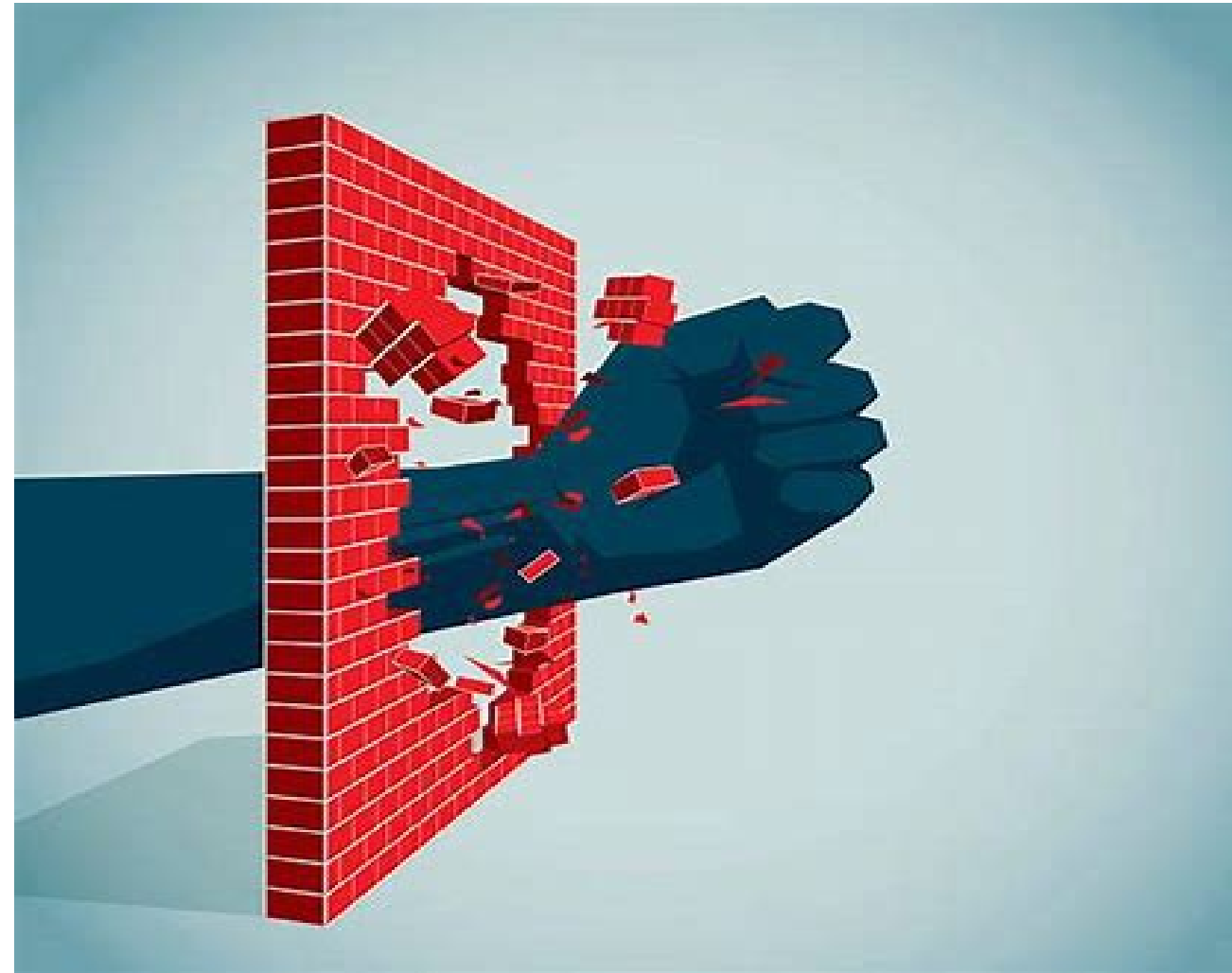
- ADSD/NEIS and IDEA Part C play crucial roles in early intervention system planning, with ADSD QA frequently contributing to planning and improvements. ADSD/NEIS oversees the daily implementation of programs, ensuring smooth operations of early intervention on a day-to-day basis.
- Nevada Legislators
- EI Programs
- IFC – Interim Finance Committee
- IDEA Part C Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)
 - Governor-appointed members representing statewide collaboration
- Funding and oversight from: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Part C federal funds allocated to states are intended to supplement, not supplant, state resources, and therefore, most states access a variety of funding streams beyond the federal Part C allocation to serve more children. Funds are federally determined by OSEP.
- The national average of PART C funds to states is 9%. Nevada gets 13.6%



Barriers and Opportunities

Barriers

- Making changes to budget in quickly changing times can only be requested at legislative sessions every 2 years.
- EI services are provided in the child's natural environment. While some of those services are contracted, they still work within the NEIS teams to coordinate services to children and families. Keeping up with increases in pay and benefits is difficult; therefore, keeping specialty therapists can also be challenging.
- Although there are critical staff shortages across the state, it is imperative that programs are transparent with families when this may have an impact on services for their family and made aware of their options to ensure they are fully informed.
- Workforce retention and recruitment initiatives are underway with Grow Your Own programming to support EI professionals with no cost professional development. Social emotional supports/early childhood mental health in EI is a growing professional development opportunity as well for program improvement to benefit each child and family in achieving their outcomes.





Barriers and Opportunities, Cont'd.

Opportunities

- Incentives to employees are being provided, all State employees received raises and quarterly bonuses. Community Providers received a rate increase from 2023 Legislative session
- Also, the EI system is growing, with new EI programs joining the system to be comprehensive EI providers. This should improve the service delivery timeframes for families statewide.
- Another unique aspect for Nevada is employing service coordinators that are also required to do special instruction. This responsibility is on the employee to obtain their early childhood special education teaching license. Part C recently developed an internal certification at no cost to employees, but the sustainability of that program will take funding.





Citations & Resources...

[The Importance of Early Intervention \(ectacenter.org\)](http://ectacenter.org)

[Why Act Early if You're Concerned about Development? | CDC](#)

[Early Development & Well-Being • ZERO TO THREE](#)

[Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect on Child Development - Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

[Early Intervention, Then and Now | Center for Parent Information and Resources \(parentcenterhub.org\)](http://parentcenterhub.org)

[Early Intervention Services - Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap 2021 \(pn3policy.org\)](http://pn3policy.org)

Developmental Milestones:

[CDC's Developmental Milestones | CDC](#) (There is even an app!)

[Home • ZERO TO THREE](#) (Developmental resources for families and providers with an emphasis on social emotional development)

[Newborn Hearing Screening and Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Resources | NCHAM \(infanthearing.org\)](http://infanthearing.org)



Questions?



Acronyms

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

ADSD – Aging and Disability Services Division

NEIS – Nevada Early Intervention Services

CP – Community Partner

APT – Advanced Pediatric Therapy

TMG – Therapy Management Group

CHHS – Capability Health and Human Services

MDDA – MD Developmental Agency

SaM – Screening and Monitoring

CAPTA – Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act

QA – Quality Assurance



Contact Information

Fatima Taylor

Clinical Program Manager 2 – Nevada
Early Intervention Services

ftaylor@adsd.nv.gov

702-486-9248

Sarah Horsman

Health Program Manager 3 – Nevada
Early Intervention Services

shorsmanploeger@adsd.nv.gov

775-687-9723

Lori Ann Malina-Lovell

Clinical Program Planner 2 – IDEA Part C
Services

lamalinalovell@dhhs.nv.gov

Work Cell (775) 895-5268

Office (702) 486-3012