Our concept of early intervention originated about 30 years ago. The founding director of ICEC, herself a parent of a child with "special needs," began a small program in 1976 for families of toddlers with developmental delays. She knew firsthand the stresses put on a family by the birth of a developmentally disabled child. She understood the desire parents had for information and help for their babies. Following her dream, she designed and developed this unique technique of providing services for families who have children with special needs.

Since 1983 ICEC has provided comprehensive Early Intervention services to children with known or suspected developmental delays. Today children with "special needs" will be living in the world of the able. It is crucial for parents to intervene early in their child's development. Early Intervention focuses on special instruction and therapy designed to help infants and toddlers with "special needs" improve their developmental skills. Our mission is to *Treat those with Special Needs with Special Care.* This is accomplished through parent participation early intervention programs which focus on the entire family supporting each child. ICEC's programs are provided to 1,000 children from birth to 6 years old annually; delivered in two Orange County facilities, by our 40 staff members consisting of Pediatric Occupational, Physical & Speech therapists, and Special Education Teachers.

**The Ounce of Prevention Program**

The Ounce of Prevention Program was created to provide developmental assessments and early intervention services to disabled infants and toddlers who are uninsured, underinsured or ineligible for state funded programs services. The Ounce of Prevention Project is designed to:

* Assess developmental levels of these infants and toddlers
* Monitor development of children with delays in development
* Provide developmentally appropriate services specifically for these high risk children, their parents and to high risk children born to adults with developmental disabilities.

ICEC is a blend of many models of early intervention, we individualize each child’s program plan by not sticking to any one ‘method’ utilizing what works best for each individual child.

Early intervention services for at-risk and developmentally delayed infants and their parents reduce both the prevalence of developmental disabilities and the severity of their disabilities. A nationwide study (Infant Health and Development Program) demonstrates that intervention in the first three years of life significantly decreases the likelihood of mental retardation, behavioral problems, and learning disabilities. Children not enrolled in early intervention programs were three times as likely to have IQ scores in the mental retardation range and twice as likely to have behavioral problems. Early Intervention based on the assessment of infant and family needs, facilitates the growth of many at risk or delayed children so much that they instead achieve "normal" rates of growth. Long term follow-up of high-risk infants receiving Early Intervention services documents the reduction of child abuse, hospitalization, and use of special education services.