



Vermont Family Network

Parents' Guide to Early Intervention



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Families Are Important!

- Families 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

Children's Integrated Services (CIS)

Vermont's prevention and early intervention initiative for pregnant and postpartum women and families with children from birth to age 5



CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES (CIS)

- CIS offers early intervention, family support, and prevention services that help ensure the healthy development and well-being of children, pre-birth to age 5.
- Services are available at low or no cost to families.



Infant and Toddler Program Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Early Intervention (EI)

The federal infant and toddler program, also called early intervention or Part C, is an important source of services and supports to help families enhance their children's learning and development.



Early Intervention Services



- Meet the developmental needs of the child and the needs of the family for enhancing the child's development
- Are selected in collaboration with the parents

Focus of 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



No-cost EI Services

- Developmental screening
- Multidisciplinary evaluations and ongoing developmental assessments
- IFSP/One Plan development
- Service Coordination



Health Insurance

Your health insurance will be charged for:

- Speech therapy
- Oral motor therapy
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Vision screening
- Hearing screening



Parents' Rights

- Decline the use of insurance if this results in financial difficulty
- Request financial assistance to help pay for services
- If you do not provide consent to use of public benefits or insurance, services will still be provided



Financial Help

If you do not have insurance or cannot afford copays or deductibles, you can apply for:

- Medicaid
- Early intervention financial assistance

Service coordinator will help you with the process



Who is Eligible for EI Services?



Families of infants or toddlers under 3 years of age who:

1. Experience developmental delays, **OR**
2. Have a diagnosis that has a high probability of developmental delay

Early Intervention Services

- 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



What Kinds of Services Are Available?

- Audiology, Assistive Technology
- Counseling/Psychological
- Family training, counseling and home visits
- Medical Evaluation (for diagnostic purposes only)
- Nursing, Nutrition



What Kinds of Services Are Available?

- Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy
- Service Coordination, Social Work
- Special Instruction, Speech/Language
- Transportation, Vision



Who Provides EI Services?

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

Where are Services Provided?

In natural environments, i.e., Home and community settings where all children participate such as childcare and other community settings where children without disabilities participate, to the maximum amount appropriate



How Do I Start?

- CIS Coordinator
- Contact information is on the Agency of Human Services -Department for Children and Families website
- <https://dcf.vermont.gov/services/cis>



Screening



Screenings

- Can occur for children suspected of having a disability and a need for early intervention services
- Parental consent must be obtained prior to conducting screening
- Parent has right to request a full evaluation anytime during the screening

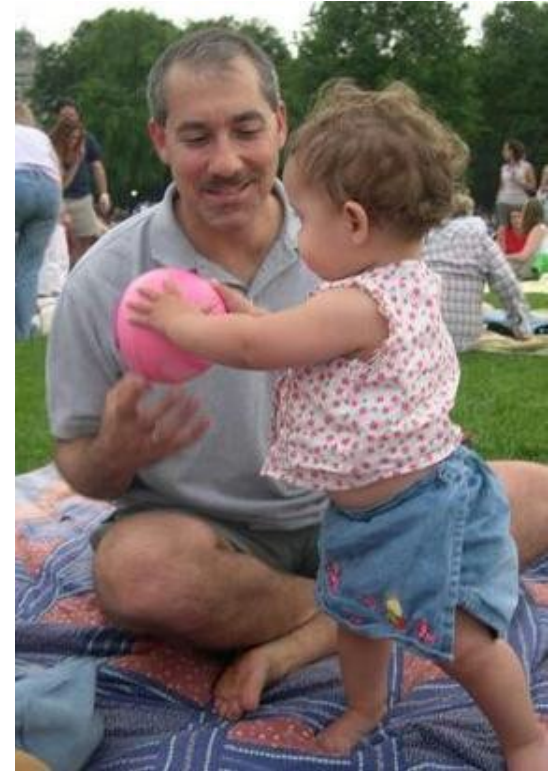
Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look



Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look

Timeline:

- Evaluation/assessment and IFSP/One Plan meeting to be completed within 45 days from date of referral
- If assessment cannot be completed within timeline, document reasons and develop interim IFSP/One Plan



Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look

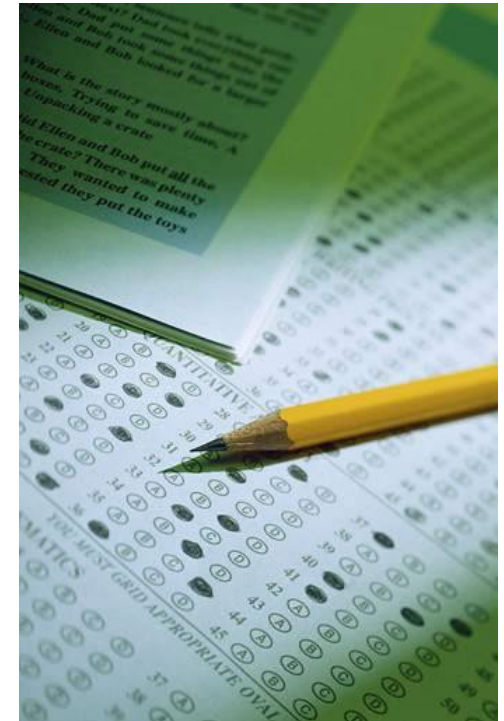
Evaluation and Assessment:

- Evaluation determines initial and continuing eligibility
- Assessment determines child's unique strengths and needs and includes evaluation of functioning in each of the developmental areas—
 - ✓ Physical development
 - ✓ Communication development
 - ✓ Cognitive development
 - ✓ Social/emotional development
 - ✓ Adaptive or self-help development



Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look

- Includes a review of records
- Based on informed clinical opinion
- By trained personnel
- Must be done in a non-discriminatory manner
- Conducted in native language of the child
- May include information from other sources



Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look

Sharing family information related to an infant/ toddler:

- Medical information
- Strengths
- Milestones
- How the infant or toddler plays and interacts with others
- Behavior with family and at daycare
- Other information



Evaluation and Assessment: A Closer Look



Family Assessment:

- In native language of the family
- Family-directed identification of resources, concerns, and priorities necessary to meet developmental needs of child
- Voluntary for each family member participating

The IFSP or the One Plan (Individualized Family Service Plan)

- Multi-disciplinary team that includes the family
- Developed within 45-day timeline
- Periodic review every 6 months
- Evaluated annually
- Informed written consent must be obtained before services can begin



The IFSP/One Plan Team

Who participates in the initial, periodic review and annual IFSP/One Plan meeting?

- Parent
- Family members
- Advocate
- Service coordinator



- Evaluators
- Service providers
- Others?
- (doctor)
- (nurse)

Service Coordinator

A service coordinator assists and enables the child and family to receive EI services and informs families of their rights and procedural safeguards

- Facilitates the development, review and evaluation of the IFSP/One Plan
- Coordinates other services that are needed
- Coordinates the delivery of services
- Facilitates the development of a transition plan



What's in an IFSP/One Plan?

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 results (outcomes) expected for child and family
- Progress being made



What's in an IFSP/One Plan?

- Early intervention services needed to achieve outcomes
- Length, duration, frequency, intensity and method of delivering services
- The natural environment where services will be provided
- Other services the child or family is receiving



What's in an IFSP/One Plan?

- Projected start date for services
- Name of the service coordinator
- Steps and services to support transition from Part C services



Parental Consent to the IFSP/One Plan

- The IFSP/One Plan is fully explained to the parents in parent's native language
- Parents must consent in writing before their child receives early intervention services
- If parents do not consent to a service in the IFSP/One Plan, then only the services they consent to will be provided



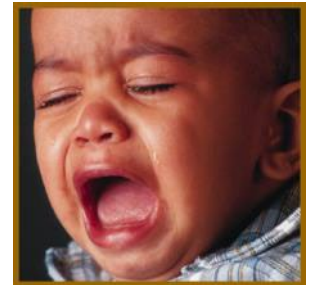
After the IFSP/One Plan Meeting

Parents receive a written copy of the IFSP/One Plan



Agree?
Sign and return

Disagree?
Put in writing;
ask for meeting



Keep copies for your records

IFSP/One Plan: Not Carved in Stone



- An IFSP/One Plan is flexible
- It can be changed when needed
 - ✓ Is the child making progress?
 - ✓ How would changing the IFSP/One Plan help?

Parents are part of the team and must consent to changes in writing

IFSP/One Plan Tips for Parents

- Attend all team meetings
- Listen
- Share information
- Learn about your child's disability
- It's okay to disagree
- Contact Vermont Family Network to learn about your rights
- Keep good records
- Put it in writing



Guiding Principle

- The family is a child's greatest resource
- One Plan is a whole family plan



Transition to Early Childhood Special Education Services

- Between 6 months and 90 days before the child's third birthday, the IFSP/One Plan Team must determine if the child is "potentially eligible" for Early Childhood Special Education Services, provided by the school district
- The IFSP/One Plan team will coordinate with the school district to discuss a smooth and effective transition to preschool

Eligibility?

