



Growing Together

**A Guide to Char-Em ISD Early On and
The Primary Service Provider Approach**

Supporting your child where they live, learn, and play!



Early On: Supporting Your Child's Development From Birth to Age Three

Char-Em ISD Early On is a team of professionals dedicated to helping infants and toddlers (ages 0-3) with developmental delays or disabilities.

Our team includes:

- Speech & Language Therapists
- Physical & Occupational Therapists
- Social Workers & Psychologists
- Hearing & Vision Specialists
- Early Childhood Teachers

We don't just work with your child; we work with your whole family. We believe that you are your child's best teacher, and we are here to give you the tools to help them succeed. Even if you only see one person, the whole team is working for you. The team meets regularly to share ideas and solve problems so that your family gets the very best help available.

The “Primary Service Provider” (PSP) Approach

Most programs have you juggle five different appointments with five different people. We do things differently. We use the Primary Service Provider (PSP) approach.

How it works:

- **One Main Contact**

Your family is matched with one professional from our Early On team who becomes your “Point Person” or PSP.

- **A Whole Team Behind You**

While you mostly see your PSP, the entire team meets weekly behind the scenes to share ideas and solutions for your child.

If your PSP needs support or a specific strategy for speech, movement, etc., they talk to other members of the team. Sometimes a team member will join your visit to help out with ideas.

Where Do We Meet?

We come to you! Visits happen in “natural environments”—the places your child spends their time. This includes:

- Your home
- Childcare or daycare
- Playgroups or the park





What Does a Visit Look Like?

We use a method called Coaching. Instead of a one-on-one individual therapy with your child, we work side-by-side with you. We show you how to turn everyday routines like mealtime, bath time, or playtime into learning opportunities. We prefer to use the toys and items you already have at home. This way, you can keep practicing with your child long after we leave!

To help you understand the “Coaching” part, here is what a typical visit looks like:

- **Observation**

We watch how your child plays or participates in your normal routine.

- **Action**

We try strategies together to encourage development using things you have in your house.

- **Reflection**

We talk about what worked and what felt difficult.

- **Feedback**

We help you come up with a plan to use that strategy until our next visit.

Our Promise to You

We believe your child is most comfortable in their home or natural environment. By working together in your home, we make sure that your child isn't just “doing therapy”—they are learning how to succeed in their real life.

Why This Works

Research and major health organizations (like the American Academy of Pediatrics) support this approach because:

- **Less Stress**
Families experience fewer people coming in and out of the home and have fewer appointments to track.
- **Better Communication**
You only have to tell your story once, not five times.
- **Real-Life Skills**
Your child learns in the places where they actually live and play, which helps them master new skills faster.
- **Family Strength**
Our goal is to make you feel confident and capable of supporting your child's growth every single day.

Common Questions

Is my child getting “less” therapy?

No! In fact, they are getting more. Instead of one hour of therapy a week, you learn how to include learning into every hour of your child's day.

Can my provider change?

We try to keep the same person as long as possible. However, there are times when another team member may take over as Primary Service Provider when necessary.

Is this a proven method?

Yes. Over 30 states use this approach. It is supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics and other national organizations.



You Are Part of the Team!

Many parents ask, "What is my job during these visits?" Because you know your child best, you are a partner in everything we do. In our program, you will:

- **Share the Story**
Tell us what is working at home and what is frustrating.
- **Set the Goal**
You decide what is most important for your child to learn next.
- **Be the Expert**
You show us how your child typically acts during their normal routines of the day.
- **Try it Out**
You practice the new ideas with us so you feel comfortable doing them later.

Check out the Early On team! Scan the QR code
or visit: bit.ly/charem_earlyon_team



Quick Facts: How We Are Different

Traditional Therapy	Our PSP Approach
Focuses on the therapist working with the child.	Focuses on the provider coaching the family.
Often happens in a clinic or office.	Happens where you live, learn, and play.
You might have 3 or 4 appointments with different people.	You have one main "Point Person" (PSP).
Uses special clinic toys & equipment.	Uses your own toys and everyday routines.
Communication can be challenging with multiple offices and providers.	Our whole team meets regularly to stay on the same page.

Words to Know

- **IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan):** This is our "roadmap." It's a written plan that lists your family's goals and how we will reach them.
- **Coaching:** This is how we teach. We aren't here to "do" for you; we are here to support you in helping your child.
- **Joint Visit:** Sometimes, your main person (PSP) will bring a team member to your home for one visit to get additional ideas.
- **Natural Environment:** This means learning while doing normal things, like playing in the yard, eating a snack, or getting dressed.

Ready to Start?

Your Early On team is excited to work alongside you. We believe that together, we can help your child reach their full potential.

Schools served by Char-Em ISD

Alanson Public
Beaver Island Community
Boyne City Public
Boyne Falls Public
Central Lake Public
Charlevoix Public
Concord Academy Boyne
Concord Academy Petoskey
East Jordan Public
Ellsworth Community
Harbor Springs Public
Pellston Public
Public Schools of Petoskey
and non-public schools



Supporting Schools
Supporting Students

08568 Mercer Boulevard
Charlevoix, Michigan 49720
231.547.9947 p
231.547.5621 f
www.charemisd.org

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