



LEARNINGbyte

EI Service Delivery

Determining IFSP Supports & Services



PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

The purpose of this activity is to encourage thought and discussion about how IFSP teams determine which supports and services might be appropriate for a child and family.



RESOURCES NEEDED

- **Handouts** - *What Supports and Services Are Most Appropriate?*
- Flip chart/whiteboard and markers (optional)



SPECIFIC STEPS

Part 1

1. Discuss with the large group the process IFSP teams take in determining appropriate supports and services for children and families. Consider, with your group, how teams (always including the family) integrate and use the following information when making their recommendations:
 - Information from the child's assessment for service planning
 - Information from families about the child's daily activities and routines
 - Family priorities, resources, and concerns
 - IFSP outcomes and identified natural learning opportunities developed in collaboration with parent/caregivers
 - How much support the family feels they need to help their child work towards their goals
 - Supports and services the family accesses outside of the Part C system

Remind the group that EI supports and services should only be discussed AFTER assessment for service planning and outcome development have occurred as information from both processes informs the determination of services.

2. Invite the group to share recent experiences that were successful with determining EI services and experiences where this determination was tense or challenging. On the flip chart/whiteboard, draw two columns and list the characteristics of each experience that contributed to its success in one column and to the challenge in the other column. Tell the group that you will revisit the "challenging" column later.
3. Continue the discussion by encouraging your group to dig a little deeper. Ask the group: *How do your teams make the decision about services? What do your teams think about when making service recommendations?* List these insights on the flipchart or whiteboard.
4. After the group has identified their own list, share the following list as guidance when discussing options for supports and services.

When discussing options for EI service delivery, IFSP teams should consider the following:

- Whether there is an immediate, critical need, such as with an infant with feeding issues
- Whether the team expects the strategies provided to the family to change frequently
- How much intervention the child may be able to tolerate, particularly when determining frequency and intensity (i.e., a child with a heart condition may only be able to tolerate a short 30 minute session rather than a 60 minute session)
- The amount of time the child is expected to spend in the program (i.e. a child who enters the Part C system at 10 months of age vs. a child enters at 34 months of age)
- Whether a primary provider model is appropriate, with one primary service provider and, if needed, other consultants available to provide ongoing support

Part 2

5. To provide the opportunity to practice discussing services using these guiding points, instruct learners to form small groups of 2-3 people to act as IFSP teams.
6. Team members should identify their roles on the team, to include a service coordinator, service provider, and parent. Encourage learners to choose a role that is *different* from their usual role to gain a new perspective on the process.
7. Using the handout, *What Supports and Services Are Most Appropriate?*, assign each IFSP team a child’s scenario. Give teams 10 minutes to determine appropriate supports and services based on their scenario.
8. Each team should designate a writer to record the team’s decision and rationale on a piece of flip chart paper.
9. Debrief by having each team share their decision and rationale. If more than one team is working with the same scenario, discuss the different team decisions to compare and contrast the results of their team discussions.
10. Discuss the similarities and differences among the decisions. Invite learners to share their observations and insights about the service determination process in their roles which were different from the typical roles they play on IFSP teams.
11. Revisit the list of characteristics created earlier in the meeting, focusing on the challenging column. Consider how these challenges might be overcome using the guiding points or any other strategies that the group can share.
12. Brainstorm with the large group several strategies for improving the way teams address service determination and briefly plan for how to make these improvements happen.
13. Ask each learner to share one thing he or she will take away from this activity.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Handouts:

- [Agreed Upon Practices for Providing Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments](#)
- [10 Tips for Managing the Frequency & Length Discussion](#)

What Supports and Services Are Most Appropriate?

Tanisha

Tanisha is a 4-month old girl who has qualified for early intervention due to atypical muscle tone and her diagnosis of Down syndrome. At the time of Tanisha's eligibility determination and assessment for service planning, she was not showing any developmental delays. She is able to smile, coo, track movement with her eyes, and has begun to reach for a rattle. When a rattle is placed in her hand, she shakes it and will sometimes look at the rattle. She eats well but still has some challenges with forming a seal around the nipple on the bottle. Tanisha has started to roll, kicks her legs in sequence, and briefly takes weight on her feet. She is starting to sit while propped but has a rounded back and can only maintain this position for a few seconds. Tanisha's parents feel that she is doing very well right now and have shared that they are "not interested in a lot of services right now." Tanisha's IFSP includes outcomes to help her learn to crawl and eventually walk, which were her family's priorities when the IFSP was developed.



Jackson

Jackson is a 33-month old boy who has qualified for early intervention due to a provisional diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and developmental delays in cognition, expressive and receptive communication, fine motor, and social-emotional development. His strengths appear to be in his gross motor and adaptive skills. Jackson uses his adaptive abilities to solve problems by himself and his motor abilities (climbing, pulling his mother to what he wants, etc.) to try to get his needs met. Jackson is not yet showing joint attention or engaging others using his gaze, sounds, or words to request what he wants. He vocalizes some repeating sounds and will cry "mamama" when he is upset. He enjoys putting together puzzles and puts shapes in a shape sorter with ease. He also enjoys scribbling with crayons and playing with his "Dinosaur Train" train set and figures by putting the figures in the trains and pulling them around the dining room floor. His mother reports that he will play with his trains for hours. Jackson walks up on his toes and likes to keep an object in each hand as he moves about his home. Jackson is also a very picky eater and will only eat macaroni and cheese and corn chips, according to his mother. Jackson's IFSP includes outcomes to address his communication abilities, expand his play, and manage his picky eating.

Sam

Sam is a 22-month old child who has qualified for early intervention due to global developmental delays. Sam was recently placed with a foster family after being removed from his biological family due to a founded case of abuse. Sam is a quiet child who rarely vocalizes but will scream or cry when he needs something. He enjoys cause and effect play and has begun to put objects in containers when he plays. He still mouths some toys and throws his toys often. Sam's foster mother reports that he understands simple directions, comes to her for comfort, and has begun to point to what he wants. He walks independently, crawls up steps, and stoops to pick up toys on the floor. He trips easily and seems to lose his balance often. He was using a bottle when he came to his foster family's home but is transitioning to drinking from a cup. He feeds himself using his fingers and has a good appetite. Sam's IFSP includes outcomes to address his ability to use words to communicate rather than screaming for what he wants and to expand his play and problem-solving skills. Activities to encourage his motor development were also woven in to his outcomes.

Leila

Leila is a 26-month old girl who has qualified for early intervention due to developmental delays in cognition and expressive communication. She is a friendly, social child who enjoys playing with her siblings at home and other children at daycare. She uses 8 words consistently, according to her grandmother who is also her guardian. When Leila talks, she leaves both the beginning and ending sounds off of most words. She understands and follows simple directions, but gets very frustrated when she is not understood and will have tantrums that can be challenging for her grandmother to manage. Leila moves about independently, attends well to activities, loves to play with her baby dolls, musical toys, and look at books with her older sister. Her IFSP includes outcomes to expand her vocabulary so that she will be less frustrated when trying to communicate.