



MAKE THE
**FIRST FIVE
COUNT**[®]

State of Early Intervention: Alabama

Every year, we as a nation fail to identify more than one million 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 Alabama.

Through *Make the First Five Count*[®], 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 Caroline.



Caroline, age 11

Easter Seals Alabama, Birmingham

When Caroline was born, her parents thought they had a perfectly healthy baby. It wasn't until she was about 13 months old that they began to notice delays in her speech and mobility. Immediately, her mother contacted Easter Seals for help.

Easter Seals not only provided Caroline with physical, occupational and speech therapy, but also offered her family the support they needed to tackle what lay ahead. Nine years later, Easter Seals still provides Caroline and her family with the latest in adaptive equipment and communication technology.

Caroline is unable to use her hands because of a genetic disorder (Rett Syndrome), so traditional communication devices hadn't been an option. Two years ago, Easter Seals outfitted Caroline with her first communication device, the Dynavox Eye Gaze talker, and Caroline was able to communicate with her family for the first time in her life.

Caroline's mother is grateful for her daughter's progress: "Thank you Easter Seals for continuing to search for answers, for always striving to improve Caroline's quality of life. We don't know what the future holds for Caroline, but with Easter Seals, we know we won't face it alone."





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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 2014.

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 \$539 million, in the years to come.

- **Federal funding:** Currently, Alabama receives \$6.16 million from the federal government to support early intervention services under Part C. This is an increase of \$60,000 from the previous year.
- **State funding:** Alabama allocates \$7.7 million in funding for early intervention. This amount represents an increase of over \$863,000 between 2012 and 2013.

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

The Numbers in Alabama

- There are 182,171 kids in Alabama ages 0-3.
- On average, fewer than 20% of young children are properly screened to identify their special need, or approximately 38,128 Alabama children.
- In Alabama, 24,783 kids are at risk of developmental delays or disabilities that will set them back when they start school, yet only 6,081 are currently receiving early intervention services through Part C of IDEA.

Sources:

http://www.ideadata.org/tables34th/AR_C-2.xls

<http://mchb.hrsa.gov/nsch/07main/moreinfo/pdf/nsch07child.pdf>

https://www.ideadata.org/arc_toc12.asp#partcCC

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/12stbyprogram.pdf>

http://www.nectac.org/~xls/IDEA/PartC_2012_allocations.xlsx

State funding information provided by a state government official is available upon request.

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MaketheFirstFiveCount.org today!**