



First Steps

**The Newsletter for
Indiana Early Intervention**



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Look for the helpers

First Steps remains strong, reliable, supportive

Dear colleagues,

We are going through unprecedented times. Many of us are finding ourselves confused, nervous, depressed and downright scared.

I want to assure First Steps personnel, families and all stakeholders that the First Steps program will remain strong, reliable and supportive to all. Our state office will continue to provide the necessary policy adjustments, guidance and support to all our local programs, agencies and providers.

We will work with families to ensure necessary services and supports are provided as written in their children’s Individualized Family Service Plans. To do this we will need to be flexible, creative and caring.



I was reminded earlier this week about what Mr. Rogers once said:

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ To this day, especially in times of ‘disaster,’ I remember my mother’s words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers—so many caring people in this world.”

Be assured all of you are the “helpers”—the caring people in the world. If we believe these words and lean on each other we will get through this.

*Be well,
Christina*

Dear stakeholders,

We regret to inform you that the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services has decided it is in the best interest of all First Steps personnel and families to cancel the 2020 First Steps Conference due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The health and safety of our community is our primary concern and we are committed to following the guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

All participants, sponsors and exhibitors will receive a full refund. Refunds will be processed in turn, in the manner in which



they were originally paid. No further action is required for registrants. Once your refund has been processed, you will receive a confirmation email from IU Conferences. Please note, due to unprecedented volumes of returns, it may take several weeks for your refund to be processed.

Please stay tuned. Our state team is working to put together some exciting virtual learning opportunities.

Wishing you all good health,
The First Steps Conference Committee

For questions, please contact Joy Jones at jsj5@iu.edu.

First Steps' COVID-19 policies

temporary policies for families, service providers and service coordinators

As you are aware, businesses, individuals, and organizations around the world are making preparations related to COVID-19, and the state of Indiana is no exception.

In an effort to keep our First Steps families and personnel safe and healthy, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services Bureau of Child Development Services is closely monitoring the 2019 novel coronavirus or COVID-19 in conjunction with other state and local partners. It is important that everyone continues everyday preventative actions and stay informed with accurate information.

Due to the community-based nature of First Steps services, BCDS is issuing several temporary policies for families, service providers and service coordinators who wish to postpone First Steps services or use alternative methods for service delivery.

At right are links to the current First Steps COVID-19 policies. Please check our [program policies and updates page](#) for the latest changes.

Updates to First Steps' COVID-19 policies and additional resources (3/25/20)

First Steps' COVID-19 policies announcement and resources

Frequently asked questions (3/24/2020)

Best practice for conducting virtual visits

Informed consent for the use of virtual early intervention

Informed consent for the use of virtual early intervention (Spanish)

Virtual early intervention technology checklist

Virtual early intervention technology checklist (Spanish)

Provider face-to-face visit summary – virtual visit

Adjustment to individualized family service plan

Guidance for receiving verbal consent

Telehealth IMH document

New Early Intervention technology solution

First Steps will be launching a new technology solution designed specifically to support early intervention processes across the state. Once implemented, it will allow users to seamlessly record and manage the work they do. The new system will streamline the management of program data in real-time, as well as enhance service delivery, and billing processes statewide. Ultimately, this transformation will strengthen data quality and help connect families to the array of early intervention resources available to them.

We understand that implementing new technology can be challenging. Therefore, we are committed to listening to all stakeholders to make the transition to this new system as smooth as possible. First Steps' contractor, Public Consulting Group, Inc., will be discussing the new solution at various stakeholder meetings and community events. In the coming months, you will learn more about the specific changes, training opportunities, and benefits you can expect as we implement this new system. We look forward to sharing more information with you as the project progresses.

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone who attended the various configuration workshop sessions conducted since January 2020. These sessions have allowed us to gain an understanding of the business processes and system requirements needed for users to complete their work in a web-based system. We truly appreciate the valuable input and feedback we have received thus far. The success of the transition to the new technology solution will be in large part due to your contributions.

ICC update The Interagency Coordinating Council members are First Steps stakeholders appointed by the governor. The role of the ICC and its subcommittees is to advise the First Steps office on the state's early intervention system. We believe that adopting a shared vision and shared goals is essential to working together to improve services and outcomes for the children and families we serve.

To learn more about the ICC, [click here to read the report to the governor](#) presented in November 2019.

