

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **THE REFERRAL PROCESS**

Section: County

Procedure#: 1

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* referral process within Iosco RESA.

### Step 1: Referral

*Early On* Michigan is the system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers, birth up to age three, with disabilities and/or delays, and their families. The first step in the *Early On* early intervention process begins with a child's referral to 1-800-Early-On or to the Special Education Office.

Professionals must refer babies and toddlers to the early intervention office if a developmental delay is suspected. The parents must decide if early intervention makes sense for their child and family. Parent or legal guardian permission must be obtained to have a child evaluated for the program and to receive services. A parent can also refer their child to the Special Education Office if they suspect a problem.

If you need to make a referral you can:

1. Call 1-800-EarlyOn (1-800-327-5966)
2. Contact your Early On Office (EO) at (989) 362-3006 ext. 1131 or email [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net)
3. You can also go to the IRESA website at <http://www.ioscoresa.net> find the Departments tab located at the top. Once you have clicked on that tab find the Special Education link.
4. **There is a 45 calendar day timeline from when the Special Education Office receives the referral to complete the intake, determine eligibility, and complete an initial IFSP.**

### Referral

When a professional refers a child to the Special Education Office, he or she must:

- Adhere to federal and state mandates, there is a 10 work day timeline once the referral has been received. Within the first 10 work days the family must be provided written notice that a referral has been received and be provided a copy of procedural safeguards. This is accomplished via mailing a copy to the home or providing them in person.
- Inform and share with parents or legal guardians the services available and how services may help their child and family.
- Inform parents or legal guardians that their child will be referred – unless they say no to the referral.
- Inform the Professional (referring source) that the parent(s) have refused services

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- Inform parents or legal guardians that the referral has been received in the language they speak, whenever possible.
- Ensure all information given to the Special Education Office is kept confidential. (See the link to procedural safeguards and the ISD policy regarding confidentiality)

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SUBJECT: **MEETING THE SERVICE PROVIDER**

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* referral process within Iosco County.

## Step 2: Intake - Meeting Your Initial Service Provider

Once an infant or toddler is referred, the Special Education Office will assign an initial service provider to work with the child and family. The job of the initial service provider is to guide families through the steps to an initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). **The initial service provider must obtain Authorization to Share and Consent to Evaluate. The required documents must be signed and dated and meet the 45 day timeline.**

The initial service provider will initiate the process by setting up a time to meet with the child and family and explain *Early On* programing. The initial service provider will gather information regarding the family concerns about their child's development. He or she will:

- Two members of the team shall make the initial visit.
- Make sure the family has a copy of Procedural Safeguards.
- Review the family rights and make sure they understand them. Confidentiality can't be stressed enough.
- Explain Consent to Evaluate – Get written permission to perform an evaluation.
- Get consent to obtain medical information.
- Gather information about the child and family needs.
- Talk with families about their child's evaluation for the program – help get the correct evaluation and assessment for individual infants and toddlers.
- With parents' permission, help arrange for the child's evaluation.

If a child has an established condition no evaluation is necessary for *Early On* intervention services.

**No evaluation is necessary unless you suspect MMSE.** The initial service provider will:

- Set up a meeting to initiate the IFSP.
- Prior Written Notice (PWN) for eligibility.
- Help families understand what the IFSP meeting might be like, and who might attend.
- Answer questions about *Early On*.

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- Find established health conditions at [EOTTA.ccesa.org](http://EOTTA.ccesa.org) or [1800EarlyOn.org/](http://1800EarlyOn.org/) family or a partial list can be found in the parent handbook.
- Help parents or legal guardians understand the process should a problem or disagreement about services to the child or family occur.
- Coordinate and assist in the development of the IFSP.

If the initial service provider agrees that the child needs help right away-before his or her evaluation - services can get started with an *Interim Individualized Family Service Plan* (interim IFSP). An interim IFSP is possible as long as the family and Special Education Office agree to needed services, your child's evaluation is completed, and an IFSP meeting is held within 45 days of referral.

An Interim Individualized Family Service Plan must include:

- The name of the service provider that will be responsible for the interim IFSP.
- The early intervention services needed immediately including the location, frequency and intensity, and providers of these services.
- Parent consent for services.

## Interim IFSP

An interim IFSP may be needed when:

- Established condition.
- A doctor recommends services begin right away.
- A baby or toddler has trouble feeding (such as poor or no sucking ability) and needs nutrition or therapy services to help.

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SUBJECT: **CHILD EVALUATION**

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### Step 3: Having A Child Evaluated (Determine Eligibility)

If a parent or legal guardian has decided that the *Early On* programing can help his or her child, the next step is to have the child *evaluated*. The reasons for the evaluation are to:

- Find out if the child is eligible for early intervention services; or, they have an established condition and,
- Evaluation/Assessment, the purpose is to gather evidences about the child's strengths and needs that will support decision made about services.

#### Evaluation Requirements:

1. Multidisciplinary
2. Comprehensive
3. Information from the parent or legal guardian

Every child referred to the *Early On* programing has the right to a free *multidisciplinary evaluation*. *Multidisciplinary* simply means that more than one professional will be a part of the child's evaluation. The child's evaluation team should have:

- A professional who can assess the child's overall development such as .....
- A professional with **special knowledge about a specific child's problem**. For example, if a child is delayed in sitting up, walking, or other motor abilities, a physical therapist might be on the child's team.

