



***The Newsletter for
Indiana Early Intervention***



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- IN EIHub
- Excellence in Service Award winners
- Inclusive child care
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- Family-Guided Routines-Based Intervention update
- Much more!

**The 2021 First Steps
Conference was a success**

***We came together to expand our
early intervention capacity***

Dear Stakeholders,

We were thrilled so many were able to join us for the 2021 First Steps Conference last month. There were more than 700 people in attendance, including early childhood professionals and many families of children who are receiving or have received First Steps services.

Our state office would like to thank the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community's Early Childhood Center team, especially Joy Jones and Katie Herron, IU Conferencing, the conference committee members, sponsors and all of our presenters and keynote speakers.

We believe it is important to create an experience where professionals and family members can come together, learn from one another, share ideas and best practices, network and continue to expand their early intervention capacity. We hope all those who attended enjoyed taking time to recharge their professional batteries after the challenging year that was 2020 and are hopeful we can resume an in-person conference in 2022.

As has been tradition at our statewide conference, we took time to recognize many individuals for their leadership, dedication and excellence in service to First Steps this past year. We thank you all for your outstanding leadership, support and partnership this past year. Congratulations to the 2021 First Steps Excellence in Service Award winners. For a complete list of this year's winners, see [page 3](#).

Best,

Christina

Cover up to 80% of the cost of care for children

50k scholarships available to Hoosier workers and their children

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration *Build, Learn, Grow* initiative has made 50,000 scholarships available to help get Hoosier children from families working in essential industries—regardless of income—enrolled in early care and education, summer learning or out-of-school care. Scholarships will cover up to 80% of the early care and education program's tuition for each child age 12 and younger. Information is available at www.BuildLearnGrow.org.

For families to qualify for *Build, Learn, Grow* scholarships, an adult in the household must work in an essential business (examples include

health care, human services, retail, restaurant and food service, essential infrastructure, media, manufacturing and logistics, religious and charitable organizations and many others).

Families will qualify for the *Build, Learn, Grow* scholarship to cover 80% of their cost with incomes of up to 250% of the federal poverty level. Families with incomes between 251% and 400% of FPL will qualify for 60% of costs covered and those with incomes at 401% of FPL and above will qualify for 20% of costs covered.

The scholarships are funded by more than \$101 million provided to

Indiana by the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, or CRRSA.

To administer the *Build, Learn, Grow* scholarship program, the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning has partnered with Early Learning Indiana and Indiana Afterschool Network, the state's leading organizations supporting early care and education and out-of-school-time programs. Early care and education and out-of-school-time programs interested in receiving children with *Build, Learn, Grow* scholarships can learn more at www.BuildLearnGrow.org.

IN EIHub update

EIHub

First Steps Early Intervention
Case Management System

As the EIHub continues to roll out, we would like to share some interesting data and a list of helpful contact information with you. Did you know that, as of this newsletter, there have been:

Over 1,200 individual users accessing the EIHub each week.



82% of services billed within a day of service entered in EIHub.



180,456 billed services since the launch of EIHub!



EI Hub users ROCK! We know this a heavy lift and appreciate all that you are doing to learn the new system.

IN EIHub links

IN EIHub [link](#)

[Learn more](#) about IN EIHub

[Step-by-step guides](#) are posted to the Learning Management System

Provider LMS Initial Credential [Support Guide](#)

IN EIHub [Provider Enrollment Management email](#)

IN EIHub help desk: Call 877-522-1065, Mon., Thurs., Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET; Tues., Wed., 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET or email: infirststeps@pcgus.com

The [First Steps website](#)

The general [First Steps email](#)

2021 First Steps Excellence in Service Award winners

Thanks for your outstanding leadership, support and partnership

As has been tradition at our state-wide conference, we took time to recognize many individuals for their leadership, dedication and excellence in service to First Steps this past year. These individuals:

- ▶ Demonstrated creativity during a statewide shortage of personal protective equipment to amass enough supply to keep their teams and the children and families they serve safe;
- ▶ Pulled together as leaders, sharing resources and information regarding the pandemic and data system transition;
- ▶ Quickly rethought their business policies and processes to remain

open and maintain continuity of new and existing IFSP services for children and families;

