



Golden Gate Regional Center

Serving people with developmental disabilities since 1966

August 20, 2009

Dear Families and Those Served by GGRC:

In a letter dated August 6, 2009 you received information on the impact the State of California budget may have on the services that you or your family member receives from Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC). However, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) had informed the Regional Centers that several changes in Early Start were on hold while awaiting approval from the Federal Government Office of Special Education Services (OSEP). We have just been informed that the changes in the law in Early Start are no longer on hold, and this letter is to serve as a supplement to the letter dated August 6, 2009 to inform you of those changes. As always, decisions about the services and supports received by a person are determined on an individual basis using Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) process.

Should you have any questions or concerns about how these changes will impact you personally, please contact your Social Worker or Service Coordinator at GGRC. For areas that are immediately impacting you personally you will be receiving a call from your Social Worker or Service Coordinator.

The following changes to the Early Start statutes went into effect July 28, 2009:

1. Early Start Eligibility:

To be eligible for the Early Start Program, infants and toddlers ages 24-36 months on the date of the initial referral must demonstrate a 50% delay in one area or a 33% delay in two areas of development. This will not affect currently eligible infants and toddlers.

2. Early Start Use of Private Insurance:

Families are required to use their private insurance or health care service plan for medical services identified in the IFSP. Speech, physical and occupational therapies are included under "medical services." Evaluations and assessments will continue to be funded by GGRC.

The following statutory changes will go into effect on October 1, 2009:

1. Prevention Program:

The new California Prevention Program will go into effect on October 1, 2009. This new program is for at-risk babies who are not eligible for the Early Start Program and are at high risk for a developmental disability. The program will give infants and toddlers between birth and 36 months the opportunity to receive intake, assessment, and case

management services as well as assistance with referrals to generic resources through the regional center system. If the infant or toddler is showing a significant developmental delay, then they can be assessed for eligibility for the Early Start Program at that time.

2. Required Early Intervention Services and Eliminating Non-Required Services:

Effective 10/1/09, GGRC will no longer fund services that are not federally mandated, with the exception of durable medical equipment.

As always, GGRC will continue to serve as the safety net for you and your family. Together, we will navigate these difficult times while ensuring that the people served by GGRC live lives that are productive and meaningful to them. If you prefer to receive information from GGRC by email, please send your email address to Judy Leonard at jleonard@ggrc.org.

Sincerely,

James L. Shorter
Executive Director

JLS/wjt