



MAKE THE
**FIRST FIVE
COUNT**[®]

State of Early Intervention: Arkansas

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 Arkansas.

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 Al.



Al, age 9

Easter Seals Arkansas, Little Rock

Born with Down syndrome and a heart condition, Al was just four weeks old when an Easter Seals therapist first visited his home to help his parents learn how to care for him. At the time, Al's dad, James, was in his medical residency working nearly 100 hours a week, and his mother, DeAnn, was a registered nurse.

Because of Al's many health and medical needs, DeAnn chose to leave her career to better care for her son. As Al grew and gained enough strength, he transitioned into Easter Seals local preschool.

Today, Al is an active nine-year-old who attends public school and still receives intensive physical, occupational and speech therapy services twice a week. He is always on the go—jumping, running, climbing and learning—and loves being on the local Miracle League baseball team and taking tae kwon do lessons!





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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, Arkansas receives \$4 million from the federal government to support early intervention services under Part C. This is an increase of \$70,000 from the previous year.
- **State funding:** Arkansas does not allocate state funds for Part C.

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 Arkansas

- There are 123,940 kids in Arkansas ages 0-3.
- On average, fewer than 20% of young children are properly screened to identify their special need, or approximately 24,788 Arkansas children.
- In Arkansas, 16,112 kids are at risk of developmental delays or disabilities that will set them back when they start school, yet only 3,222 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.

**To learn more, log onto
MaketheFirstFiveCount.org today!**