

Early Intervention Services: The IFSP



An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written, legal document that tells you the early intervention services your child, ages birth through two, and family will receive. The plan is delivered by the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (MITP).

What is an IFSP?

An IFSP is **Individualized** to meet the unique needs of your child and family, views the **Family** as the center of the early intervention process, has **Services** to strengthen your child's development, and has a **Plan** of action with supports and services for your child and family. You are your child's first teacher and know her best. Your dreams, desires, and outcomes for your child help to guide the how and why the IFSP is written.

The IFSP Team Includes:

- You the parent(s)
- Two or more people with one being the service coordinator (who has been working with family from the beginning) and the other being one or more of the following:
 - special education teacher, school psychologist, therapists/service providers (speech, occupational, physical), social workers, nutritionist, child development specialist, and other persons who have expertise in their area

Eligibility

In the State of Maryland, after the evaluation happens, a child can be eligible based on one of the following categories:

- Has at least a 25% developmental delay, *or*
- Has atypical development or behavior, *or*
- Has a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high chance for developmental delay



Implementing the IFSP



Doing early intervention services can really help your child develop and grow. Every daily interaction and experience is a chance to grow your child's love for learning. Your service provider will help "coach" you on ways to interact with your child that are backed up by science and research. Remember, your team is there to work with you and support family members. Your child will make more progress and growth while he/she is with you in between sessions. Keep on continuing the work you learn in order to best support your child!

Parental Consent

With your written consent, the IFSP is carried out and services are given to your child. The IFSP is like your roadmap for services. You also have the right to decline any early intervention services without putting at risk eligibility for other services. You may take away consent for services at any time. The IFSP is reviewed every six months and updated at least once a year.

Tips from Veteran Parents

- Involve your whole family in your IFSP
- Your service coordinator is a listener, resource, and support to your family
- Trust the coaching model; you work together with your team
- There are times when it is important to just be a family
- Connect with other parents
- Remember to take care of yourself as well as taking care of your child and family
- You are the expert about your child



Sources:

[Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program Individualized Family Service Plan \(IFSP\) Process and Document Guide](#)

[A Family Guide to Understanding the IFSP](#)