

Talking Points Worksheet: Expand Eligibility and Funding for the Infant Learning Program (ILP)

- What we are asking for:
 - Allow a child who is 25% behind other children to receive help from the ILP.
 - Add \$5.7 million to the ILP budget to help this happen.
- Why are we asking for this:
 - Alaska has the worst eligibility criteria in the country – we require a child to be 50% behind other children the same age which means a 2 year old must be learning or developing at a 1 year old level before we will help them.
 - Special Education only requires a child to be 25% behind other children the same age to get help in school. We want ILP services to be the same so all children are treated equally and can receive the help they deserve.
 - A child's brain is most able to learn new things from the time they are born until they turn 5 years old. We want them to get the help they need during this time instead of later in life.
 - In addition to the funding increase, Medicaid can be billed for many services offered by the ILP.
- What are the benefits of expanding the ILP:
 - The State can save a lot of money by giving children the help they need early in their life. Almost half of the new children we would help would not need special education when they go to Kindergarten. Helping them from birth to the age of 5 is much less expensive than helping them later during school or as adults.
 - After the time it takes to make the changes to the ILP to help more children, we project the State can save almost \$35 million a year – every year – in special education costs.
 - There will be less need for adult home and community based Medicaid services.
 - There will be fewer children entering the juvenile justice system
 - This will make it easier on child protective services workers, make our communities safer, and lead to fewer adults in jails and prisons.
 - There will be less need for special needs daycare which will allow more parents to go back to work.
 - Will have a positive impact on society because more young adults will graduate high school ready to go to college or into a vocational program or to enter the workforce.

