



4.29.20

Early Intervention programs in Massachusetts desperately need bridge funding to continue to serve babies, toddlers and their families throughout the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Association for Infant Mental Health (MassAIMH) Policy Committee writes to urge you to provide fiscal relief to the Commonwealth's Early Intervention Programs now, before it is too late. MassAIMH is a non-profit interdisciplinary, professional statewide organization established to promote and support the optimal development of infants, young children, and families through relationship-focused workforce development and advocacy efforts.

EI programs have been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the crisis, the number of babies and toddlers served by EI programs is drastically decreasing. This results in EI programs across the state with sustained aggregate lost revenue of 60% in one month since the State of Emergency was declared. Staff furloughs and layoffs are being implemented due to this mounting revenue shortfall. Massachusetts is actively losing its capacity to sustain its infrastructure of dedicated EI programs and highly educated professionals who respond to the needs of vulnerable families now and in the future once this crisis is over. You and our legislators have the ability to change this trajectory, now.

Many EI programs will not survive this crisis without your help. **We need you to step in Governor Baker and provide additional funding of \$13.5 million now to preserve the quality staff and sustain the Early Intervention service delivery system the Commonwealth has worked for decades to build and is in jeopardy of losing its standard as a national model.** The thousands of children (aged 0-3) and families served by EI programs throughout the state are counting on EI programs to stay open and viable to provide critical developmental services for our babies and toddlers both now and when the crisis ends. The long-term outcomes of early school success are dependent upon continuous developmental interventions, parent coaching, and nurturing relationships so critical in these first three years. EI programs cannot do that without immediate funding support from you. Please act today Governor Baker, the children and families EI delivery systems serve depend on it. MassAIMH members are a part of this strong workforce and we are standing beside them in urging you to act.

We support and advocate for Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium's (MEIC) proposal written on April 16, 2020 to implement a plan to reinvest all unspent budgeted EI funding back into EI Programs. This proposed plan will help save 59 Massachusetts Early Intervention Programs throughout our great state that has continuously put infants, early childhood and families first. Let us not lose our commitment to solid high-quality developmental care and services!

Sincerely,

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