



FIRST STEPS

Quarterly Newsletter—New Year, New Look!



Christina Commons
First Steps Director

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First Steps State Team

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- Brenda Webster**
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- Constance Young**
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Happy New Year!

As we welcome 2018, I'd like to take some time to reflect on 2017. I am pleased to report that 2017 was a great year for Indiana First Steps.

Early last year we set out to pilot a new Family Assessment. Through professional development support from IU, ICC workgroup discussions, SPOE personnel input and commitment to its success, we made necessary adjustments to forms, developed a training for all Service Coordinators, and implemented a statewide rollout of the assessment in October. The Family Assessment is currently offered to all families prior to writing their IFSPs and is used to assist the team in discussions around family strengths and needs, child and family outcomes, as well as community and service supports that may benefit families outside of the early intervention system. This tool should help ensure all IFSPs are individualized for children and their families.

The First Steps system saw an improvement in its Comprehensive System of Professional Development as professional development opportunities were offered to all personnel at little to no cost and in a variety of formats.

There is commitment to building a strong foundation and infrastructure for the program to ensure highly qualified personnel are providing the best early intervention services possible to the roughly 25,000 children and families we serve annually. The Home Visiting Series of regional face to face trainings and webinars is one example of this commitment. Our First Steps Conference will be another. Please save the dates for June 14th and 15th for this event.

The State First Steps office grew to a team of 5 individuals dedicated to the early intervention system. Maggie McCall oversees Data Management and Quality Improvement, Meghan Smith manages review, rewrite, and development of policy and procedures, Connie Young is working with higher education institutions on recruiting qualified personnel and ensuring preservice training personnel receive is preparing individuals to be strong early interventionists, and Brenda Webster provides support for training, quality improvement, and program personnel needs. We will continue our work for all the children, families, and personnel in First Steps to guarantee we have a strong sustainable system for years to come.

We have also worked to bring our system into the 21st Century through small modernizations and efficiencies. If you haven't heard, our families that have co-payments for services are now able to make payments online at www.firststeps.in.gov with their credit, debit, HSA, and FSA cards. Although this was just implemented November 14th, over 165 payments have been received. Please assist us in sharing this exciting information.

These are just a few of our accomplishments this year. We anticipate even more in 2018. Thank you for your commitment to First Steps and the children and families with whom you work.

Best,
Christina

ICC UPDATE

The Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) members are First Steps stakeholders appointed by the Governor of the State of Indiana. The role of the Interagency Coordinating Council and its subcommittees is to advise the State 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.

We would like to thank all outgoing members for their hard work and dedication to the First Steps program. To see the list of new appointments by Governor Holcomb click the following link: <https://calendar.in.gov/site/gov/event/gov-holcomb-makes-appointments-to-various-boards--commissions-4/>

All ICC meeting dates and minutes are posted on our website: http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/3355.htm#Interagency_Coordinating_Council.

The next meeting of the ICC is May 9, 2018 from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm at:

Choices Coordinated Care Solutions 7941 Castleway Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46250.



SAVE THE DATE

2018 CONFERENCE

JUNE 14-15, 2018 • MONROE CONVENTION CENTER • BLOOMINGTON, IN

Learn more: iidc.indiana.edu/pages/first-steps-conference-2018

National Keynote Speakers • Innovative Ideas • Inspiring Evidence-Based Research



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



To register or to become a conference sponsor use the following link:

<https://eventmobi.com/fs2018/>

or

Download the eventmobi app and enter the code FS2018 for more details!



2018 CONFERENCE

JUNE 14-15, 2018 • MONROE CONVENTION CENTER • BLOOMINGTON, IN

Call for Presentations

Conference Objective: Did you know Indiana First Steps served 20,775 children and families last year alone? For the first time, First Steps will be holding a statewide conference for its personnel, service providers, and families. The objective is to provide a common space for our stakeholders to share, learn, and network. The conference will include two national keynote speakers. Dr. Rosemarie Allen will speak about implicit bias in early intervention, and Dr. Dipesh Navsaria will present on how trauma in early childhood impacts brain development with implications across the life course. Please help us make this inaugural First Steps conference amazing by submitting a proposal to give one of 32 break-out session presentations.

