

From IDEA Part C to IDEA Part B: The Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education

June 5, 2024



TODAY'S FOCUS

First Steps Overview

Transition Conference Overview

Preschool Special Education

**Office of Special Education
Programs (federal) Q&A**

**Indiana Office of Special Education
Q&A**





What is First Steps?

- Entitlement program providing early intervention for children birth to 3 years old with developmental disabilities or delays
- Established and funded through federal statute and state laws (IDEA Part C)
- Provides early intervention services that can help eliminate/reduce the need for later services and thus save costs.

How and Where Services Occur



Families are the center of First Steps services and family engagement is key. Providers coach families to learn strategies to implement in their daily routines.



First Steps builds upon the parent/professional relationship and supports parents as the advocate for their child.



The goal is to work with the parents/caregivers to develop a plan which educates and empowers. Families drive IFSP development and service delivery.



“Natural Environments” are settings typical for same-aged infants or toddlers without a disability, likely include home, child care and community settings.



First Steps Eligibility

An infant or toddler who is 0-3 years old and resides in the state of Indiana.

Has a developmental delay or a diagnosed medical condition

Demonstrates a 25% delay in one area or a 20% delay in two or more areas of development:

- Cognitive
- Physical (gross motor, fine motor)
- Adaptive skills
- Communication (receptive and expressive)
- Social/emotional development

Medical Categories of Eligibility

- Chromosomal abnormalities
- Genetic or congenital disorders
- Sensory impairment including vision or hearing
- Inborn errors of metabolism
- Neurological abnormality in newborn period
- Congenital infection
- Low birth weight (1500 grams/3.1 pounds)
- Severe attachment disorders
- Severe toxic exposure - pre and postnatal exposure (including FAS)

Indiana State First Steps Profile Report



The total number of children and families served from :
July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

30,100

First Steps Services



Assistive Technology

Speech Therapy

Audiology

Developmental Therapy

Vision Services

Nutrition

Occupational Therapy

Physical Therapy

Psychology Services

Service Coordination

Social Work



Number of children receiving each type of service:

- ❖ Occupational Therapy: 18,802 (60%)
- ❖ Speech Therapy: 17,576 (57%)
- ❖ Physical Therapy: 16,390 (53%)
- ❖ Developmental Therapy: 16,165 (52%)
- ❖ Audiology: 971 (3%)
- ❖ Nutrition: 335 (1%)
- ❖ Psychology: 191 (0%)
- ❖ Social Work: 41 (0%)

*As of 6/30/2023



- The state of Indiana is divided into 9 service regions called Clusters
- Each Cluster is required to have a System Point of Entry (SPOE)
- There are 42 Provider Agencies statewide

Journey Through First Steps



1

A referral is made to a local SPOE

2

A Service Coordinator meets with the family

3

Evaluation to determine eligibility is completed

4

IFSP is developed

5

Services begin!

6

Discharge or Transition

Individual Family Service Plan

The **IFSP** is a process and a legal document that considers a family's priorities, concerns, and resources regarding their child with special needs.

The purpose of the **IFSP** is to identify and organize resources to facilitate priorities and goals for the child in the context of their family.

Important Timelines

- Program has **45** days from referral to IFSP
- Program has **30** days from signed IFSP to initiate services
- Children referred after 34 months – The SPOE will assign a Service Coordinator and work with the family and department of education to determine eligibility for preschool special education services, write and IEP, and start services

What Happens After First Steps?



Children transition when no longer eligible or when they turn 3 years of age. Here are some possible next steps:

- Public School System
- Clinic-Based Therapies
- State Resources/Waivers
- Head Start
- Early Care and Education Options
- No Formal Intervention



IN*Source



Indiana's Parent Information Training Center
located throughout the state of Indiana providing:

- Trainings
- Resources
- Supports
- Liaisons

www.insource.org

insource@insource.org

574.234.7101

FirstSteps.in.gov



What Is First Steps?

First Steps is Indiana's **early intervention** program for children birth to age 3 who would benefit from additional support to meet their developmental milestones. First Steps supports families and caregivers by helping their children learn and grow through their family's everyday activities. Children learn to build relationships with other children and adults, develop independence, play and grow.

What is early intervention?

Early intervention describes the services and supports that are available to babies and young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. This may include speech therapy, physical therapy, and other types of services based on the needs of the child and family.

Who Is Eligible?

Families with children from birth to their third birthday who:

- Are not reaching appropriate milestones for their age
- Are diagnosed with certain conditions

If you think your child or a child you know may be experiencing **developmental delays**, contact your physician or First Steps for further information and support. The sooner you reach out to First Steps the more we can do for you and your child.

What are developmental delays and disabilities?

Developmental delays and disabilities may include impairment in physical, learning, language or behavior areas. These conditions begin during the developmental period and may impact day-to-day functioning beyond a child's early years.

Getting Started

First Steps is committed to families across Indiana. Here's how you can get started.

Anyone can refer a child to First Steps. Whether you are a parent, family member, service provider, doctor or someone else in a baby's or toddler's life, you can connect that child with First Steps and help them learn and grow. Contact First Steps directly to assess eligibility for your child or a child you know.

If it is determined that a child is eligible and in need of early intervention services, an assessment, a service coordinator will work to get the best available support for your child and family.