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It is the responsibility of the initial service provider to provide families with information about evaluations and the evaluators. Once the team has been assembled, the initial service provider – with permission from the family – will assist in making an appointment with the evaluators. The family, service provider, and evaluator will conduct the evaluation in the home unless other arrangements are made.

### **What is a "screening"?**

Sometimes a parent or evaluation team may be concerned about a child's development – without being sure why. A screening can be used to:

- A screener has no impact on the 45 timeline to complete the initial IFSP. If a screener is used the original 45 day timeline must still be adhered to.
- Find out what areas of development – if any – are behind what's expected.
- Help the evaluation team decide what type of evaluation may be best.
- Find out if the child's development is "on target" even though a problem was suspected.

When a screening shows a child's development is "on target," it is unlikely that the child will be eligible for the Early Intervention Services. **Parents always have the right to ask for – and get – a full multidisciplinary evaluation for their child (even if a screening suggests a child is developing fine).**

The parents have an important role to play in their child's evaluation. Here's a list of suggestions and ways parents can be an active participant in their child's multidisciplinary evaluation:

- They can be an observer.
- They can sit beside their child.
- They can help with activities that explore their child's abilities.
- They can tell team members whether or not what they are seeing is typical of their child.
- They can help the team see their child's strengths and needs.
- They can comfort and support their child.
- They can ask questions and offer their opinions about how their child's evaluation is going.

## **Checklist of important evaluation information**

- Determination of eligibility.
- Explanation of tests – if any – that will be used and what these tests can and cannot tell about a child's development.
- Types of professionals who will be on the child's team and an explanation of what they will do.

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- How long the evaluation will last.
- The child's developmental age levels and what that means.
- Specific areas where the child needs support.
- What the evaluator is looking for in the child's responses.
- What the child does well.
- Area of concern and suggestions about how parents can help.
- Recommendations on the types of services that may support the child and family will be discussed after outcomes are identified.
- The name of another parent or parent group that can offer support.
- Books, newsletters, magazines, and videos to help families find information about the child's developmental needs.
- Interaction between parent and child.

### **What is included in the multidisciplinary evaluation?**

The child's multidisciplinary evaluation will include:

- A health assessment, including vision and hearing screening. The child's health assessment should be done by the child's regular health care provider whenever possible. If the child has had a recent checkup, a new one may not be needed.
- With parent permission, a review of any records that may be helpful.
- An assessment of the child's strengths and needs in each area of development (physical, cognitive, communication, social emotional, and adaptive development).
- An interview with parents regarding their concerns.

The evaluation will be planned to meet the needs of the child and the family. The evaluation team may:

- Use a developmental test to assess the child's development.
- Play with the child – or ask parents or family members to play with their child.
- Spend some time watching and observing the child.
- Ask parents or legal guardians to share what their child is currently doing and some of the things they would like to see their child doing.
- Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions.

### **What Happens After an Evaluation?**

After the child's evaluation, the evaluation team (or a member of the team) will meet with the family and share the findings. Please encourage parents to address their concerns. Let them know it is okay to ask questions! **Remember, it is our responsibility to help parents understand what the evaluation means regarding their child.**

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The evaluation team must have clear written (documented) evidence that matches one of the eligibility categories. The child's evaluation report and summary will include the following information:

- A statement about the child's *eligibility* for Early Intervention Services (in the IFSP).
- The *names* of the professionals who evaluated the child (in the IFSP).
- A *description* of what took place at the evaluation. This should include where the child was evaluated and *what methods* were used (such as tests or activities) (in prior written notice).
- The child's *responses* to the evaluation (**required observation of parent/child**).
- The parent's opinion about whether the evaluation showed their child at his or her best.
- The *tests and scores* that were used (if any), and what they mean (in the IFSP).

The written and spoken summary of the child's evaluation must be provided to the parents in their native language or in a manner they use to communicate, if possible. With parent or legal guardian permission, an interpreter can be used to translate the child's evaluation summary. The evaluation team must complete the written summary as soon as possible after the evaluation. The team must give the summary – and upon request – the full evaluation report to:

- The parent.
- The initial service coordinator.
- The Special Education Office.
- With parent permission, the child's doctor.

### **When More Information is Needed**

Sometimes parents or service providers may feel more information is needed. If parents feel a second evaluation is needed, or part of the evaluation should be repeated, they can request by asking the supervisor of the Special Education Office. Children may be provided with a second evaluation (or part of an evaluation) at no cost if your Special Education Office agrees the child needs one.

The initial service provider may also ask parents to permit additional evaluations of the child. Additional evaluation procedures can be done only if the parent and the Special Education Office agree. The evaluation will be at no cost to the families.

## **The Evaluation Team**

### **Questions to Ask, Tips to Think About**

- Typically all evaluations are completed in the home.



