Learning about the IFSP
For Families with Children Birth to Age 3

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Parents are the most important people in a child’s life. They know their child better than anyone else. They share their child’s joys and challenges.
Learning that their infant or toddler has a disability or delay, Parents may experience a range of emotions...

Loss      Relief      Denial      Sadness
Blame or Anger Fear or Anxiety
Love and joy     Motivation to act
The federal infant and toddler program, also called early intervention or Part C of IDEA* (1975), is an important source of services and supports to help families enhance their children’s learning and development.

*IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Referral

Screening/Evaluation

Notice of Eligibility

Create IFSP

Services

Review Every 6m.

Timeline:
45 days from date of referral to complete
An infant or toddler under 3 years of age who needs early intervention services due to:

- Developmental delays
- Diagnosis
- At Risk Infants/Toddlers
Evaluations

May include:
- A review of records
- Informed clinical opinion
- May include information from other sources

Requirements:
- Trained personnel assessing
- Must be non-discriminatory
- Child’s native language
Family input is important:
- Medical information
- Strengths
- Milestones
- How the infant or toddler plays and interacts with others
- Behavior with family and at daycare
- Other information
The team must develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Parents encouraged to ask the Regional Center for a meeting to review evaluation findings
Services are provided

- Under public supervision
- At no cost, unless family share of cost is determined.
- By qualified personnel
- Follow the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Meet State standards
Designed to meet needs of an infant or toddler in one or more areas of development:

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Communication
- Social or emotional
- Adaptive

Support families as they work to enhance their child’s development

Early Intervention Services
• Help families enhance the learning and development of their child
• Assure children participate fully in family and community activities
• Maximize naturally occurring learning opportunities
Natural Environments

Home and community settings where all children with and without disabilities participate

- Child Care
- Parks
- Holidays
- Stores
- Family Gatherings

Maximum extent appropriate

Early Intervention Services
**What Kinds of Services are Available?**

- Assistive technology
- Audiology
- Family training, counseling
- Home visits
- Social work services
- Special instruction
- Speech-language pathology
- Health services
- Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation
- Nursing services
- Nutrition services
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Service coordination
- Sign Language and cued language services
- Transportation and related costs
- Vision services

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**Early Intervention Services**

EPU
Children's Center
Who Provides E.I. Services?

- Audiologists
- Family therapists
- Nurses
- Occupational therapists
- Orientation and mobility specialists
- Pediatricians and other physicians
- Physical therapists
- Psychologists
- Registered dietician
- Social workers
- Special educators
- Speech and language pathologists
- Vision specialists
- Other

Early Intervention Services

EPU Children’s Center
The IFSP
Individualized Family Service Plan
Parent Rights

- Meetings convenient to parents
- Meetings in native language
- Written notice of meetings
- Informed parental consent and must be obtained for services to begin
The IFSP Team

Advocate    Parent    Evaluator

Service Coordinator    Doctor Or Nurse    Service Providers    Anyone with Knowledge of the Child

Individualized Family Service Plan
Service Coordinator/Case Manager

- IFSP/IPP plan creation and management
- Advocacy (May attend meetings with you)
- Support navigating needed service systems
- Coordinates services (Payer of Last Resort)
- Facilitates the development of a transition plan
A good relationship with members of your team is vital.
Preparing for the IFSP Meeting

• Think about your child’s strengths and their needs.
• What are your main concerns?
• How do your child’s challenges impact their daily life? In what ways?
• How do your child’s challenges impact your life? In what ways?
What is in an IFSP?

Statements of the—

- Infant’s or toddler’s present levels of development
- Family’s resources, priorities, concerns related to the development of the child
- Measurable outcomes (goals) expected for child and family
- Progress being made
### Outcomes

#### Family Outcomes
1. Know their rights
2. Effectively communicate their children's needs
3. Help their children develop and learn.

#### Child Outcomes
1. Children have positive social relationships.
2. Children acquire and use knowledge and skills.
3. Children take action to meet their needs.

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**Individualized Family Service Plan**
What’s in an IFSP?
- Early intervention services needed to achieve outcomes
- Service details (length, duration)
- Where services will be provided
- Other services the child or family is receiving
- Steps and services to support transition at age 3
How To Request a Service
The Purchase of Service Process

• Understand your child’s and your family’s needs regarding the disability

• Request a service in writing or in a meeting with the Service Coordinator

• Ask about available options
After the IFSP Meeting
Parents receive a written copy of the IFSP.

Agree   
Disagree
Sign and Return  
Put in writing
Ask for a Meeting

Keep copies for your records
If parents do not consent to a service in the IFSP
then only the services they consent to will be provided
The IFSP is Not Carved in Stone

• An IFSP is flexible
• It can be changed when needed
  • Is the infant or toddler making progress?
  • How would changing the IFSP help?
 Attend all team meetings
  - Listen
  - Share information
  - Learn about your child’s disability
  - It’s okay to disagree
  - Know your rights
  - Keep good records
  - Put it in writing

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIPS FOR PARENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Family Service Plan</td>
</tr>
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EPU Children’s Center
Communication with your Service Coordinator or Service Provider is KEY.

Many concerns that you may have can be resolved by speaking directly to your Service Coordinator or Service Provider and asking questions.
In case of Disagreements

Procedural Safeguards
• Right to receive a copy of your child’s early intervention record

• Right to confidentiality of personally identifiable information

• Opportunity for parents to examine records
• **Prior written notice**

• **Notice in parents’ native language (unless clearly not feasible)**

• **Parental consent and right to decline services**
Dispute Resolution Options:

• Mediation
• Complaint
• Due Process Hearing

This also applies to payment disputes
Parents

are the most important people in a child’s life.
know their infant or toddler better than anyone else.
help their child develop and learn.
are experts and have much to share!
The contents of this resource were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education #H328M200055. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.