

Writing the IFSP for Your Child

Alert! Alert!

Because NICHCY's website will only remain online until September 30, 2014, most of its rich content has moved to a new home, the **Center for Parent Information and Resources** (CPIR), where it can be kept up to date.

The new address of *Writing the IFSP for Your Child* at the CPIR is:

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/ifsp/>

Updated, December 2012

After your young child's evaluation is complete and he or she is found eligible for early intervention services, you, as parents, and a team will meet to develop a written plan for providing early intervention services to your child and, as necessary, to your family. This plan is called the **Individualized Family Service Plan**, or **IFSP**.

The IFSP is a very important document, and you, as parents, are important members of the team that develops it. This webpage focuses on the IFSP—both the process of writing it and what type of information it will contain.

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What is an IFSP?

The IFSP is a written document that, among other things, outlines the early intervention services that your child and family will receive.

One **guiding principal** of the IFSP is that ***the family is a child's greatest resource***, that a young child's needs are closely tied to the needs of his or her family. The best way to support children and meet their needs is to support and build upon the individual strengths of their family. So, the IFSP is a whole family plan with the parents as major contributors in its development. Involvement of other team members will depend on what the child needs. These other team members could come from several agencies and may include medical people, therapists, child development specialists, social workers, and others.

Each state has specific guidelines for the IFSP. Your service coordinator can explain what the IFSP guidelines are in your state.

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What is included in the IFSP?



Your child's IFSP must include the following:

Your child's **present levels of functioning and need** in the areas of his or her physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive development

Family information (with your agreement), including the resources, priorities, and your concerns, as parents, and other family members closely involved with the child

The major **results or outcomes expected** to be achieved for your child and family

The specific **early intervention services** your child will be receiving

Where in the **natural environment** (e.g., home, community) the services will be provided (if the services will not be provided in the natural environment, the IFSP must include a statement justifying why not)

When and where your son or daughter will receive services

The **number of days or sessions** he or she will receive each service and how long each session will last

Who will pay for the services

The name of the **service coordinator** overseeing the implementation of the IFSP

The steps to be taken to support your child's **transition out of early intervention** and into another program when the time comes.

The IFSP may also identify services your family may be interested in, such as financial information or information about raising a child with a disability.

The IFSP must be fully explained to you, the parents, and your suggestions must be considered. You must give written consent before services can start. If you do not give your consent in writing, your child will not receive services.

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Who develops the IFSP?

The meeting to develop the child's first IFSP (and each annual meeting thereafter to review the IFSP) must include the following participants:

- the parent or parents of the child;
- other family members, as requested by the parent, if feasible to do so;
- an advocate or person outside of the family, if the parent requests that the person participate;
- the service coordinator designated by the system to be responsible for implementing the IFSP;
- a person or persons directly involved in conducting the evaluations and assessments of the child and family; and
- persons who will be providing early intervention services under this part to the child or family (as appropriate).

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What happens next?

With your written permission, the IFSP is then implemented, meaning that the services described in the IFSP are provided to your child in the manner described in the IFSP. In other words, all that information you included in the IFSP now serves as a roadmap for the early intervention system as it provides services to your child and family.

About parent consent | You, as parents, have the right to decline any early intervention service without jeopardizing your child's eligibility for other early intervention services. Parents may also revoke their consent for one or more services at any time.

Review and update of the IFSP | The IFSP is reviewed every six months and is updated at least once a year. You, as parents, are also part of that review and revision process. Together, you and the team will look at your child's progress and decide how (or if) the IFSP needs to be changed to reflect your child's growth toward the goals you've set, the family's current situation, and so on.

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More Information on the IFSP

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is the cornerstone of family involvement and early intervention services provided to infants and toddlers with disabilities. Find out the basics and more about the IFSP below.

IFSPweb.

<http://ifspweb.org/>

This online self-paced tutorial is designed to help families and professionals develop better IFSPs for young children with disabilities. It is specifically for Nebraska families and professionals, but we all can learn here, too.

IFSPs in your state.

<http://nichcy.org/state-organization-search-by-state>

We refer you to NICHCY's state resource sheets, where you can find an entrance point into your state's early intervention system. It will be listed under the first category, State Agencies, under the header "Programs for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities: Ages Birth through 2." Take note of the website listed for the agency, and visit it to see what information they provide online.

It's amazing how many states have online modules and explanations for parents and professionals with respect to the state's approach to IFSPs and service delivery. Just to name a few...to give you an idea of what a valuable resource you might find if you go looking via NICHCY's state sheets...take a look at what several states offer. Kinda makes you wanna find out what your state offers!

Arizona: Early Intervention Program.

<http://www.azdes.gov/azeip>

Colorado: Early Childhood Connections.

<http://www.eicolorado.org>

Connecticut: Birth to Three.

www.birth23.org/

Indiana: First Steps.

<http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2633.htm>

Kansas.

Intro into the system: www.kdhe.state.ks.us/cds/index.html

Online inservice training for families & professionals: www.kskits.org/index.shtml

Maryland.

The IFSP Process Tutorial: <http://cte.jhu.edu/courses/ifsp/>

Missouri: First Steps.

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/>

Texas: Early Childhood Intervention.

www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/index.shtml

Wisconsin: Birth to 3.

Intro into the system: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/birthto3/>

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