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- The best time of the day for the child to complete an evaluation.
- Include anyone the family would like to attend. Ask parents and legal guardians who they would like to participate in their child's evaluation—a relative, friend, or caregiver—who knows the child well.
- **Encourage parents to share their worries and questions before the evaluation. Make a list and have it present at the evaluation.**
- Think about the child's daily routines, when does the child and family (eat, sleep, play, bathing, etc.). Does anything happen at these times that concerns parents? For example, feeding is stressful due to problems with sucking or swallowing.

### **After the First Multidisciplinary Evaluation**

The child's first multidisciplinary evaluation determines eligibility. It also helps with the first Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

There may be other times when a child will need additional evaluation services. If parents and the Special Education Office agree, other evaluation services can be provided:

- If there is a change in the child's development that suggests different services are needed.
- When the parent, Special Education Office, or service provider feel more information is needed to review or evaluate the child's current IFSP.

Once evaluation services are agreed upon, the service provider is responsible for making sure changes are made to the IFSP. **All IFSP changes must occur at annual IFSP meeting.**

### **Requirements for a Fair (Unbiased) Evaluation**

Early Intervention Services have rules to make sure a child's evaluation is fair. These are:

- *The child's evaluation team must use materials and activities that are sensitive to the family's language.* The evaluation must be completed in the "dominant" language of the family. "Dominant" language means the language the family and child use most often when speaking.
- *The cultural background and traditions of the family must be considered in the child's evaluation.* Families raise children using their own cultures and ideals. The child's evaluation team must take this into account when deciding what materials to use and describing the child's responses to the evaluation.
- *The child's eligibility cannot be based on only one test or procedure.* This means that more than one source of information must be used to decide whether the child is eligible.

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### ***The Family Assessment***

Every family is different. Parents know their family the best – service providers know what needs to be completed to help baby or toddler development. Families know what is most important to them, their child, and family - and what concerns them the most.

Parents bring resources, priorities, and concerns to the early intervention process. Family resources are all the strengths, abilities, and formal and informal supports that families can use to help their child. *Family priorities* are the outcomes you want most from early intervention services.

*Family concerns* are the problems or needs they want to work on with their child and family.

This information can be helpful in designing the IFSP for the child and family. If parents wish, they can participate in a *family assessment* — an assessment of the family's resources, priorities, and concerns.

Family assessment is a **voluntary** process. They do not have to take part in one. All information shared is kept private and parents or legal guardians decide what goes into the IFSP.

If parents decide to participate in a family assessment, it can help them by:

- Thinking about what they need most from early intervention services.
- Thinking about other services and supports they might need (like another parent to talk to or respite services).
- Preparing them for the IFSP meeting.

A family assessment will be:

- Completed with parents or legal guardians by trained professionals, typically at the home at times that are convenient for them.
- Based on information provided by families in a personal interview.
- Their description of their family's resources, concerns, and priorities.

### **Early Intervention and the Child's "Primary Care Physician"**

Every child needs a Primary Care Physician – or doctor – who takes care of the child's health. A "Primary Care Physician" is the doctor that the family always takes the child to when he or she needs a checkup or is sick.

The doctor can give families support and advice about Early Intervention Programing. To help the doctor stay involved:

- Inform parents to send all information and evaluation reports about the child to the service coordinator.

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- Inform parents about talking to their doctor about their child's evaluation, so the doctor can provide insight into services that can be helpful to their child.
- Inform parents that they can invite their doctor to the IFSP meeting.
- Inform parents to share a copy of their child's IFSP with their doctor. **Or you as the service provider can gain consent to send a copy to the doctor for them.**
- Encourage parents to talk to their child's doctor about how early intervention services are working for their child.

### **When an Evaluation Finds that a Child is not Eligible**

If a child's evaluation shows that the child is not eligible for services, share other service opportunities, **parents have the right to disagree with the results. Parents can request a mediation or an impartial hearing** to challenge this decision (see "Your Rights as a Parent in the Early Intervention Program"). Parents can take these actions only when their child's evaluation has been completed.

**If parents agree their child is not eligible – and still feel they need help** – encourage parents to ask the service provider for information about other supports and services in their community. Service providers can help parents make connections with other services.

If the evaluation information shows that the child is not eligible for *Early On* services, the initial serve provider will tell the family about other services that might help. **If a family chooses to appeal the decision, the service provider and family will notify the special Education Office immediately.**

### **Supporting Effective Parent Advocate**

- Remind parents that they are an equal member of the team.
- Instruct parents to know their family's rights and responsibilities.
- Encourage parents to stand up for what they think about their child and family's strengths (what do they do best) and needs (what they need help with).
- Encourage parents to take part in every step of early intervention services.
- Encourage parent to ask questions!
- Encourage parent to ask professionals why they think their child needs certain services and how they will help.
- As a service provider keep copies of letters and notes you write.
- Work out problems early.
- Inform parents about support and advocacy groups in their neighborhood, town, city, or county. Encourage them to call for advice, support, or help.

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SUBJECT: **IFSP**

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* referral process within Iosco County.

### Step 4: Making a Plan for Services - Your IFSP

#### **I-F-S-P means...**

- **Individualized...**the plan will be specially designed for the child and the family.
- **Family...**the plan will focus on the family and the outcomes they hope to reach for their baby or toddler and the family goals through early intervention.
- **Service...**the plan will include all the details about the early intervention services the child and family will participate in – including when, where, and how often services will be delivered. The IFSP can also include other services that the child and family needs that will not be paid for by the Early Intervention Program.
- **Plan...**the plan is a written plan for early intervention services.