If you have questions about this process, please email Katie Herron at kgherron@indiana.edu

Click the link to submit a proposal:

https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_c14BiXjj4Y09xPf

Deadline for submission is February 15, 2018

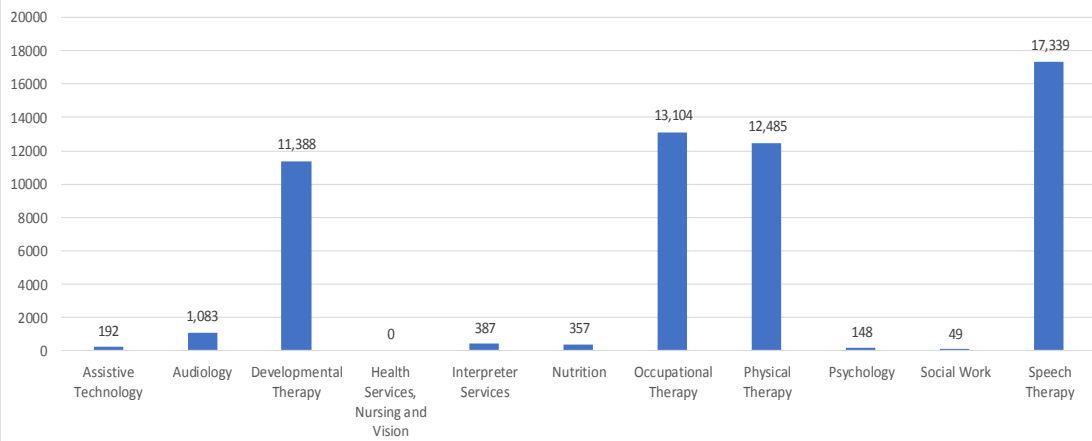
Members of the First Steps Conference Committee will review all submissions. We will contact you with updates.

PROFILE DATA REPORT

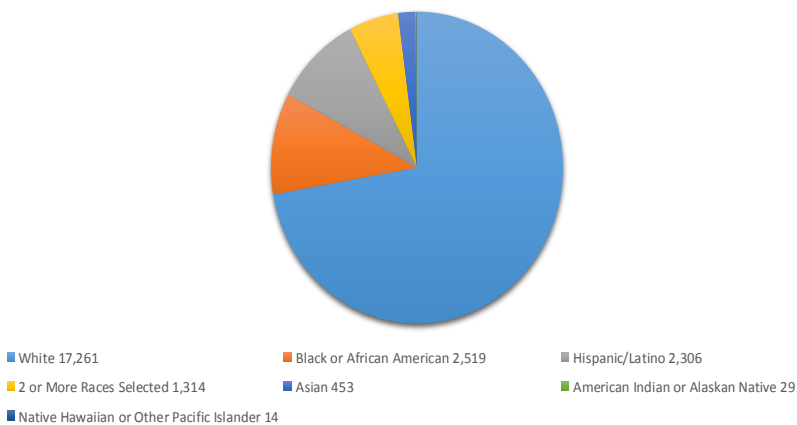
10/1/2016 - 9/30/2017

	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
CHILD ENROLLMENT & REFERRAL		
One-day Count w/ IFSP— 0 to 1 year old	1,330	
One-day Count w/ IFSP— All Children	10,200	
Annual Count of Children w/ IFSP	19,985	
Annual Count of Children Served (regardless of IFSP)	23,913	
Average Age at Referral (months)	14	
New IFSP 07/01/2016—09/30/2016	2,574	
Children with Referral to IFSP 45+ Days 07/01/2016-09/30/2016	44	
EXITS		
Children Moving to Preschool Special Education	4,224	44%
Children Under 3, Services No Longer Needed	206	2%
Eligible Children who Declined Services	1,059	11%
PAID SERVICES		
Children w/IFSP Served Primarily in the Natural Environment	19,841	99%
Total Amount Paid on Behalf of Children Served	\$38,244,929.02	
Average Paid on Behalf of Each Child Served	\$1,599.34	

Numbers of Children Receiving Each Service Type



Race Information



QUALITY REVIEW UPDATE

Quality Review Update:

The Quality Review/State Team is ready to submit the Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). This report is for FFY16 (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017). Even though Indiana did not meet compliance on some of the Federal Indicators, the State still reached high levels of compliance with percentages above 95%. The report is due February 1, 2018. States that submit the report timely are given a clarification period allowing states to make updates, changes, and incorporate OSEP feedback before the final submission on April 1, 2018. As part of the final submission, the newest State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) will also be included.