All ICC meeting dates and minutes are posted on [the DDRS website](#).

2020 ICC meeting dates: **May 13, July 8, Sept. 9, Nov. 4.**

All meetings are from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time at:

Choices Coordinated Care Solutions
7941 Castleway Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46250

The 2020 United States Census

You count and our children count!

Did you know...

- ▶ That there has been a U.S. Census count taken every 10 years since 1790?
- ▶ The U.S. Census count data determines legislative district boundaries and the number of representatives in Congress?
- ▶ It determines how over 675 billion dollars in federal grants are disseminated to states and local governments?
- ▶ Children under 5 years old are often missed in the data?
- ▶ Support for hospitals, early intervention, early childhood development, child care, hospitals and food assistance is significantly impacted if newborn babies and young children are not counted?
- ▶ The funding for social services for families and young children are often determined by the data collected?

[Share this](#) with your colleagues and the families with whom you work and encourage people to participate in the 2020 U.S. Census. [Visit this site](#) for more information.



DDRS—First Steps Indiana statewide profile report

Reporting Period: 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019

I. Population Information

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Population (U.S. Census Bureau) | 6,376,792 |
| Population Growth Percentage (U.S. Census Bureau) | 4.0% |

II. Child Enrollment & Referral

| | Number of Children | Percentage of Children |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|
| One-day Count w/ IFSP –0 to 1 year old | 1,550 | |
| One-day Count w/ IFSP –All Children | 12,128 | |
| Annual Count of Children w/ IFSP | 23,401 | |
| Annual Count of Children Served (regardless of IFSP) | 27,000 | |
| Average Age at Referral (months) | 14 | |
| New IFSP 04/01/2019 –06/30/2019 | 3,104 | |
| Children with Referral to IFSP 45+ Days 04/01/2019-06/30/2019 | 819 | |

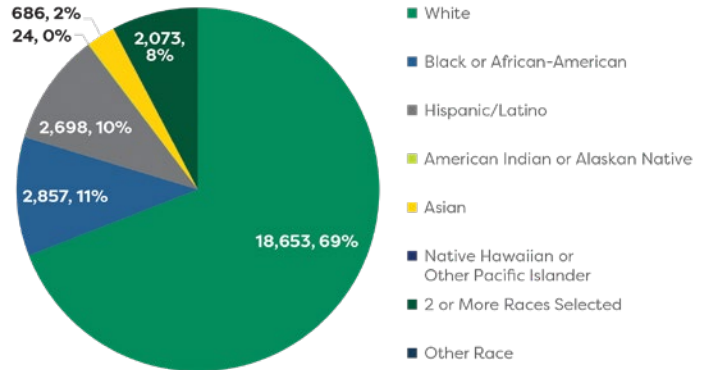
III. Exits

| | Number of Children | Percentage of Children |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| Children Moving to Preschool Special Education | 5,098 | 47% |
| Children Under 3, Services No Longer Needed | 220 | 2% |
| Eligible Children Who Declined Services | 1,286 | 12% |

IV. Paid Services

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|
| Children w/IFSP Served Primarily in the Natural Environment | 23,264 | 99% |
| Total Amount Paid on Behalf of Children Served | \$45,757,762.18 | |
| Average Paid on Behalf of Each Child Served | \$1,694.73 | |

V. Race Information



VI. Children Receiving Each Service Type

| Service Type | Number of Children Served | Percent Receiving Service |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Assistive Technology | 190 | 1% |
| Audiology | 1,052 | 4% |
| Developmental Therapy | 14,574 | 54% |
| Health Services | 0 | 0% |
| Interpreter Services | 554 | 2% |
| Medical | 0 | 0% |
| Nursing | 0 | 0% |
| Nutrition | 325 | 1% |
| Occupational Therapy | 15,187 | 56% |
| Other Services | 17 | 0% |
| Physical Therapy | 14,023 | 52% |
| Psychology | 205 | 1% |
| Social Work | 36 | 0% |
| Speech Therapy | 16,779 | 62% |
| Vision | 0 | 0% |

Source: First SideHatch Database

Understanding Part C federal indicators

Federal Indicator 5: Child Find, Birth to 1 and Indicator 6: Child Find, Birth to 3

In this issue, we will explore both Federal Indicator 5: Child Find, Ages Birth to 1; and Federal Indicator 6: Child Find, Ages Birth to 3.