#### **Family-centered!**

If the child is eligible for Early Intervention Programing, the next step is to develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP must be completed within 45 days after the child's referral to the Early Intervention Office, unless the parent or guardian "stops the clock" (for example, if the parent notifies you that the child is sick and the evaluation must be delayed). The IFSP is the written plan for the early intervention services the child and family will receive. You as the caseload provider will support the development of the IFSP at meeting held with the child and family.

The initial service coordinator/provider will set up the meeting to work on the development of the IFSP. The Early Intervention Office and the service provider will support families so they are prepared for the IFSP meeting. Some facts that should be shared with parents are:

- The IFSP meeting must be held at a time and place that is good for you and your family (preferably the home).
- **The parents, initial service provider, the Early Intervention Office, and evaluation team – or selected member of the team – *must* take part in the meeting.** The Early Intervention

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Office may send someone else to represent him or her (an Early Intervention Office "designee"). The Early Intervention Office may also ask the service provider to act as "designee."

- Parents can invite others to be at the IFSP meeting – family, friends, the babysitter, or a child care provider.
- The service provider can invite others to take part in the meeting, with the parents' permission.
- Parents can have an advocate to take part in the meeting.
- Parents must provide permission to use any information from their family assessment, if they had one completed. Confidentiality is a highly important element in building trust and establishing relationships with families.
- The notice form will be sent in the language the family speaks, unless it is clearly impossible to do so. The meeting will also be held in the family's native language if possible too, unless it is clearly impossible to do.

**Before the meeting**, the initial service provider **will make sure the family understands the child's evaluation**. You as the service provider must also talk with parents about the possibilities for early interventions and service based outcomes.

The following list are some suggestions for parents to think about when planning for an IFSP meeting. The following list should be shared with parents so they are prepared to have a discussion with you about their child.

- How would you describe your child to others?
- What is working well for you at home?
- What do you need help with?
- What help do you want for your child?
- What do you need more information about?
- **What places or activities in your community could early intervention help your child take part in?**

### **Strategies for a successful IFSP meeting**

Some families have said the IFSP is hard work! It is very important to encourage parents to take an active part in the meeting. This is the BEST way to develop the BEST plan for their child and family.

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- Ask parents to think about – and make plans for – someone to help them if their baby or toddler and/or other children will be at the meeting. It is important to remember that a meeting held in the home with children might be distracting without support!
- Plan to start on time.
- Be prepared. Have paper and pencil ready for parents to take notes.
- Listen to what other team members have to say.
- Encourage parents to:
  - Be clear about what they want.
  - Ask questions when they don't understand something.
  - Don't be afraid to ask you for help!

### **At the IFSP meeting**

Working on the IFSP is a team effort! You the service provider, the parents, the child's evaluators, the Early Intervention Office Official or Coordinator, and others who take part will:

- Review all the information that has been gathered about the child.
- Talk about the family's resources, priorities, and concerns.
- Develop the outcomes - or goals - expected for the child and family from early intervention services.
- Work on strategies, activities, and services that will lead to the outcomes for the child and family to reach.
- Agree to the measures and timelines that will be used to look at the progress of the child and family.

**Remember that parents have the right to say yes or no to any of the services talked about at the IFSP meeting.** To include a service in the IFSP, the parents and the Early Intervention Office (or Early Intervention Office designee) must agree to the service. Others can give their opinion – but the IFSP team determines the final decision.

If parents and the Early Intervention Office disagree about an early intervention service that parents think their child needs, parents can ask for a *mediation* and/or *impartial hearing* to settle the differences. In the meantime, the early intervention services that parents and the Early Intervention Office Official do agree on will be provided.

Parents will be asked to sign the IFSP when the plan is finished. Participating in the Early Intervention Program is voluntary. When a parent signs the IFSP, they are showing that they

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were at the IFSP meeting and that they agree to the services in the plan. Remind parents that they are providing permission to start early intervention services.

The IFSP is an important document! Please remind parents if they need extra time to think about the plan, they need to ask for it. Parents can discuss the plan with other family members or review it to make sure it meets the needs of their child and family.

### **What's in an IFSP?**

An IFSP will include the following information:

- A statement of the child's present level of functioning.
- With the parents' permission, a statement of the family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to their child's development.
- A statement of the major outcomes expected from early intervention services.
- A statement of the early intervention services, including transportation, needed to meet the child's and family's needs.
- A statement of the natural environments where early intervention services will be provided. "Natural environments" means settings where infants and toddlers are typically found in the community (home).
- A plan for when the child is in day care, or when needed, for early intervention service providers to train the day care staff to meet the needs of the child.
- A statement about other services, including medical services, which are needed by the child and family that are not provided by the Early Intervention Programing.
- The projected dates that services will begin, as soon as possible after the IFSP meeting, and the period of time during which the services will be delivered.
- The name of the ongoing service provider.
- If the child is turning three, the steps to help the child and family change to other services, including preschool special education services at least by 31 months.

