

# Young Children Must Receive Early Intervention Services on Time



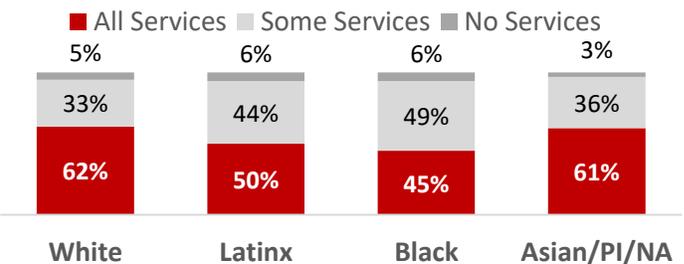
February 2025

In New York City, the Early Intervention (EI) Program helps around 30,000 young children under three years old, who are not learning, playing, growing, talking, or walking like other children their age. Unfortunately, children throughout the city have been unable to receive timely and comprehensive developmental services due to provider shortages and a chronically underfunded Early Intervention system. The data in this fact sheet points to the urgent need to ensure EI is supported at the state level so children receive the timely developmental supports they need and are legally entitled to.

**Less than half of children in New York City receive all their EI services on time. Black and Latinx children are disproportionately affected.**

Citywide, on average, just over half of all children (55%) receive all their services within the mandated 30 days. A disproportionately lower share of eligible Black (45%) and Latinx (50%) children get all their services within 30 days, compared to 62% of their White peers. New York State requires children to receive Early Intervention services within 30 days of their Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) meeting. **During this critical period of brain growth, delays in service receipt can have lifelong effects on a child's developmental trajectory.**

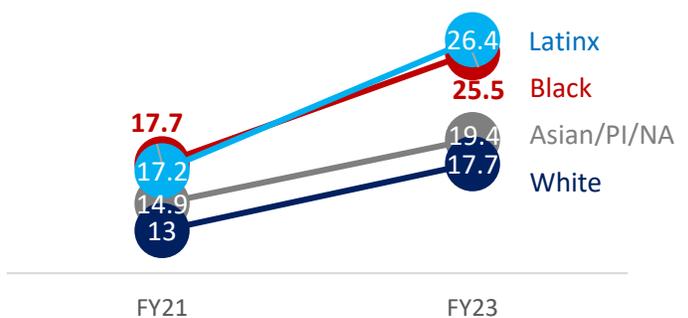
**Children with Early Intervention Services by Race/Ethnicity and Number of Services Received within 30 days, FY23**



**Children had to wait longer to receive at least one Early Intervention service in FY23. Provider shortages and the lack of in-person services are driving these delays.**

In Fiscal Year 2023, the average time from initial IFSP meeting to first service was 22.8 (up from 21.6 days in 2022 and 15.9 days in 2021). For Black and Latinx children, the wait was over 25 days. **Provider shortages have impacted children in New York City and around the State, with a growing number of families being told their children will have to wait for services because no providers are available who will provide in-person care.**

**Average Number of Days from initial IFSP meeting to First EI Service, FY21 and FY23**



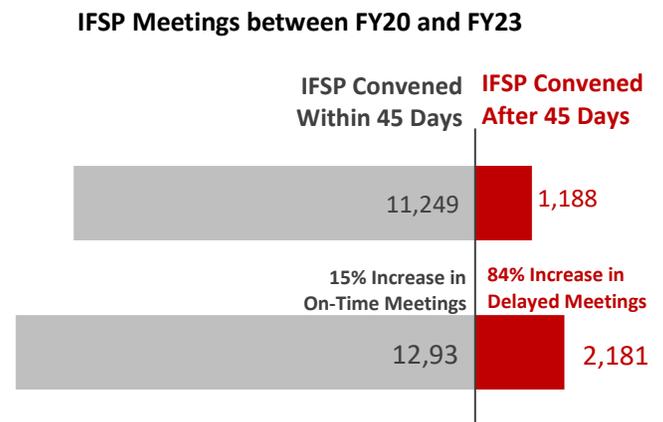
Source: NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Early Intervention: [City Council Early Intervention Report](#) (FY 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023); NYC Early Intervention's: [Local Early Intervention Coordinating Council \(LEICC\) Report](#) (FY22).

We use Latinx to remain true to the source of the data that the DOHMH BEI produces but we recognize that members of this community might identify with other terms, such as Latine, Latino/a, or Hispanic.

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## There has been an 84% increase in the number of delayed initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings between FY20 and FY23.

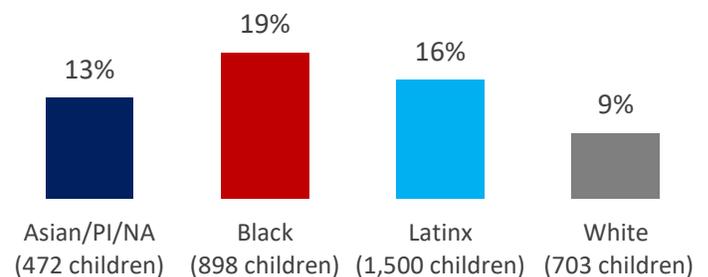
While the overall number of initial IFSP meetings increased around 20%, from 12,400 in FY20 to 15,113 in FY2023 the number of delayed meetings increased disproportionately, at 84%. The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written plan that identifies EI services that the child and family will receive. Federal law requires that the initial IFSP meeting be convened within 45 calendar days of the date the child is referred to the EI program. **A dramatic increase in the number of IFSP meetings not convened on time is resulting in thousands of children experiencing delays in eventual service receipt.**



## Children of color are disproportionately not evaluated after being referred and not getting services after determined eligible.

Across New York City, 86% of children who were referred for services ultimately received an evaluation, while 14% of children who were referred were never evaluated. Children of color are disproportionately being left behind, with close to 900 Black and 1,500 Latinx children not receiving an evaluation after being referred. Additionally, 94% of children who were evaluated and found eligible received at least one EI service, while 6% of children found eligible for EI services never received any service. For Black children, the proportion of children who failed to receive services is even higher at 8%.

**Share of Children Referred to EI and Not Evaluated, FY22**



*DOHMH Bureau for Early Intervention calculates progress statistics using a cohort analyses to understand retention through each step from referral, evaluation, eligibility, and receipt of services. The data above focus on the drop-off between referral and evaluation for children who aged out of the EI program in FY22.*

## What Steps Must State Leaders Take to Ensure Children Receive Timely Access to Developmental Services?

Delays in Early Intervention services can have lifelong impacts on New York City children, resulting in children losing out on developmental supports during a critical period of brain growth. New York's leaders must address these access barriers by addressing provider shortages, particularly for families needing in-person services. These delays are concerning because children are not getting the critical services they need to thrive. We support the following priorities:

- **Fund a 5% rate increase for in-person Early Intervention Services through an increase in the Covered Lives Assessment.**
- **Fund a comprehensive review of New York's Early Intervention program, including program models and financing of the program.**
- **Create a student loan forgiveness program to attract new Early Intervention providers.**

Visit [data.ccnyc.org](https://data.ccnyc.org) for more data on Early Intervention and hundreds of other indicators on child and family well-being in New York City.