



*The Newsletter for  
Indiana Early Intervention*



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*First Steps director*

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## 2023 Indiana Early Intervention Conference

Dear early intervention stakeholders,

We were thrilled and grateful more than 760 early intervention personnel, infant and early childhood mental health professionals and families were able to join us either in-person or via the live stream option for the 2023 Indiana Early Intervention Conference in June. First Steps would like to thank our conference partners, Infancy Onward, the team at the Indiana Institute on Disability and the Community at Indiana University and our conference planning committee for working so hard to put on such an amazing event. We truly appreciate all of our conference sponsors and exhibitors. We thank you for your generosity and support. You are vital to the success of this event.

We strongly 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 enhance their early intervention knowledge and skills. We hope all those who attended enjoyed the wonderful keynote messages and high-quality breakout sessions, enriching their practice and taking time to recharge. We truly appreciate the work you do with infants, toddlers and their families.

As has been tradition at our statewide conference, we took time to recognize many individuals for their excellence in service to First Steps this past year. We thank you all for your outstanding leadership, support and partnership. Congratulations to the 2023 First Steps Excellence in Service Award winners. The complete list of names is listed on [page 3](#) of this newsletter. They represent a range of roles in early intervention, from managers to directors, to providers representing a variety of disciplines, service coordinators, schedulers and data entry and credential specialists. These professional, dedicated and compassionate individuals are being recognized by their peers for ensuring children and families are cared for and celebrated, being team players and great collaborators, acting as resources and mentors to new personnel, supporting their colleagues in learning new strategies and technology and having positive attitudes, especially when it is not always easy.

As Dr. Dan Rusyniak, Family Social Services Administration Secretary said in his conference address, "Thank you for choosing to work with young children, because your work matters."

Best,  
*Christina*

Please like and follow us on Facebook  and Instagram 

You can find us by searching @FirstStepsIndiana.

**The First Steps Interagency Coordinating Council** is a governor-appointed body required by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The role of the ICC is to advise and assist the state's early intervention team in developing and maintaining an early intervention system of the highest quality and balancing family-centered services with fiscal responsibility. Its membership is comprised of parents of children with delays and/or disabilities, state agency groups, early intervention service providers, legislators and others. The ICC meetings are open to the public. The next ICC meeting will be hosted in person on **Wednesday, Sept. 13, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., ET**. We will also have an online option to attend virtually via Zoom. Please [click here for meeting details](#).



## 10 things to know about the EIHub

After many months of development and testing, a release was pushed to EIHub on June 27, 2023. Updates were made to the Case Management and Provider Enrollment and Management modules. Those updates included behind the scenes development to prepare for implementation of the service coordinator and agency roles in CM, efficiency and better alignment with federal reporting requirements and additional information to be collected regarding our early intervention workforce for recruitment purposes.

Here are the top changes users will notice with this release:

1. PEM will now collect information about the provider's race, ethnicity and gender as part of the Enrollment Application. Providing this information is optional.
2. PEM will now collect information about the provider's education including university, area of study and date of graduation. This will assist with outreach efforts to higher education at the state level.
3. Transcripts for Developmental Therapists will no longer be sent to the First Steps state team for review. DT applicants will be required to upload a copy of their transcript when submitting their Provider Enrollment Screening to be reviewed by the PEM team.
4. All agency and SPOE support staff (e.g., data entry, billing, quality assurance) will now complete enrollment in PEM in place of the JotForm previously used.
5. In CM, the options for a child's ethnicity have been updated to align with federal reporting requirements. Options are now limited to Hispanic/Latino, Not Hispanic/Latino, and Unknown at Referral. (The expectation is for all children who move to intake to have ethnicity selected.)
6. In CM, the options for a child's race have been updated to align with federal reporting requirements. Options are now limited to American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White and Unknown at Referral. Users may select multiple races. (The expectation is for all children who move to intake to have race selected.)
7. Once an authorization is activated in CM, it cannot be changed except to update the authorization end date (if ending earlier than expected), provider name and/or the ICD10 code.
8. Family members can now be removed from the household in CM by inactivating the family member's status and the family member's address. When this change is made users must remember to generate a new Family Cost Participation.
9. Users now have the ability to search for the child's medical provider as the integration of the national registry is now complete. Users should enter the medical provider's last name, first initial of the first name and any other known information to select the medical provider.
10. The lookup when changing a child's primary address in CM has been corrected. To update the primary address, users must first inactivate the current address and add the new address. The system will prompt the user to identify the previous address as secondary and the new address as primary.