- ▶ Supported their teams through access to technology and virtual platforms;
- ▶ Provided time for their teams' professional development and mentorship as they shifted to tele-intervention, which was a new service delivery method;
- ▶ Learned a new data system and supported their teams through registration and implementation;
- ▶ Maintained recruitment and retention of personnel;
- ▶ Collaborated with the state team to improve and clarify existing

processes during the design, development and implementation of EIHub, thus increasing the consistency in early intervention statewide;

- ▶ Continued child find activities in their local communities in spite of doctors' offices and child care closing; and
- ▶ Finally, they supported the children and families as they transitioned out of the First Steps program.

We thank you all for your outstanding leadership, support and partnership this past year. Congratulations to the 2021 First Steps Excellence in Service Award winners.



Kim Amberger-Fledderman
Tangie Armstrong
Whitney Austin
Jason Berty
Karen Berty
Barb Blain
Katie Callan
Daud Chowdry
Judy Chowdry
Molly Cleek
Michelle Coleman
Debbi Davis
Dean Dekemper
Angie Dick

Anne Dolan
Donna Driscoll
Megan Drzewiecki
Brooklyn Dugdale
Amy Ellis
Brigette Fairchild-Leazenby
Ben Faulstick
Nellie Feliciano
Lisa Fisher
Suzanne Foley
Caitlyn Fredrick
Mariann Frigo
Stephanie Furnas
Angie Garmon

Kesha Germany
Tracey Giannini-Duer
Karen Glander
Katarina Groves
Katherine Hargreaves
Drew Haverstock
Becky Haymond
Janice Hensley
Polly Hines
Cynthia Holtz
Marissa Horvath
Julianne Jarrell
Jennifer Kendrick
Robin Klakamp

Megan Kochvar
Patty Kovacs
Urszula Krygowski
Cindy Lawrence
Kelli Lynch
Clare Mann
Angie Miller
Deb Miller
Nancy Moore
Kathy Mullen
Missy Myers
Lily Osborn
Lydia Otiato
Jennifer Owens
Cottrell Sanders

Crystal Scott
Patti Sebanc
Melissa Sharp
Brittnee Smith
Caitlyn Stacy
Victoria Stenulson
David Sterne
Sue Swindeman
Christian Swisher
Trent Terry
Colleen Wasemann
Ginger Whitler
Stacy Williams
Teri Williams
Amelia Williams



Supporting young children and their families in inclusive child care

By Jamie Le Sesne Spears, M.Ed., family engagement specialist, *Child Care Answers*

Every young child and their family have the right to quality early childhood care and education. Therefore, for families that have young children with developmental delays and medical conditions, it can be challenging to find child care without support. In this INBest Practice, you will discover ways you can support families as they navigate inclusive child care.

What is inclusive child care and education?

Early childhood inclusion is the belief and practice that all children have the right to access and participate in high-quality early childhood care and education. It is through inclusive values, program policies and classroom practices that young children with developmental delays and medical conditions experience full membership, participation and a sense of belonging. When programs have supports and engage in collaboration with families, child care and early intervention providers, inclusive child care can be successful for everyone.

Therefore, inclusive child care and education can be distinguished by three key features: **access**, **participation** and **supports**. [Click here to view](#) *Finding Inclusive Child Care for Children with Special Needs: A Guide For Central Indiana Families*.

How can First Steps providers support families and collaborate with child care programs?

As a First Steps provider, you are in a unique position to support families as they learn how to advocate for their child and navigate inclusive child care. It is through intentional conversations that you can best understand the family's needs and



Access

All children have access to be educated in programs alongside their same-age peers.



Participation

All children have what they need to participate and be engaged in play and learning.



Supports

The child care program has supports for their staff to create inclusive experiences and policies.

Pamela Brillante, The Essentials: Supporting Young Children with Disabilities in the Classroom

open doors to meaningful collaboration with programs. As you collaborate with families and child care programs, you will enhance outcomes for children, families' capacity to meet specific needs and inclusive child care opportunities.

