

# **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)







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

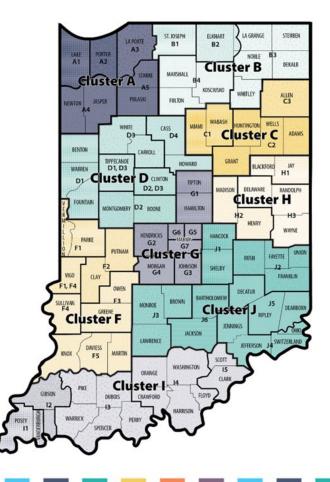


## Number of children receiving each type of service:



- ❖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!



Discharge or Transition





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**

first steps

- 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? **Getting Started** First Steps is Indiana's early intervention program for children birth to age 3 who would First Steps is committed to families across Indiana. Here's how you can get started. benefit from additional support to meet their developmental milestones. First Steps supports families and caregivers by helping 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 their children learn and grow through their family's everyday activities. Children learn toddler's life, you can connect that child with First Steps and help them learn and grow. Contact to build relationships with other children and First Steps directly to assess eligibility for your adults, develop independence, play and grow. If it is determined that a child is eligible and What is early intervention? in need of early intervention services after an assessment, a service coordinator will work Forty 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 speach therapy, to get the best available support for your child 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 Are not reaching appropriate milestones for Get started by going to our Are diagnosed with certain conditions

do for you and your child.

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.

FAOs and to find your local First Steps provider.

FirstSteps.in.gov

#### you reach out to First Steps the more we can What are developmental delays and disabilities?

If you think your child or a child you know

may be experiencing developmental del contact your physician or First Steps for

further information and support. The sooner



















# Thank you!





### **Constance Young**

Director of Training and Outreach <a href="mailto:constance.young@fssa.in.gov">constance.young@fssa.in.gov</a>

www.firststeps.in.gov

1.800.545.7763

firststepsweb.fssa@fssa.in.gov



# 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









## **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.



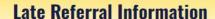


#### **Transition Meeting**

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.





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.



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.

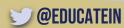


If the student's third birthday occurs during the summer and the CCC determines the student requires extended school year services (ESY), the student's IEP must state that services will be initiated during the summer of the student's third birthday. Otherwise, the IEP should state that services will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



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.



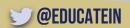
#### WHAT TYPE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

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:**

- **OAUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**
- **OBLIND OR LOW VISION**
- **OINTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**
- **ODEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**
- **ODEAF-BLIND**
- **ODEVELOPMENTAL DELAY (THROUGH 8 YEARS OF AGE)**
- **CEMOTIONAL DISABILITY**

- **OMULTIPLE DISABILITIES**
- **OOTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT**
- **ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT**
- **OSPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY**
- **OTRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY**



# **QUESTIONS?**