What does child find mean?

The Center for IDEA and Early Childhood Data Systems and the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center define child find “as a term to describe activities states undertake to identify, locate and evaluate all children who may need early intervention or special education services to ensure all children with disabilities receive the services they are entitled to under the Individuals with Disabilities Act” (Child Find).

Who is responsible for child find activities?

In Indiana, the Local Planning and Coordinating Council in each cluster is charged with conducting child find activities that inform potential referral sources about First Steps. Child find activities may include hosting events, working with physicians to share information about First Steps and our referral process or making connections throughout the local community to educate people about our program. Since anyone can refer a child to First Steps, including physicians, child care providers, preschool teachers, DCS case managers, other home visitors and family members, we must work diligently to inform all types of referral sources about First Steps.

How is this reported?

As part of the Annual Performance Report, indicators 5 and 6 identify the percentage of infants and toddlers with an individualized family service plan compared to national

data. If child find activities were successful, the number of children with IFSPs should meet or surpass the target. Each state sets their own targets with the approval of the Office of Special Education Programs for these indicators.

As reported in the APR for FFY 2018 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), Indiana met the target for both indicators.

The 11 indicators

- 1 Timely service delivery
- 2 Services provided in the natural environment
- 3 Child outcomes
- 4 Family outcomes
- 5 Child find (birth-to-1 population)
- 6 Child find (birth-to-3 population)
- 7 Initial IFSP complete within 45-day timeline
- 8 Early childhood transition
- 9 Hearing requests resolved
- 10 Mediation agreements
- 11 State systemic improvement plan

| FFY 2018 Data | Indicator | Target |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------|
| 5: Child Find, Ages Birth to 1 | 1.57% | 1.63% |
| 6: Child Find, Ages Birth to 3 | 3.84% | 4.58% |

*To see the data broken down by cluster, please review the [public reporting of APR indicators](#).

What can you do to help First Steps meet these targets?

As First Steps personnel you have a unique role in regards to child find activities. You know your local communities best and are encouraged to help the LPCC identify and share contact information of potential referral sources, and maintain relationships to ensure that we receive referrals that meet the intent of early intervention. Please share information about First Steps with potential referral sources including an understanding of developmental milestones and eligibility for the program. Get involved with your LPCC and participate in local outreach activities in your community.

If you have question about child find, please contact your agency director, SPOE supervisor or LPCC coordinator in each cluster.

The DaSy Center and the ECTA Center (2019). Overview of the Part C Child Find Funnel Chart Tool. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

New provider orientation training information

To access ALL state required training registrations, [click here](#).

Recorded trainings for initial credential

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| DSP 101 | AEPS part 1 | Professional Boundaries and Ethics in Home Visiting |
| SC 101 | The Science of Infant Brain Development | |
| Exit Skills Checklist | | |

Live webinar trainings

You must be able to access Adobe Connect to view the webinars. Course documents can be downloaded on the First Steps website prior to the training. If you need accommodations for accessibility, email FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov.

| | |
|----------|----------|
| DSP 102* | DSP 103* |
|----------|----------|

*For your convenience, DSP 102 and 103 trainings alternate monthly and are offered either mid-morning or early evening. Please check the registration page for specific times. **Please note times will be Eastern Time (ET).**

In-person trainings

| | | |
|--------|--------|-------------|
| SC 102 | SC 103 | AEPS part 2 |
|--------|--------|-------------|

Professional development corner

Looking for online trainings for professional development hours? For a complete list of online webinars and trainings, please [visit this page](#). You may also go to [I-LEAD](#) and register for an account. When registering, you will use the category “early intervention provider.” All trainings are free of charge and provide users with a certificate upon training completion. Certificates for all completed trainings are stored in each user’s account under “Reports.” First Steps personnel must keep these certificates in their personal training records for seven years. If you have questions, contact an I-LEAD representative at **800-299-1627** and choose **option 5**, Monday through Thursday 8 a.m.–7 p.m. or Friday 8 a.m.–5 p.m. EDT.

Indiana State University is offering an online Master of Education in teaching and learning for those individuals who wish to develop leadership skills in the areas of assessment, curriculum and instruction, early childhood education, elementary education or literacy. [Click here for more information](#) on the Teaching and Learning Master’s degree at ISU or contact Dr. Duarte at georgianna.duarte@indstate.edu or Dr. Park at yongjoon.park@indstate.edu directly.