Consider the following recommendations as you support families and collaborate with child care programs:

- ▶ Begin a conversation with families about child care. Ask families open-ended questions that will help you identify how to best support the child in their child care program. For example, "What concerns do you have about child care?" or "Are there ways that I can help support your child at school?"
- ▶ Encourage families to share essential information with their child's teacher and program. This can include Individualized Family Service Plan outcomes, treatment plans and team meeting dates. With the program present at the IFSP meeting, you can collaborate with the family and child care provider to exchange knowledge and ways to implement interventions at home and in the classroom.
- ▶ Collaborate with the family and

child care program to create specific intervention plans for child care. Due to classroom factors such as the environment and supports available to the teacher, it is critical to collaborate in order to empower the program to implement interventions in the classroom.

- ▶ Model interventions to the family as well as the teacher. Teachers are likely to implement an intervention if they are able to watch the intervention being modeled in the classroom during the targeted activity. If needed, this will also help you modify the intervention for the environment.

Want to learn more?

Indiana's [Child Care Resource & Referral Network](#) can help your families find high quality child care!

The Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children [Recommended Practices](#) is a tool that provides guidance to families and providers about inclusive practices and supporting learning outcomes.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children [Inclusion Resources](#) are a collection of articles, books and blogs about inclusive practices in early childhood.



First Steps webinars and trainings, including those required for initial credentialing, are now located on the [IN EI Hub Learning Management System](#). All registered IN EI Hub users are encouraged to visit the [Learning Management System](#) often, as we will be posting new trainings and professional development opportunities. [Watch this video](#) to learn more about the LMS!

As we continue to refine the processes and procedures in our First Steps program, we are not currently offering Service Coordination 102/103 and Direct Service Provider 102/103 trainings at this time. We will notify personnel when those become available. Stay tuned!

You may still access trainings posted on the [I-LEAD platform](#) hosted by the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning and other applicable early intervention professional development trainings outside of the LMS. However, as documented in the First Steps Policy Manual, please remember to retain your certificate of attendance documentation for a period of seven years.

If you are looking for online trainings for professional development hours, you may [visit I-LEAD](#) and register for an account. When registering, identify as an “early intervention provider.” If you have questions regarding I-LEAD, contact their customer services representatives directly 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., Eastern time.

- **Infancy Onward's Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference 2021, Aug. 12 and 13.** Join us for Infancy Onward's [2021 conference](#), “Little People, Big Feelings: Skills for Compassionate Care,” which will focus on healing for all practitioners and the children for which they care. [Click here](#) to register.
- **ASL Run Series: 5K Walk/Run, August through September.** Proceeds from the ASL Run-Thrive will go to the Indiana School for the Deaf Alumni Association. 5K Walk/Run race on Sept. 25; Virtual ASL Run from Aug. 31–Sept. 25. [Visit this site](#) to sign up.
- **2021 Annual Help Me Grow Virtual Forum, Sept. 20–23.** The 12th Annual [HMG National Forum](#) will consist of four half-days of presentations and speakers. Co-hosted by Help Me Grow Indiana. [Registration is open](#) now!
- **Division of Early Childhood virtual conference, Sept. 20–24.** Join the [37th Annual International Conference](#) on Young Children with Disabilities & Their Families for sessions offering the latest research, evidence-based practices and advice for working with young children with disabilities. [Register here](#).
- **Family Voices Indiana virtual Heart to Heart Conference 2021, Sept. 30.** [Heart to Heart Conference 2021](#) will be a day of learning and support for families of children with special health care needs and the professionals who serve them. Call 844-F2F-INFO or email conference@fvindiana.org for more information. [Register today!](#)
- **The 24th Buddy Walk® Indianapolis, Oct. 2.** [Buddy Walk®](#), the largest fundraising and awareness event for Down Syndrome Indiana, is a family-friendly event open to all. [Sign up here](#).
- **Indiana Speech and Hearing Association 2021 Fall Conference, Oct. 9.** ISHA's [fall conference](#) theme is “Overcoming Feeding and Swallowing Challenges in Infants and Toddlers.”
- **Hear Indiana 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend, Oct. 8 and 9.** Our [anniversary celebration](#) will begin with an open house on Oct. 8 at the Speech and Hearing Resource Center and will culminate on Oct. 9 with our 50th Anniversary Gala at the Willows Event Center in Indianapolis from 6 to 9 p.m. Email arika.weil@hearindiana.org to find out more.
- **About Special Kids “Kitchen Roundtable” at the Indianapolis Children’s Museum, Oct. 14.** Email familynetw@aboutspeciallykids.org for more information.
- **Zero to Three virtual conference, Oct. 25–29.** This year’s theme is [“Take Heart.”](#) Join us to advance our shared goals, grow your professional network, and deepen your learning and practice. [Register now](#).
- **SAVE THE DATE: American Physical Therapy Association Indiana Fall Conference, Nov. 5 and 6.** The APTA Indiana [Fall Conference](#) will be held at The University of Indianapolis.
- **SAVE THE DATE: Indiana Occupational Therapy Association Fall Conference, Nov. 2.** For more information about the IOTA Fall Conference, [visit our website](#).