This year's SSIP will talk about progress we made from Year 3's SSIP, what we want to accomplish in Year 4, and how the State plans to evaluate the process. You as stakeholders continue to be a valuable voice as the State team moves forward with the SSIP. One way you offered your voice was participating in the focus groups last fall. Here are some of the highlights:

Greatest barrier to engaging families:

- Screens/phones
- Cleanliness of home
- Lots of people in the home
- Repeat families
- Parent assumption you are there to 'fix' the child
- Mental Health issues in the family
- Building family confidence

Communication with family when child is seen in childcare setting:

- Call/text after appointment
- Be there at drop off/pick up to touch base with family
- Monthly visit at home
- Leave note in cubby
- Cubby notebook for everyone to write in including family and teachers

Best part of your job:

- Smiles from kids you work with
- Seeing the child/family make progress
- Family 'aha' moments
- Being in the home with the family
- The variety of families you get to interact with during the day
- Laughter of child



First Steps families can now pay their family cost participation fees using a *NEW* convenient online payment option. Paying online should take no more than a few minutes. Log on to www.firststeps.in.gov and click the "Make a First Steps Payment" button.

Once your payment is processed, you will have the option to print a receipt or have one emailed to you. There will be a small fee of \$1 plus 2 percent of the fee to process online.

TRAINING CENTRAL AND CREDENTIALING UPDATE

Visit Training Central to access a variety of posted online trainings ...

Go to <http://partnershipsforearlylearners.org/get-involved/providers/training-central/> 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 “My Certificates”. First Steps personnel must keep these certificates in their personal training records for five years.

If you have questions, please contact the Training Central Help Desk at:

tcsupport@earlylearningindiana.org or 1-800-299-1627 and choose option 5.

New Provider Required Orientation Training Information

Direct Service Provider Trainings (DSP)

DSP 102 - Complete within 60 days of enrollment date.
DSP 103 - Complete within 3-6 months of enrollment date.

DSP 102 is 9 am - 12 pm and DSP 103 is 1 pm - 4 pm

Training dates are: April 3, 2018
February 6, 2018 May 1, 2018
March 6, 2018 June 5, 2018

All DSP trainings will be held at: **PediPlay**
6239 S. East St Suite A
Indianapolis IN 46227

To register visit: <https://fs-aeps-dsp-sc.weebly>

Service Coordination Trainings (SC)

SC 102- Complete within 3-6 months of enrollment & SC 103 within the first year.

SC 102 and SC 103 are both 9 am - 4 pm

SC 102 Training dates are: April 10, 2018 July 10, 2018
and October 9, 2018

SC 103 Training Dates are: * March 13, 2018 at **Pediplay**

The May 8, 2018, August 14, 2018 and November 13, 2018

Trainings will be held at: **Prokids (please note new address)**
1776 North Meridian Street Indianapolis IN 46202

To register visit: <https://fs-aeps-dsp-sc.weebly.com/>

Assessment Team Required Training (AEPS)

AEPS Part 2– Complete within first year of enrollment.

On-going Providers may also take AEPS Part 2 as a First Steps Core Training

AEPS Part 2 is 9 am - 4 pm

Training dates are: February 8, 2018 August 24, 2018
May 4, 2018 October 26, 2018

All AEPS Part 2 trainings will be held at: **PediPlay**
6239 S. East St Suite A
Indianapolis IN 46227

To register visit: <https://fs-aeps-dsp-sc.weebly.com/>

ADDITIONAL TRAININGS

First Steps Core Trainings (FSCT) and orientation trainings are available on the First Steps website or at <http://www.eikids.com/in/matrix/UnifiedTraining.asp>. Once you have completed the training video/presentation, you must complete the competency assessment. A score of 80% or higher is required to pass the assessment.

***NEW information!** The assessments have now been posted to Qualtrics. Just take the included quiz and your score is automatically graded, recorded and a confirmation email sent immediately thereafter!

Please maintain a copy of the email as supporting documentation of completing the training. You are responsible for maintaining all of your training records.

- FSCT – AEPS Part 1: Understanding and Using the AEPS .3 pts
- FSCT – The Science of Infant Brain Development .4 pts
- FSCT – Inclusion in Early Care and Education Training .3 pts
- FSCT – Providing EI Supports & Services in Natural Environments .5 pts
- FSCT – Family Centered Approach to Procedural Safeguards .4 pts
- FSCT – Professional Boundaries and Ethics in Home Visiting .3 pts
- FSCT – Positive Transitions for Children & Families in Early Intervention .3 pts
- Direct Service Provider 101 1.0 pts
- Service Coordination 101 2.0 pts



The Exit Skills Checklist Training Webinar located on Training Central is a mandatory First Steps Core Training (FSCT) for ALL personnel and worth .2 credentialing points.

