



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO, STATE  
DELEGATION AND LOCAL ADVOCATES CALL FOR INCREASE IN  
REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR CHILDHOOD EARLY  
INTERVENTION SERVICES**

*An 11% increase is proposed in both Senate and Assembly budgets*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today was joined by members of the state delegation, The Children's Agenda and Parents Helping Parents to advocate for passage of the proposed 11% increase in reimbursement rates for Early Intervention Services (EI) currently included in both one-house budgets. As it stands, reimbursement rates for providers are lower now than 20 years ago.

*"There are 435 children in Monroe County with developmental delays and disabilities awaiting access to EI services — this is unacceptable," said County Executive Bello.*

*"That is 435 children at risk of not keeping pace with other children their age. That's 435 families desperate for their child to get the developmental help they need and are entitled to. Thank you to state Senators Samra Brouk and Jeremy Cooney, Assemblymembers Harry Bronson, Sarah Clark, Joshua Jensen, Jen Lunsford and Demond Meeks, The Children's Agenda and Parents Helping Parents for their tireless advocacy on behalf of our children."*

Early Intervention provides children with developmental delays and disabilities vital services such as occupational therapy, language and speech therapy and physical therapy as mandated through federal law. Currently, in Monroe County, 435 children who have been waiting 30 days or longer for early intervention services. From 2021-2022, 47% of eligible infants and toddlers across New York State experienced delays past the 30-day deadline for receiving EI services. Delays in services are attributed in part to a lack of providers due to the historically low reimbursement rates for EI service providers.

*"Quality, timely developmental support is a moral imperative," said Larry Marx, CEO of The Children's Agenda. "Every child, no matter their abilities or where they live, should have the therapies and early education that prepare them for lifelong learning and success. New York has the resources and capacity to create an Early Intervention system that is a model for the nation. All we need is the will to do so. The Children's Agenda supports the Assemblymembers and state Senators who are calling for an 11% increase*

*in the Early Intervention reimbursement rate and call on the Governor to join them because providers need to be there when kids need them."*

Since taking office, County Executive Bello has made EI a major focus of his administration, and has taken actions including:

- Creating a new position in 2021 for a transportation representative to assist families whose children need to be transported to their Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education services
- Increasing pay groups for Early Childhood Development staff in 2021 to increase retention
- Adding one new Senior Assistant Health Services Coordinator and two new Assistant Health Services Coordinator positions in 2021 to help families access services their children need
- Adding two new bilingual Assistant Health Services Coordinators in 2023 to assist Spanish-speaking families access necessary services
- Increasing reimbursement rates for Preschool Special Education services by 5% per year for the past three years, for a total increase of 15%
- Advocating for increased state EI reimbursement funding as well as the Covered Lives Assessment on third-party insurance to ensure commercial health insurance plans contribute a proportionate share of the payment for EI services provided to infants and toddlers with special needs

*"The County has taken extraordinary steps to better fund the delivery of EI services," said Bello. "It's now time for New York State to do the right thing and pass this proposed 11% increase in the reimbursement rate."*

**Assemblymember Harry Bronson said,** *"We know that reaching children in their earliest stages of life improves outcomes in all areas and is crucial to them reaching their full potential. It is therefore unacceptable that our Early Intervention program has been systematically failing these children and the hardworking service providers. It is the time to properly fund and invest in this program, and the Assembly's budget recognizes the need to increase pay for our service providers and increase access for our families."*

*"The greatest investment we can make in our community is to invest in our children which is why I listened to my community members and I'm incredibly proud that the Senate One House Budget includes an 11% rate increase for Early Intervention," said Senator Samra Brouk. "The fight is not over — we are continuing our advocacy efforts here in Rochester and in Albany to ensure that this increase is included in the final budget. Our kids can't wait."*

**Assemblywoman Sarah Clark said,** *"Children are our most important resource, and it is time for New York to invest the needed funds into programs that are critical to their development. The demands on the Early Intervention system have been increasing dramatically for years as more families request support, especially now to restore developmental skills that were hindered throughout the pandemic. At the same time,*

*providers have been leaving the field because of low pay. We need to fix the system now. The Assembly One House Budget included a much-needed 11% increase for the Early Intervention program. As we enter the final days of negotiations in the state budget process, all our partners in government and community stakeholders stand here together today to ensure we get this much-needed increase included in the final enacted budget. Our children should not have to wait for the tools and services they need to thrive.”*

*“I know firsthand the impact Early Intervention has, as I received services myself, and now see its critical impact every day with my son. Outcomes are clear that early intervention does wonders,” said **Assemblyman Josh Jensen**. “I applaud the inclusion of the 11% increase in budget negotiations. I will work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue advocating for this inclusion in the governor’s final budget proposal in order to ensure that our kids have access to life changing services and resources.”*

*“I am proud to support the 11% increase for early intervention services in the Assembly one-house budget. When we provide critical therapies to children before age 3, we are giving children the best opportunity to succeed and live their fullest potential,” said **Assemblymember Jen Lunsford**. “Early intervention can limit, or even wholly prevent disabilities later in life. It reduces costs in the long run, lifts up families, and creates healthier adults and communities. I’m grateful to the organizations and advocates who have been vocal about the necessity for this increase for so many years, and I trust the Governor will recognize the importance of this rate increase as we proceed through budget negotiations.”*

***Assemblyman Demond Meeks said**, “Additional funding for Early Intervention services is key to ensuring all children have access to the vital programs that help build strong foundations for learning, health and life-long success. Early Intervention services are critical to helping our children reach their fullest potential. The Assembly’s budget recognizes the importance of these programs and the need to increase reimbursement rates so our children and families do not have to wait to receive the time-critical interventions they need.*

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