First Steps providers needed for study

Researchers at the Early Childhood Center at Indiana University are conducting a study around recruitment and retention of providers in the Part C workforce. They are wanting to interview First Steps early intervention providers directly. The one-on-one interview with an IU researcher will be scheduled at your convenience and will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. If you are interested in participating in this important study, please contact Janet Ballard at jaeball@indiana.edu to arrange an interview.

FGRBI update

Professional development opportunities

Last year, First Steps announced the adoption of the Family Guided Routines-Based Intervention model for early intervention home visiting. This family coaching model focuses on partnering with families to help caregivers support child development within the context of typical family routines.

The shift to FGRBI will not happen overnight and it will involve the entire early intervention system. In an effort to build awareness and create readiness, First Steps has partnered with Dr. Juliann Woods at Florida State University, the creator of FGRBI, to provide a series of professional development opportunities. You can find multiple webinars on the new IN EIHub Learning Management System.

If you attended the 2021 virtual First Steps Conference, you had an opportunity to participate in a pre-conference workshop and breakout session facilitated by Dr. Woods. Recordings are now available on the conference platform and will be made available in the LMS within the next few months.

A cohort of 15 First Steps providers just completed the first FGRBI Community of Practice, which included special access to a series of learning modules and monthly meetings with Dr. Woods to discuss the content, ask questions and share their feedback on how they used FGRBI techniques in their own practice.

As the First Steps state team works to craft a multi-year plan to introduce and implement the FGRBI model, provider and stakeholder feedback will be critical. Beginning in August and September, Indiana University Early Childhood Center staff will be extending an invitation to provider agencies across the state to provide feedback on the new model. If you or your agency would like to learn more or talk with someone about FGRBI in Indiana, please email Katie Herron at kgherron@indiana.edu. For more information on FGRBI, visit the [FGRBI website](#) or the [First Steps website](#).

Early intervention resources

[DEC and ITCA Service Coordination joint position statement](#)

Formal expressions of the Division for Early Childhood that have been developed with input, reviewed by members and approved by the Executive Board.

[EI on the Fly podcast](#)

This podcast focused on all things Early Intervention is a collaborative effort of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

[Baby Talk monthly newsletter listserv](#)

Baby Talk is a free, one-way listserv. Each issue features one or more resources. To subscribe, email Camille.catlett@unc.edu.

[LITSAE](#)

Learn the signs. Act early. Act Early Indiana promotes awareness of healthy child development.

[IDEAL legislation](#)

Access the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing documents.

[IDEAL Milestones handout](#)

Language milestones for American Sign Language and English.

[Indiana Hands & Voices](#)

Indiana Hands & Voices supports families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology.

[Vincennes U. ASL & Deaf Studies](#)

This two-year program prepares students to pursue a baccalaureate degree that provides a foundation in careers that serve deaf individuals.



Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services

Get First Steps information directly via email

Sign up for DDRS updates, First Steps newsletter and INVision parent newsletter. To register, [click FSSA Subscriber](#).

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.

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.

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](#).



COVER UP TO 80% OF THE COST OF CARE FOR CHILDREN UP TO AGE 12.

Working families can get up to 80% of costs covered for early care, summer care and before and after school care.



Helping working families connect to early care & education

Families.BuildLearnGrow.org