The Exit Checklist Module went live in October and over 600 providers have already completed it!

HOME VISITING SERIES

The regional home visiting trainings wrapped up in November and included a special half-day meeting for agency and SPOE leaders. Thanks to all who participated. Planning for Day 2 is already underway!

There are recorded webinars on the Opioid Crisis, Helping Families Navigate An Autism Diagnosis and Resources for Families posted on Training Central. They are each worth .1 credentialing point and are offered to all First Steps personnel.

If you are registered for the First Steps Home Visiting Series please follow the link below to sign up for the Day 2 Training. They are located within each Cluster. Registration is on a first come, first served basis!

https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_af6quTcDZRWWtpH

Also, as a registered participant of the Home Visiting Series you may view the next webinar live on Monday February 19th from 12:30-1:30pm. The topic will be Helping Providers and Families Navigating the DCS/Foster care System.

FROM OUR FRIENDS AT ISHA...

Indiana Speech-Language Hearing Association (ISHA) Annual Spring Convention April 5-7, 2018.

LOCATION: Sheraton Hotel at Keystone Crossing, Indianapolis. 13 (1.3) hours of CEUs offered specifically for Birth-3 providers. Topics for First Steps Providers include:

"Suspected Childhood Apraxia of Speech (SCAS)" and "The Power of Play in the Development of Young Children."

NATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES



First Steps Professional Development *National Webinar Series*

Breaking the Iron Cage of Poverty

February 5, 2018

Noon-1:00PM EST

Open to Everyone

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://iu.zoom.us/j/849285653>

Webinar Description:

Stereotypes of people living in poverty in America are deeply imbedded in our society. Before our country can move forward with fighting the war on poverty, we must make a collective effort to examine personal beliefs and open our minds to new interpretations of the behavior of those struggling without basic needs. Attitudes and beliefs shape tone of voice, body posture, facial expressions and actions towards others. If you are judging behavior, then you cannot connect. Therefore, it is important to reflect on beliefs.

Presenter:

Donna Beegle grew up in generational migrant-labor poverty, leaving school at 15 to get married, and having two children while continuing to cope with poverty, Donna Beegle found herself—at 25—with no husband, little education, and no job skills. Within 10 short years, she gained the confidence to get her GED and advance through to a Doctorate Degree. All these experiences provide Dr. Beegle with an authentic voice to speak, write, and train across the nation to break the iron cage of poverty.

As president of Communication Across Barriers, a consulting firm dedicated to building poverty informed communities that are armed with tools to break barriers, she works directly with children and adults currently in poverty, as well as all professionals who want to make a difference for those living in the crisis of poverty. For over 27 years, Dr. Beegle's work has spread word of mouth to all 50 states and six countries. Dr. Beegle is also the founder of the Opportunity Community movement which provides the foundation for a contemporary war on poverty.



The January 10th webinar titled: “First Steps National Webinar: Emerging Issues in Early Intervention” presented by Maureen Greer” is now available on Training Central.

You will receive .1 credentialing points for watching this one hour webinar.

Enjoy!

Important Note: If you require closed captioning for this recorded webinar, please email kgherron@indiana.edu.



Do you have kids on your caseload with behavior problems? Or sleep problems? Anxiety? Do their parents wonder how to help their kids with these challenges? Do you wonder how to deal with behavior problems during your home visits? Each of us in early intervention brings our expertise to the work that addresses at least one of the five developmental domains. Part C, IDEA requires that First Steps address all of these areas of development: social emotional, communication, cognitive, adaptive, and physical (including hearing, vision and nutrition). It takes all of us to help families achieve their desired outcomes for their children.

To support assessment and intervention of social emotional development needs, Infancy Onward, Indiana's infant mental health association, sponsors the *Infant Mental Health Endorsement*. The endorsement is a voluntary credential that identifies the skills and expertise we each bring to the team regarding children's social emotional development. The association imagines that when communities have providers with the endorsement, there is a better opportunity to share information and get children connected to the supports and services they need.

