

# Increase Funding for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

## KNOW THE FACTS

- **EarlySteps provides services to infants/ toddlers with developmental delays or a medical condition likely to result in a delay.**
- **Due to budget constraints, eligibility criteria was tightened in 2012 resulting in 900 fewer children receiving services.**
- **Services to young children who are at risk for delays have been shown to improve outcomes across all developmental areas.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately many children considered “at risk” do not meet the stricter eligibility criteria.**

## What Can Legislators Do?

Appropriate \$2.7 Million in SGF for EarlySteps to restore eligibility criteria to that used in 2012.

## Why Do This?

High quality early intervention services **reduce educational costs** to our society by minimizing the need for special education services as children with disabilities reach school age.<sup>1</sup>

Early Intervention Services are authorized by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities and **minimize potential developmental delay.**

Services can change a child’s developmental trajectory and **improve outcomes** for children, their families, and their communities.<sup>1</sup>

EarlySteps criteria now requires infants/toddlers to have a delay in two developmental areas rather than one or a medical condition likely to lead to a developmental delay. **Eligibility should be restored to delay in only one developmental area, to reach infants/toddlers who are at risk.**

Early intervention services for these children is likely to be **more effective** and **less costly** than if services are postponed until later in life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Importance of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families. (2011, July 1). Retrieved October 31, 2014, from <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/importanceofearlyintervention.pdf>