Get started by going to our website for more information, FAQs and to find your local First Steps provider.
FirstSteps.in.gov

The First Steps Are the Most Important

As a parent, you know your child best, but it can be hard to know what to expect in terms of development. First Steps is Indiana's go-to resource to help you through the process.



FirstSteps.in.gov



Your First Steps Journey

Let's walk through the First Steps journey from start to finish!

Your First Steps Journey

Referral to First Steps

• Anybody can refer a child to First Steps! Families can "self-refer" to First Steps by contacting a system point of entry office directly. However, families may also be referred to the program by pediatricians, child care providers or social services agencies.

Intake

• A service coordinator will schedule a free assessment and evaluation with a multi-disciplinary team of professionals to identify developmental delays and determine program eligibility. There may be a fee for ongoing services depending on your family's income and insurance. Your service coordinator will work with you to determine if you will have a possible cost participation and what that may mean for you.

Connecting With the Team

• A service coordinator will work with you throughout your family's time in First Steps.

Developing a Plan

• The service coordinator, you and those you would like to include (e.g., other family members, child care providers, early intervention providers, etc.) will meet to review the results of the assessment, discuss concerns and priorities and determine your goals for your child, what services will be provided, and where and how progress will be measured.

Start of Services

• This information is compiled and written into the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Reviewing the Plan

• Based on information gathered from your IFSP, First Steps will connect you and your child to the right services in your area to begin early intervention.

Future Steps

• Services should begin soon after your IFSP is developed.

• As your child and family's needs develop and change, so do our services.

• As your child reaches their developmental milestones or begins nearing their third birthday, First Steps will work with you to find the right services on your child and family transition from the program.

• Your First Steps team will provide information and discuss options for future steps. We are available to assist with the transition to school and community-based settings.



Thank you!



**Division of Disability and
Rehabilitative Services**

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Transition Conference: Future Steps



TRANSITION CONFERENCE: FUTURE STEPS



Child exits First Steps at age 3



Transition meeting with service coordinator to determine child's future services



Many options for child after First Steps





Future Steps: Transition Conference



**Public School
System**



State Resources



HeadStart



Private Therapies



@EDUCATEIN

Preschool Special Education



PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

First Steps Requirements

First Steps must notify IDOE and the local educational agency (LEA) where the student receiving Part C services resides, and if they are potentially eligible for Part B services prior to their third birthday. If eligible, First Steps will obtain family approval to then convene a transition conference with appropriate parties to discuss possible services.

Federal law requires that LEAs are notified no less than 90 days prior to the child's third birthday. Article 7 requires the notification to occur 6 months prior to the child's third birthday.

If First Steps determines that the child is eligible for services over 45 days but less than 90 days before their third birthday, First Steps may provide the transition notification to IDOE and the LEA upon determining the child's eligibility that they could receive Part B services.

PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

Transition Meeting

LEAs participate in transition conferences arranged by First Steps for students who may be eligible for preschool services under Part B. If the LEA is unable to attend, arrangements must be made for involvement through other means, including one of the following:

- Participation in a conference call;
- Having a knowledgeable authorized representative attend the meeting; or
- Making pertinent information available at the meeting.

Best practice includes obtaining parent signature of consent for evaluation at the time of the transition conference either agreeing to the evaluation or declining the evaluation for Part B eligibility.

Late Referral Information

If parent referral for a child is late due to initial refusal of Part B at the transition conference and later reversing their decision, the LEA should make a good faith effort to conduct the evaluation, convene a Case Conference Committee (CCC), and create and implement an Individualized Education Program (IEP) by their third birthday.

The late referral is defined as less than 45 days before their third birthday, and the CCC must convene no later than 50 instructional days after receiving written parental consent for evaluation.

PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

Prior to their third birthday, LEA is responsible for the education of students who live in the area where the student and family claim residency must:

- Complete its evaluation of the student**
- Convene the CCC to determine eligibility for special education and related services**
- If the student is eligible, develop an IEP, taking into consideration the student's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the other general and special factors**
- Implement the IEP**

Services must begin on or before the child's third birthday.

PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

If the student's third birthday occurs during the summer and the CCC determines the student requires extended school year services (ESY), the student's IEP must state that services will be initiated during the summer of the student's third birthday. Otherwise, the IEP should state that services will start at the beginning of the school year.

This guidance should also be followed when an LEA has extended breaks during the school year (i.e. fall break, winter break, and spring break).



PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

At the request of the parent, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting must be sent to the First Steps service coordinator, or other Part C service representative, if the child previously received First Steps services.



WHAT TYPE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

SERVICES ARE DETERMINED BY A CASE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE (CCC) TO MEET THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF A STUDENT AND PROVIDE FAPE IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

(Not an all-inclusive list)

- Assistive Technology
- Audiology
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Accommodations for learning
- Modifications when necessary
- Supplementary Aids and Services



WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

- CHILDREN AGES 3-5
- CHILDREN MUST BE FOUND ELIGIBLE BY A CASE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AFTER DISCUSSING RESULTS OF THE CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

AREAS OF ELIGIBILITY INCLUDE:

- AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER
- BLIND OR LOW VISION
- INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
- DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING
- DEAF-BLIND
- DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY (THROUGH 8 YEARS OF AGE)
- EMOTIONAL DISABILITY
- MULTIPLE DISABILITIES
- OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT
- ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT
- SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY
- TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

QUESTIONS?



Thank you!



Contact osemonitoring@doe.in.gov