If you experience an issue with EIHub, have concerns regarding system speed or have questions about how to navigate EIHub, please reach out to the EIHub Helpdesk by emailing [infirststeps@pcgus.com](mailto:infirststeps@pcgus.com) or calling 877-522-1065, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET.

## FGRBI: Now recruiting providers

*Currently recruiting for the 2023–2024 Cohort*

Family Guided Routines Based Intervention is now recruiting participants for the 2023–2024 Cohort!



Providers across the state continue to participate in professional development to learn about Family Guided Routines Based Intervention. These providers are learning how to utilize caregiver coaching to support parent and child interaction within a family's routines and daily activities.

We are currently recruiting providers to be part of the 2023 FGRBI Professional Development

Cohort! This is a professional development experience in which providers will have the chance to complete online learning modules, participate in live webinars and engage with their peers in small group professional learning communities over the course of approximately 10 months beginning in August 2023.

The calendar of events, information on participation stipends and a link to register in is being sent to agency leaders in early July. Be sure to ask your agency director about it!

## First Steps wants to hear from YOU!

The First Steps quarterly newsletter is dedicated to sharing news, information and updates to Indiana's early intervention personnel. With that in mind, we want to know what you are interested in and what will assist and support you in your job of providing services to infants, toddlers and their families in their natural environment.

Please take a few minutes to [complete the online survey](#). Let us know how we can improve the newsletter to better align with your professional needs.

We appreciate the work you do to help families every day and thank you in advance for your input.

## 2023 Excellence in Service Award winners

*2023 Indiana Early Intervention Conference*

|                   |                   |                   |                     |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Toni Alexeychuk   | Melissa Deer      | Vanessa Jauregui  | Miranda Mazza       | Andrea Scholz     |
| Kim Anderson      | Stephanie Deethe  | Urszula Krygowski | Augustine McAdams   | Lisa Sieverding   |
| Melissa Arseneaux | Michelle Dills    | Elizabeth Lambert | Annette Moore       | Kristin Sosa      |
| Jason Berty       | Marisa Escobar    | Lindsay Larger    | Janet Mota          | Teresa Stack      |
| Jena Boylan       | Kim Fledderman    | Gilda Lewis       | Brad Murphy         | Rachel Stelmach   |
| Carrie Brush      | Heather Flick     | Anna Little       | Kelsey Nagel        | Jill Tolley       |
| Theresa Clancy    | Michelle Flora    | Michele Lloyd     | Kjari Newell        | Debbie VanBriggle |
| Shellee Collins   | Tricia Forman     | Sarah Lowe        | Christal Precht     | Haley Wolf        |
| Lori Coutts       | Tonja Foster      | Susan Luyster     | Abigail Rager       |                   |
| Sandra Cruz       | Katarina Groves   | Jennifer Marquis  | Rhayne Ann Robinson |                   |
| Erin Cutshaw      | Alexandria Henson | Jennifer Martinez | Jane Schmidt        |                   |

**Save the Date for the 2024 Early Intervention Conference: Thursday and Friday, June 13–14, 2024, Bloomington, Ind. Please reach out to Joy Jones at [jsj5@iu.edu](mailto:jsj5@iu.edu) if you are interested in being part of the conference planning committee. We would love to have you!**

# Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health in Indiana

*There are many resources available*

[Zero to Three](#) defines Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health as “the developing capacity of the child from birth to 5 years old to form close and secure adult and peer relationships, experience, manage and express a full range of emotions, explore the environment and learn—all in the context of family, community and culture.”

While a small percentage (10–16%) of young children benefit from a formal diagnosis and related services, ALL children have social-emotional and mental health needs. ALL children benefit when professionals pay attention to their relationships and emotions. Regardless of stated IFSP goals, early interventionists will benefit from incorporating social emotional learning into their work. Nurturing strong, positive caregiver-child relationships and supporting those caregivers to teach young children about emotions is vital because only then will children feel secure enough to be curious and explore. Addressing social emotional development early helps promote a healthy well-being for the future.

What can you, as an early interventionist, do?

Families may struggle to meaningfully engage with early intervention if they are dealing with their own mental health. Research suggests that a third of all families may be experiencing emotional health challenges. Remember that early intervention professionals are there for the whole family, not just the child. If a family is struggling, be willing to listen, offer support and provide resources for adults to pursue.