- EI Team members determine “potential eligibility”
- The school determines early childhood special education eligibility



Transition Conference

- To discuss early childhood special education services
- Parents receive procedural safeguards notice
- Options if a child is not found “potentially eligible”



Child and Family Outcomes

Family Outcomes

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

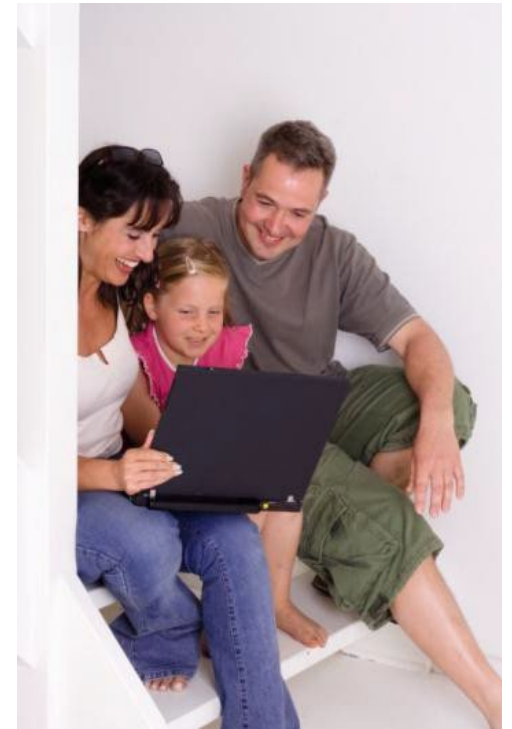
Child Outcomes

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



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



Procedural Safeguards



- Prior written notice
- Notice in parents' native language (unless clearly not feasible)

“Prior Written Notice”

- Parents must be told in writing in advance about any meetings, evaluations, services or actions affecting your child
- Parents can change their minds at any time

Procedural Safeguards

- Dispute Resolution Options:

- ✓ Mediation
- ✓ Complaint
- ✓ Due Process Hearing



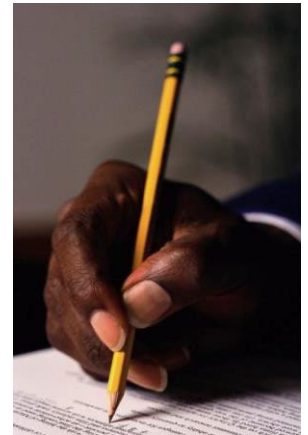
Mediation

- Voluntary
- Not used to delay parent right to hearing or other rights
- Qualified and impartial mediator
- Timely
- Convenient location
- Written agreement
- No cost to parents



Complaint Procedures

- Put it in writing
 - ✓ Describe what the lead agency, public agency or EIS provider is doing wrong or failing to do
 - ✓ Facts to support the allegation
 - ✓ Contact information for complainant and child
 - ✓ What remedy do you want
- Must be filed within one year of the violation
- Decision within 60 days
- Decision issued in writing



Due Process Hearing

- Written request
- Resolution Meeting within 15 days
- Formal process that has a timeline
- Held at a time and place convenient for parents
- Decision issued in writing



Survey Link

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sv/wCsQsoC>

Parents' Guide to Early Intervention



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VFN Early Childhood Resources:

- [Early Childhood Workshops](#)
- [Children's Integrated Services Early Intervention Fact sheet](#)
- [Early Childhood Special Education Fact Sheet](#)
- [Advocating for Your Child Fact Sheet](#)
- [Administrative Complaint Fact Sheet](#)
- [Mediation Fact Sheet](#)
- [Medical Home for Children with Special Health Care Needs Fact Sheet](#)



VT Early Childhood Resources:

- [Bright Futures Child Care Information System](#)
- [Building Bright Futures](#)
- [Center on Disability and Community Inclusion at UVM](#)
- [Child Development Division](#)
- [Children with Special Health Needs \(CSHN\)](#)
- [Developmental Evaluation Programs](#)
- [Help Me Grow Vermont](#)
- [Let's Grow Kids](#)

VT Early Childhood Resources:

- [Parent Child Centers](#)
- [Prevent Child Abuse Vermont](#) and [Vermont Parent's Home Companion](#)
- [STARS Recognition for Child Care](#)
- [Vermont Agency of Education Early Education](#)
- [Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies](#)
- [Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children](#)
- [Vermont Child Care Providers Association](#)
- [Vermont Head Start Association](#)
- [Vermont I-Team Early Intervention Project](#)



Questions?

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