## **The Service Provider**

You as the service provider will be responsible for:

- Helping family's obtain the services and help they need.
- Coordinating early intervention services with other services the family is receiving.
- Making sure the child and family receives all the services in the IFSP.

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- Making sure services are delivered on time.
- Informing parents about advocacy services.
- Making sure *six-month reviews* and *annual evaluations* of the IFSP are completed.
- Helping to make any changes to the IFSP that may be needed between six-month reviews and annual evaluations.



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SUBJECT: **PLAN FOR SERVICES**

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## Step 5: Putting Your IFSP Into Action

### Plan Into Action

An important goal of Early Intervention Programming is to make sure infants and toddlers get early intervention services as quickly as possible. The sooner, the better!

The IFSP will include the dates, as soon as possible after the IFSP meeting, when early intervention services will begin. The service provider is responsible for making sure the early intervention services in the IFSP are delivered and supporting families with any problems.

Putting the IFSP into action is a team effort! Inform parents that their *families* are important members of the team. Families need to be a part of their child's services. Remind parents they can help by:

- Being with their child when he or she is receiving early intervention services. Inform parents to arrange for services at times that are good for them so they can pay full attention to what's happening.
- Encourage parents to ask you the professional working with their child to teach them the skills they need to help their child make progress.
- Encourage parents to keep notes, a diary, or a journal about how well services are working and how well their child is doing. Have them advocate about what they think is working and what isn't working. Encourage parent to ask for a change in services if they think a change is needed.

### Reviewing, evaluating, and changing the IFSP

As a child grows and changes, so will the early intervention needs of the child and the family. It is important to be sure that an IFSP keeps pace with a child and family, the Early Intervention Programming requires:

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- Six-month reviews of the IFSP. The review may – or may not – include a meeting. If everyone agrees, the six-month review can be completed over the phone or by mail, or other ways that don't involve a meeting.
- Annual meetings to evaluate the IFSP.

The service provider is responsible for making sure the IFSP is reviewed and evaluated on time. The following persons take part in the six-month reviews and annual meetings to evaluate the IFSP:

- Parent and anyone they ask to participate.
- The service provider.
- The Special Education Office or designee.
- Any other professionals who are providing services to the child and family.
- Other persons invited by you the service provider, with parent permission.
- An advocate, if parents invite one.

The six-month reviews are to evaluate the current IFSP and to make sure that the IFSP still makes sense for the child and family. Parents and the other participants will look at how well early intervention services have helped the child and family meet the outcomes in their IFSP. Parents also need to discuss what should be changed in the IFSP. This may include:

- Adding new outcomes and dropping old ones that have been reached – or that are no longer important or useful.
- Changing strategies and activities to help meet new outcomes or outcomes that have not been reached yet.
- Changing the services needed by the child and family.

Just like the initial IFSP, parents and the Special Education Office Official or designee must agree on IFSP's that come out of annual IFSP meetings. Parents will be asked to sign the IFSP, to show you agree and give your permission to provide services. And just like the initial IFSP, parents can ask for a mediation or impartial hearing if they disagree with the Special Education Office Official or designee about certain services – while receiving the services you do agree on. Parents can request a review of the IFSP at any time. The service office or provider can set up an IFSP review whenever one is needed.

# IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

SUBJECT: **TRANSITION**

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## Step 6: Transition

*Transition means passage from one form, state, style, or place to another.*

All too soon, the child will be turning three years old! As the child changes from a "toddler" to a "preschooler," he or she will also be "transitioning" from Early On Intervention Programing to other services.

- All *Early On* funded programs and services listed in the child's IFSP end by their third birthday.

The service provider will help families plan for other available supports when the child leaves *Early On* services. Some children will no longer need any services. Other children and families may go on to more specific early childhood programs that are appropriate to meet their needs. Many children receiving *Early On* intervention services will be eligible for *preschool special education* services from their local school districts. All service coordinators have been provided professional development covering transition planning and SPP-B12 compliance.

### The Steps to Transition

#### ➤ The Transition Plan

A transition plan must be developed for every child leaving the *Early On* Intervention Programing. The timeline for the transition IFSP to be compliant is anytime between 27-33 months for those children enrolled in *Early On*. For the children eligible after 31 months, the transition plan must be a part of the initial IFSP.

1. The plan must include confirmation that:
  - a. Parental consent was provided "Authorization to Release *Early On* Information"
  - b. Child find information about the child has been shared with the LEA; and,

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- c. Confirmation that additional information (evaluation/assessment information and copies of IFSPs) needed by the LEA to ensure continuity of services has been shared with the LEA if the parent has consented.
2. The steps needed to help prepare the child to get acclimated and transition into a new setting.
3. The steps needed to help prepare families to get acclimated and transition into a new setting.
4. Review of future placements after *Early On* ends.
5. Review of the child's program options for the period from the child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year.
6. Conversations with the LEA about time, services, and supports.
7. Creating a list of steps needed to acclimate providers that support the child during their transition to a new setting and/or services.

The service provider will incorporate the transition plan into the IFSP and complete the documents in EdPlan.