The endorsement is a competency based system that documents providers' education and experience in an easy to use online portfolio system. The IMH Endorsement has 4 categories which encompass the variety of providers that support young children and their development; including social emotional. These categories include:

Infant Family Associate (IFA) - for individuals whose primary focus is promotion of infant mental health. This includes child care workers, non-profit coordinators, play group leaders, doulas & midwives, lactation specialists, school counselors, and many others. This category is also available for professionals who may fit into a different category of Endorsement but do not yet meet all of the eligibility requirements.

Infant Family Specialist (IFS) - for individuals whose primary focus is prevention. This includes home visitors, family support specialists, **First Steps providers**, Parent Educators, Inclusion Specialists, NICU nurses, and many others.

Infant Mental Health Specialist (IMHS) - for individuals whose primary focus is therapeutic intervention. This includes mental health clinicians, psychologists, marriage and family therapists, licensed clinical social workers, and others.

Infant Mental Health Mentor (IMHM) - for individuals demonstrating leadership in the field. This includes a broad range of professionals under three separate designations: Policy, Clinical, and Research/Faculty. Some examples include psychologists, pediatricians, policy specialists, university faculty, and researchers.

To qualify for the *Infant Family Specialist*, a provider must have a caseload of children under the age of three, have a Bachelor or Master degree, have a minimum of 30 clock hours of training in the promotion of social emotional development and/or the relationship-based principles of infant and early childhood mental health, have a minimum of 24 hours of reflective supervision/consultation in the past 1 to 2 years while working with young children, be a member of Infancy Onward, and document their education, experience and skills, and reference ratings in the online EASy system.

As you can see, many First Steps either already meet or closely match the requirements. And when more of us have the Endorsement we are better able to identify social emotional challenges earlier and connect kids and families to the resources and supports needed to achieve the best outcomes possible.

To learn more about the Endorsement visit www.infancyonward.org or contact Becky Gee, Executive Director & Endorsement Coordinator at info@infancyonward.org or by telephone at 317-638-3501.

Submitted by Stephan Viehweg, LCSW, IMH-E®, CYC-P a social work provider and IMHM policy mentor. He is co-author of "Tackling the Tough Stuff: A Home Visitor's Guide to Supporting Families at Risk." To ask Steve questions about endorsement or infant mental health, email sviehweg@iu.edu



On My Way Pre-K is the name of Indiana's first state-funded prekindergarten program, which was approved as a five-county pilot by the Indiana General Assembly in 2014 and has been operating since 2015 in **Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion and Vanderburgh Counties**. In 2017, the General Assembly authorized FSSA to add 15 additional counties.

The 15 new expansion counties are:

Bartholomew, DeKalb, Delaware, Elkhart, Floyd, Grant, Harrison, Howard, Kosciusko, Madison, Marshall, Monroe, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe and Vigo Counties.

Ten of the recently announced 15 expansion counties **will offer half-year of On My Way Pre-K in winter/spring 2018. Applications for all 20 pilot counties for the 2018-19 school year will be opened to families soon. Family eligibility includes:**

- The family must have an income below 127 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Parents or guardians must be working and/or attending school or an accredited or certified education/training program.
- The child must be 4 years old by August 1, 2018, and be starting kindergarten in August 2019.

Families may choose from any of the eligible, enrolled On My Way Pre-K programs.

OECOSL has currently enrolled 464 On My Way Pre-K providers in all 20 counties, and the application process for new providers is ongoing. In order to qualify, the program must be top-ranked at level 3 or level 4 on Paths to QUALITY and meet the states CCDF eligibility requirements. Approved pre-K programs may be located in a public, charter or private school, licensed child care center, licensed home or registered ministry as long as that program meets the quality requirements and is registered as an On My Way Pre-K Provider.

Families may choose from a program that is full-day or part-day, as well as from programs that end with the school year or continue through the summer. Parents in On My Way Pre-K counties can find approved providers located near them here:

<https://secure.in.gov/apps/fssa/providersearch/home/program/prek>

Families who need help finding an approved pre-K program can also call 1-800-299-1627 for assistance from an early learning referral specialist.

There will also be 8 On My Way Pre-K Agreement sites located in Dubois, Huntington, Jefferson, La Porte, Miami, Ripley, Wayne, and White counties that were former Early Education Matching Grant sites in 2013 -2016. In the 2017 General Assembly legislation, these sites have now been accepted as approved On My Way Pre-k grant sites.

