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Maine Autism Institute  
for Education and Research

## Early Start Maine

Intervention services for young children



### How to reach us:

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Early Start Maine is an initiative of the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research. The Early Start Maine team is comprised of nationally certified Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) providers. In partnership with Maine Child Development Services, our team provides training, consultation and ongoing support to early intervention providers statewide who are working with toddlers with autism.

## About ESDM

Developed by psychologists Geraldine Dawson, Ph.D. and Sally Rogers, Ph.D., ESDM is an early intervention program designed to promote language, learning and engagement for children 12–48 months of age with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

ESDM is supported by the principles of developmental psychology and applied behavior analysis (ABA). The ESDM curriculum is designed to address all areas of the child's development using ABA-based teaching strategies within play-based, relationship-focused routines.

ESDM sessions involve rich interpersonal exchange and positive affect during shared engagement with developmentally appropriate materials and activities. The program focuses on developing the child's verbal and nonverbal communication skills, as well as increasing adult sensitivity to a child's cues. Functional play, as well as the enjoyment of play, is facilitated.

## Family involvement

Parental involvement is a crucial part of the ESDM program. If your child is receiving ESDM intervention, the provider will explain and model the strategies for you to use at home. Families are encouraged and supported to use the strategies during everyday activities, such as meals, bath time and play.



## What we do

- Assess your child using the ESDM Curriculum Checklist
- Develop objectives that address your child's needs and your family priorities
- Provide support and consultation to the primary service provider working with your family
- Monitor your child's progress on the ESDM objectives

For more information on the Early Start Maine Intervention Services, contact the Maine Autism Institute for Education and Research, 207.581.2352; [maineautisminstitute@maine.edu](mailto:maineautisminstitute@maine.edu); [umaine.edu/autisminstitute](http://umaine.edu/autisminstitute).