If the provider, a parent, or someone else suspects part B services are needed the child may be eligible for preschool special education services. The Special Education Office will notify the local Special Education Supervisor from the local school district of any and all referrals in a timely manner. The Special Education Office will notify LEAs every other month when a child has turned 27 months old. The Special Education Office will send evaluations, IFSPs, and other records to the local district, Early Head Start, and Head Start – with parent permission. The service provider will review the steps in the transition process with all members of the IFSP/IEP team.

### ➤ The Transition Conference Meeting:

For children who are “potentially eligible”, a transition conference meeting is also required. “Potentially eligible” for Part B preschool special education services means children participating in Part C who have been determined eligible for, and are receiving Michigan Mandatory Special Education (MMSE) services, prior to two years, seven months of age (31 months).

If parents agree, the service coordinator will convene a conference with parents, the service provider, and the Special Education Supervisor from the local school district to discuss the student's needs. This conference must happen at least 90 days before the child's third birthday. The transition conference may be combined with the transition plan IFSP/IEP meeting.

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

**A transition conference must be a face to face meeting.** The transition conference must be at a time and place good for parents and all other participants and it must be held by 33 months.

For more information about preschool special education services, contact the Michigan Department of Education at 1-800-327-5966 or Office of Great Start 517-241-7004.

### **Preparing for Transition**

The following list includes some helpful tips to prepare parents and children for transition from *Early On* Intervention Programing to preschool or other appropriate supports and services:

- Learn what transition is and why it is important for the child and family.
- Make sure the last IFSP includes all the necessary steps to help the child make a good transition to preschool special education services or other early childhood services.
- Find out what you (parents) need to know and what skills you (parents) need to develop to make sure you get the most out of preschool special education services.
- Provide a copy of your Procedural Safeguards.
- **Call the Special Education Office or *Early On* department at the Iosco Regional Educational School Agency (Iosco RESA) if you have any further questions. You can make contact at (989) 362-3006 ext. 1131.**

Some questions that you might want to share with parents as they think about making the transition are:

- What new information is needed about their child?
- What skills will their child need to get along in a new setting?
- Are there adaptive equipment needs, or modifications needed where their child will be getting preschool special education services?

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **EARLY ON AUDIOLOGY REFERRAL**

Section: County  
Procedure #: 7  
Approved: March 2020  
Revision:  
Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* IFSP process within Iosco RESA.

### Early On Audiology Referral

#### **The steps for the referral process:**

**Step 1:** A consent form must be completed and **include a parent signature**. The Early On Audiology Referral form is located on the Iosco RESA website under Early On tab.

**Step 2:** Once the audiology form is complete it needs to be sent to the Special Education Office. The contact person is the Early On Coordinator, Amie McCann can be contacted by phone at (989) 362-3006 ext. 1131 or emailed at [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net)

**Step 3:** The form will be reviewed and approved by the Special Services Supervisor.

**Step 4:** The referral will be made to Primary Care Physician.

**Step 5:** Amie McCann will be notified via email of the referral to [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net) and the coordinator/provider will be cc'ed in those emails.

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES**

Section: County

Procedure#: 8

Approved: March 2020

Revision:

Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* IFSP process within Iosco RESA.

## Early On Exceptional Family Circumstances – Timely vs. Untimely Initial IFSPs

1. Exceptional Family Circumstances include one reason for the 30-calendar day timeline (Indicator 1 - Timely Provision of Services - Percent of infants and toddlers with Individualized Family Support Plans (IFSPs) who receive the early intervention services on their IFSPs in a timely manner.) If:

- The child or parent is unavailable to participate in the intervention service.

2. Exceptional Family Circumstances include two reasons for the 45-calendar day timeline (Indicator 7 - 45-day Timeline - Percent of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs for whom an initial evaluation, initial assessment and an initial IFSP meeting were conducted within Part C's 45-day timeline.) If:

- The child or parent is unavailable to complete the screening (if applicable), the initial evaluation, the initial assessments of the child and family, or the initial IFSP meeting due to exceptional family circumstances that are documented in the child's early intervention records; or
- The parent has not provided consent for the screening (if applicable), the initial evaluation, or the initial assessment of the child, despite documented, repeated attempts by the lead agency or EIS provider to obtain parental consent.

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

Once the documented exceptional family circumstances no longer exist or parental consent is obtained, *Early On* must complete the screening (if applicable), the initial evaluation, the initial assessments (of the child and family), and the initial IFSP meeting as soon as possible.

3. Exceptional Family Circumstances for the transition plan (Indicator 8a) & transition conference timeline (Indicator 8c - Early Childhood Transition - Percent of all toddlers with a disability exiting Part C who have received timely transition planning by their 3rd birthday.) If:

- The child or parent is unavailable to complete the transition plan IFSP meeting OR the transition conference meeting due to exceptional family circumstances that are documented in the child's early intervention record.

**ALWAYS document the reason for not meeting the timeline in the child's record/file!!!**



## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **DATA ENTRY RELATED TO ALL INITIAL IFSPs**

Section: County

Procedure#: 9

Approved: March 2020

Revision:

Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* IFSP process within Iosco RESA.

### Early On Data Entry Related To All Initial IFSPs

1. The timeline for all initial IFSPs regardless of the situation remains to be a 45 day requirement. For example: A family with a child moves into Iosco County, they have already started the initial IFSP in another county the initial referral date remains the starting date for that 45 day timeline.