More than 2,100 children who began kindergarten in July or August of 2017 are currently participating in the third full year of On My Way Pre-K, which began in Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion and Vanderburgh counties in July/August of 2016. Previously, more than 2,700 children have participated in previous cohorts of the pilot program, from January 2015 through August of 2016. For more information, please visit www.onmywayprek.org.

FREE App to track developmental milestones

That's right. It's free. The CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* campaign has announced the Milestone Tracker is now available for free download to any IOS or Android phone/device. The Milestone Tracker is a handy tool that helps parents (and even grandparents) follow their children's developmental progress right on their phones.

Just plug in the child's name and birthdate and respond to the app's various questions. There are even suggestions about activities that encourage new skills. Even more useful to EI providers, the app will provide a quick status for physicians and other providers to help families share their children's progress and their questions.



“Skills like taking a first step, saying those first words, and waving ‘bye-bye’ are developmental milestones all parents anticipate and celebrate,” said CDC Director Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D. “This CDC Milestone Tracker app gives parents tips to help their child learn and grow, a way to track developmental milestones, recognize delays, and the ability to share this information with their healthcare provider.”

The new app offers:

- Interactive milestone checklists for children ages 2 months through 5 years, illustrated with photos and videos
- Tips and activities to help children learn and grow
- Information on when to act early and talk with a doctor about developmental delays
- A personalized milestone summary that can be easily shared with the doctor and other care providers
- Reminders of appointments and developmental screening

Learn more and get information on downloading the app at [CDC's Milestone Tracker website](#). The app is available in the [App Store](#) and on [Google Play](#).

Although it is packed with parent-friendly features, this app isn't just for parents! Healthcare providers can use it to help with developmental surveillance as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and early care and education providers can use it to better understand their students' skills and abilities and to engage families in monitoring developmental progress.

After you download it for yourself (to check it out of course!), be sure to share with families, friends and other professionals.

But the CDC offers many other helpful materials for those without phones.



The “pathways” brochure is a quick presentation of several developmental milestones from birth to age 5 with encouragement to contact a physician or other early child care provider when parents have questions or concerns about development. This resource is also available in Spanish.

The Milestones Moments booklet provides detail about developmental skills across four domains of development at various ages from birth to five years. It includes activities to encourage skill development and suggestions for how and when to share concerns with a physician or other early care provider. This resource is also available in Spanish.



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The Amazing Me: It's Busy Being Three, and Where is Bear? books feature cute stories with footnotes describing developmental milestones. Watch for a book aimed at 1 year old children in the coming year.

A very useful tool for EI providers is the single page checklist that includes all of the domains on one page in a handy checklist format. These are ready to photocopy for multiple use with families on your caseload. Use these checklists with families to help talk about the skills children are ready to develop and how they all relate to each other. This is in Spanish as well!

The CDC LTSAE website hosts a library of photos and videos describing a variety of developmental milestones across four developmental domains. Most of these materials can be downloaded from the CDC's website. To access their site as well as other helpful Indiana resources, visit www.actearlyindiana.org or like us on Facebook (Act Early Indiana).



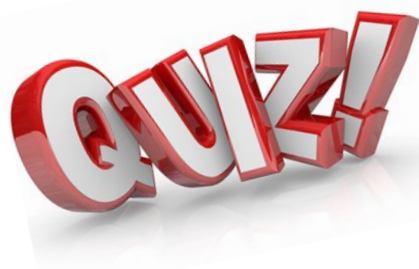
Submitted by Stephan Viehweg, LCSW, IMH-E®, CYC-P. He is the CDC's Act Early Ambassador to Indiana. To ask Steve questions about autism and the vast resources available from the CDC, email sviehweg@iu.edu.

Helpful link to share with families from ECTA Center...

Parent Participation in Early Intervention

Source: Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

Parent involvement is key for making the necessary decisions about early intervention services for children. This [list of resources for parents and early intervention providers](#) recently compiled by CIPR (December 2017) offers information and strategies for supporting parent participation in developmental screening, identifying appropriate services to best meet the child's needs, and staying informed about your (parents') rights.



The Newsletter Quiz can be found by clicking on the following link:

https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0TXq1PCqRq9zLLf

You have until March 15th to complete the quiz and earn .2 pts.

Speaking of Qualtrics! Don't forget that all past newsletter quizzes and FSCT Assessments can now be found on the First Steps website under trainings and at ei kids. No need to scan, fax or email assessments to the First Steps Web for grading. The IU Qualtrics system electronically grades, records your scores and sends you the results immediately! Make sure you enter your correct email address to receive your confirmation.