Recognize that each family is unique and consider how to individualize services to work for each family. Have careful conversations about what number and frequency of services is manageable for a family and revisit these decisions over time.

Early intervention service coordinators and providers can educate themselves about the importance of infant and early childhood mental health and begin to expand their role to include a foundation of social emotional learning. Understand [social emotional milestones](#) and discuss them with families.



**“ALL children have social-emotional and mental health needs. ALL children benefit when professionals pay attention to their relationships and emotions.”**

Another great opportunity is to familiarize yourself with [INfancy Onward](#), Indiana’s infant and early childhood mental health association, and consider getting the [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement](#). The accompanying reflective supervision is an excellent opportunity to enter into community with your peers and gain knowledge in a supportive professional environment.

There are many more resources available, such as:

[988: The Crisis and Suicide Lifeline](#). **988** offers a direct connection to compassion-

ate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress – whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

[The Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#). Moms can call or text **1-833-9-HELP4MOMS** or **1-833-TLC-MAMA** for Spanish and connect with a counselor at no charge.

[MOMS Helpline](#). Moms in Indiana can call **1-844-624-MOMS**.

[Brighter Futures Indiana](#) offers child care resources for families, as well as other supports.

[Indiana Family to Family](#) is an excellent resource for parent-to-parent support. They aim to provide families with tools to make informed decisions.





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

that have been added. Look for some exciting changes to come to the LMS in 2023, including brand-new service coordination and direct service provider trainings.

The 2021 Early Intervention Conference recorded webinars are now posted on the LMS and are a great way to get those required First Steps credentialing hours!

As always, if you are looking for professional development hours, you July always take courses outside of the LMS. However, as documented in the First Steps Policy Manual, you must retain your certificate of attendance documentation for a period of seven years.

- **Indiana University ECHO sessions.** ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) is a movement to improve treatment for complex and chronic health conditions. Experts at Indiana University School of Medicine and the IUPUI ECHO Center are leading ECHO clinics that are free to all providers. Visit individual project sites at <https://echo.iu.edu/> to learn more about ECHO clinics and how to participate.
- **Indiana Hands and Voices** has fun events planned for children and their families across the state! Check out their [website and calendar of events](#).
- **Indiana Alliance Trainings.** Check out [the trainings scheduled](#) at Indiana Alliance on Prenatal Substance Use Exposure!
- **ISHA “Any Age and Any Stage: Facts and Impacts of Postnatal Hearing Loss on Children and Families,” Aug. 2.** From 6:45 to 8:15 p.m. EST. Presented by Valerie James Abbott, EICM and parent-advocate, and Alison R. King, PhD, CCC-SLP, LSLC Cert. AVT. [Registration is free](#) for ISHA members; non-members pay \$50.
- **IDOE Office of Kindergarten Readiness August Sessions.** Join the Indiana Department of Education in the [Indiana Learning Lab](#) at 4 p.m. ET for three free training sessions. Tuesday, Aug. 8: Introduction to the 2023 Future-Focused Early Learning Standards. Tuesday, Aug. 15: Introduction to the 2023 Early Learning Instructional Frameworks. Tuesday, Aug. 22: Watch Your Students Grow with Early Learning Assessment. Create a free account to [register for each session](#). If you have questions, contact the [IDOE Office of Kindergarten Readiness](#) or the [Spark Help Desk](#).
- **Infant Mental Health Community of Practice webinar, Aug. 16.** From 2–3:30 p.m. Gerry Healy Marini will be presenting on Sensory Regulation and impact on IMH. [Registration is open](#).
- **Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics Conference, Aug. 25 and 26.** INAAP is excited to invite you to attend the 2023 Pediatric Conference at Conner Prairie in Fishers. [Register today](#).
- **Zero to Three Conference, Sept. 19–20.** For two days at the Minneapolis Convention Center, learn from like-minded early childhood professionals and meet an incredible network of partners. Early Bird discounted tickets available when you [register before August 9](#)



## 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](#).

**READY? SET? LET'S GROW!**

Your child may qualify for **FREE**, high-quality pre-kindergarten through **On My Way Pre-K!**

**APPLY NOW AT**  
**OnMyWayPreK.org**

**For application questions or help: Call 800-299-1627**

On My Way Pre-K is a program of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.