- The Data Specialist will ensure that all dates are entered into EdPlan correctly.
- The Data Specialist will route information to the correct staff members ASAP.

2. If the initial IFSP is going to exceed the 45 day deadline, the service coordinator will ensure that contact logs are up to date and are accurately kept. The service log will document communication between the parents/guardians regarding progress of the IFSP. The service coordinator will document Exceptional Family Circumstances to include the specific reason for not meeting the [45-calendar day timeline \(Indicator 7\)](#).

For example:

- The child or parent is unavailable to complete the screening (if applicable), the initial evaluation, the initial assessments of the child and family, or the initial IFSP meeting due to exceptional family circumstances that are documented in the child's early intervention records; or
- The parent has not provided consent for the screening (if applicable), the initial evaluation, or the initial assessment of the child, despite documented, repeated attempts by the lead agency or Early On provider to obtain parental consent.

Once the initial IFSP has been completed and if it's late it will be identified as "UNTIMELY WITH EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES." Situations like this do not regularly occur. However, the TEAM must remain focused on the fact that the initial IFSP meeting must take place as soon as possible.

# IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **THE REFERRAL PROCESS – Medicial**

Section: County  
Procedure#: 10  
Approved: March 2020  
Revision:  
Revised:

This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* referral process within Iosco County.

## Step 1: Referral

The process for all referrals taken at the any Medical Office located in the hospital. All infants that qualify under an established condition for *Early On*® Michigan services must be reported to the Special Education Office within 72 hours from the time they are received from the Medical staff. The parents must decide if early intervention makes sense for their child and family. Parent or legal guardian permission must be obtained to have an infant receive services. **There is a 45 calendar day timeline from when the Special Education receives the referral to complete the intake, determine eligibility (not specifically under an established condition), and complete an initial IFSP.**

1. Referrals are reported to the Special Education Office within 72 hours of being made by the Medical to (989) 362-3006 or email [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net).
2. You can also go to the Iosco RESA website at [www.ioscoresa.net](http://www.ioscoresa.net) find the Departments tab located at the top. Once you have clicked on that tab find the *Early On* link.
3. Families that refuse *Early On* services must be exited and notification must be made to the EIO within 72 hours.

## Referral

When a professional refers a child to the Special Education Office, he or she must: **Adhere to federal and state mandates, there is a 10 calendar day timeline once the referral has been received. Within the first 10 days the family must be provided written notice that a referral has been received and be provided a copy of procedural safeguards. This is accomplished via mailing a copy to the home or providing them in person (at the hospital).**

- Inform and share with parents or legal guardians the services available and how services may help their child and family.
- Inform parents or legal guardians that their child was referred – unless they decline services (notify the Special Education Office so the infant can be exited within 72 hours).

## **IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON***

- You must attempt to contact parent or the guardian 3 times (2 by phone and 1 by mail). If contact can't be made the Special Education Office must be notified in a timely manner so the infant can be exited from *Early On*.
- Inform parents or legal guardians that the referral has been received in the language they speak, whenever possible.
- Ensure all information given to the Special Education Office is kept confidential. (See the link to procedural safeguards and the ISD policy regarding confidentiality)

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: <b>EARLY ON DATA COLLECTION (Electronic Form)</b>	Section: County Procedure#: 11 Approved: March 2020 Revision: Revised:
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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* data collection process within Iosco RESA.

## Sharing data with the Early On Office

**Anytime an infant or toddler has an event that requires updated data entry into EdPlan the Special Education Office must receive notification. The following list of events qualify for data updates: initials, periodic review, transition conference, transition plan, and a Part C Exit that includes Child Outcomes Summary (COS) or updated relevant evaluation data.**

The service coordinator or provider must initialize updates with the Special Education Office. The following outline how to complete the process.

- Access the Iosco RESA website at [www.ioscoresa.net](http://www.ioscoresa.net)
- Proceed to the departments tab and locate Early On
- Once you have located the Early On page scroll approximately halfway down the page looking for the electronic document titled Iosco RESA Early On Data Collection Form
- Once the document has been opened complete all the necessary fields
- By submitting the form an email notice will be sent to the Special Education Office
- All data will be reviewed for accuracy
- If there are any questions or concerns you will be contacted by the Special Education Office

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Early On Office at (989) 362-3006 ext. 1131 or email at [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net)

# IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **FOSTER & SURROGATE PARENTS**

Section: County  
Procedure#: 12  
Approved: March 2020  
Revision:  
Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* data collection process within Iosco RESA.

## Foster & Surrogate Parents

Foster parents and teachers can improve educational outcomes for foster children by knowing the facts and then identifying the roadblocks that may hamper the child's chances for success.

What is the definition of a parent? The federal definition of a parent is specified in the federal regulations implementing the IDEA at 34 CFR § 300.30: Parent means - A biological or adoptive parent of a child; A foster parent, unless State law, regulations, or contractual obligations with a State or local entity prohibit a foster parent from acting as a parent; A guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State); An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare;

Or

A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with § 300.519 or § 300.639(a)(5) of the Act. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the biological or adoptive parent, when attempting to act as the parent under this part and when more than one party is qualified under paragraph (a) of this section to act as a parent, must be presumed to be the parent for purposes of this section unless the biological or adoptive parent does not have legal authority to make educational decisions for the child. If a judicial decree or order identifies a specific person or persons under paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section to act as the "parent" of a child or to make educational decisions on behalf of a child, then such person or persons shall be determined to be the "parent" for purposes of this section.

The Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) have included the federal definition of parent with an addition at R 340.1701b(d)(viii) as follows: The affected student or youth with a disability when the student or youth with a disability reaches 18 years of age, if a legal guardian has not been appointed by appropriate court proceedings.

## **IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON***

### **Steps to Support Families and Surrogate Parents:**

Determine if the biological parental rights have been terminated.

If rights have been terminated, then a determination of who will act as the parent in the educational process needs to occur.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) case manager might already have a surrogacy form completed. In which case, you would follow that guidance.

If rights have not been terminated, contact will need to be made with the biological parent(s) for consent.

Once consent is gained from the biological parents and or assigned surrogate the evaluation can be completed.

If you are unable to get in contact with the biological parents, or the DHS case manager contact the Early On Coordinator at the Iosco Regional Service Agency (IRESA) for support. IRESA will appoint a surrogate.

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Early On Office at (989) 362-3006 or at [amccann@ioscoresa.net](mailto:amccann@ioscoresa.net).

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **DATA COLLECTION & OUTCOMES (File Review)**

Section: County

Procedure#: 13

Approved: March 2020

Revision:

Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* data collection process within Iosco RESA.

### Evaluating Outcome Data (File Reviews)

**The Early On team will meet two times a year and review IFSP goals. The staff will complete the Early On Data Tracking Sheet. Growth will be measured from fall to spring, this data will be entered into the goals and outcomes grid.**

The service coordinator or provider will meet to discuss and review student outcome data from individual IFSPs. The following steps outline how to complete the process.

- The Special Education Office will schedule the initial meeting date for file reviews.
- Once you have been notified you will select a minimum of 3 files to be reviewed at the meeting.
- The Data Tracking Sheet will be completed and a copy will be provided to the Early On Office.
- At the fall meeting the spring review date will be scheduled.
- In the spring the service coordinator or provider will return for the review with the same the files.
- The data will be entered into the same Early On Data Collection Sheet.
- Conversations will be held with individual providers about progress and/or the lack of progress and explore ideas for success.

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Early On Office at (989) 362-3006 by email at [amccann](mailto:amccann).

## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **TIMELY & UNTIMELY INITIAL IFSPs**

Section: County  
Procedure#: 14  
Approved: March 2020  
Revision:  
Revised:

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* data collection process within Iosco RESA.

## CASELOADS AND TIMELY INITIAL IFSPs

**Each month at Early On Service Coordinator Meetings (EOSC) the service providers will be provided with a copy of their current caseloads to include those students in the referral process. This will allow for an opportunity to discuss timelines and timely vs. untimely initial IFSPs. If providers have not met the 45 day timeline for the initial IFSP, they must be able to explain the untimeliness with justification.**

The service coordinator or provider will meet monthly at EOSC meetings to discuss and review their current caseloads. The following steps outline how the process will be implemented.

- A report will be run for each specific caseload provider in Iosco RESA each month.
- The updated caseload list will be provided to caseload providers at EOSC meetings monthly.
- The caseload providers will review all timelines for accuracy and one hundred percent compliance.
- All students in the referral process will be reviewed for timeliness of initial IFSPs.
- If providers report they will not meet the 45 day timeline, they must provide a contact log related to the circumstances for justification of the late event.
- This data will be reviewed quarterly by the **Birth to 5 Early On Coordinator** and the **Early On office for compliance purposes.**

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Early On Office at (989) 362-3006 or email Amie McCann at amccann@ioscoresa.net or the Special Education Office.



## IOSCO RESA *EARLY ON*

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SUBJECT: **Unable to Make Contact Active IFSPs**

Section: County  
Procedure #: 15  
Approved:  
Revision:  
Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

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This procedure was developed to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken in the *Early On* data collection process within Iosco RESA.

### Active IFSP's and Contact

**Each month at Early On Service Coordinator Meetings (EOSC) the service providers will be provided with a copy of their current caseloads to include those students in the referral process. This will allow for an opportunity to discuss timelines and timely vs. untimely initial IFSPs. If providers have not met the 45 day timeline for the initial IFSP, they must be able to explain the untimeliness with justification.**

The service coordinator or provider will meet monthly at EOSC meetings to discuss and review their current caseloads. The following steps outline how the process will be implemented.

- The Early-On Coordinator has made three or more attempts to contact a parent of a student with an active IFSP, using various methods and have failed.
- Prior Written Notice will be mailed to parents indicating they will be exiting Early-On before 3 years old, for failure to make contact.
- Drop/Exit Form will also be filled out, documented in Ed Plan and mailed to parents, referring source will also be notified.

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Early On Office at (989) 362-3006 or email Amie McCann at amccann@ioscoresa.net or the Special Education Office.

EarlyOn Procedures Manual

IFSP Compliance

Coding Input Review

Prior to Special Education Secretary submitting Part C Data to MDE, EO Coordinator and Director of Special Education will review all IFSP documents to insure proper coding of services.