Infant Mental Health Endorsement[®] is a credential that can be earned by anyone working with or on behalf of very young children and their families, with a focus on strengthening and supporting early relationships that are so crucial to a child’s social and emotional development. To learn more, visit the [Infancy Onward site](#).

Event calendar

Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children annual conference on May 7-9, 2020. Learn from leaders in Early Childhood Education. Visit the Exhibitor Hall. Network with other early childhood education professionals. [Click here](#) for more information.

Indiana/Kentucky American Physical Therapy Association 2020 combined conference on September 25-26, 2020. Events will be held at the Schwitzer Student Center at the University of Indianapolis. [Click here](#) for more information.

IU research participants needed

Study addresses future expectations families have for their children

The Early Childhood Center at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is conducting a study on family expectations. Supporting families to develop high expectations for their children with disabilities is very important.

Please spread the word! We are looking for families with a child between the ages of 1 to 5 participating in either First Steps

or receiving special education services and who were found eligible due to a medical condition or delay in two or more areas.

Participants will receive a \$30 gift card!

[Click here](#) to download and print a flyer to share with your families or email kgherron@indiana.edu to receive printed flyers or ask questions about the study.



A podcast focused on all things early intervention

As an early interventionist, you meet different families, work in homes and community settings, watch infants and toddlers grow and learn, and, yes, spend lots of time in your car. The “EI on the Fly” podcast is designed so you can easily listen between visits during your day.

Each episode of “EI on the Fly” focuses on an important topic discussed by Dana Childress, PhD and Emily Webb, MS ED, two experienced EI professional development specialists who have also been service coordinators, service providers and parents of children enrolled in EI. Listen often to learn, reflect and hear a few good tips to add to your practices!



To subscribe or listen to episodes, visit eionthefly.podbean.com or find us wherever you follow your favorite podcasts.

This podcast is a collaborative effort of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (through a contract with the Partnership for People with Disabilities/VCU).

First Series: Functional assessment | Second Series: Stay tuned!



First Steps

*The Newsletter for
Indiana Early Intervention*



**Division of Disability and
Rehabilitative Services**

**Indiana Family and Social Services
Administration**

Bureau of Child Development Services
402 W. Washington Street, W453
Indianapolis, IN 46204

INvision newsletter

The Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services *INvision* newsletter shares news, information, tips, and events from each of our bureaus to help families and individuals with disabilities stay connected and learn more about our services. Families can [view past editions](#) and [sign up here](#). Please feel free to sign up and share with the families you support.

If you have an idea that works well with families or an article to share for our newsletter, please [submit it here](#).

Our mission, vision and values

Mission: To partner with Hoosier families whose young children are experiencing developmental delays and connect them with services that help them promote their child's development.

Vision: All Indiana families have a strong foundation to advocate for their infants and toddlers to grow and flourish to their highest potential.

Values:

- **Family-centered:** To support and enhance each family's capacity to promote their child's development.
- **Strengths-based:** To acknowledge families and children as fundamentally resourceful and resilient.
- **Relationship-based:** To embrace and promote the fact that children grow and learn in the context of positive relationships with caring adults.
- **Holistic:** To promote "whole child" development by recognizing the interconnectedness of physical, cognitive, social emotional and adaptive development.
- **Culturally competent:** To respect and be responsive to the cultures, beliefs, practices, strengths and needs of all families, children and individuals.
- **Routines-based:** To embed services and supports into a child and family's daily activities in their home or other community-based environments.
- **Individualized:** To adapt services and supports in response to the unique strengths and needs of each child and family.

Sign up for text messages!

Did you know we offer text message updates to First Steps providers? You will get information about policy changes, professional development opportunities, local planning and coordinating council news, and more. All you have to do is go to [this site](#) and enter your cell phone number!



Use your computer to read webpages out loud

BrowseAloud is a suite of products that provides online reading support. BrowseAloud reads website content out loud, highlighting each word as it is spoken in a high-quality, human-sounding voice. Click on the BrowseAloud link that appears beside "Accessibility Tools" on the footer of the IN.gov website. This will launch the BrowseAloud Plus toolbar. This toolbar provides speech at the touch of a button. For more information, visit [BrowseAloud](#).