



This brochure was developed in collaboration with the **University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development.**

Contact your local First Steps System Point of Entry (SPOE) office for more information by calling toll free:

(866) 583-2392

Early Intervention Teams & Families

First Steps Belief Statement

EFFECTIVE SERVICES ARE DESIGNED AROUND AND PROMOTE FAMILY STRENGTHS

All families have strengths. Families must be involved in the identification of supports and services that are meaningful to them.

Each family's strengths must be valued, accepted and incorporated into the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process.



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Missouri First Steps Early Intervention
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Whom Will I Meet?

YOUR SERVICE COORDINATOR: At the beginning, the **System Point of Entry (SPOE)** for your area assigns a **service coordinator** to you. This person explains the First Steps program and guides you through the process. Your service coordinator learns about your family, including your daily activities and your hopes and priorities for your child. Your service coordinator also arranges evaluations, assessments, services and meetings.

YOUR PRIMARY PROVIDER: Once you are in First Steps, a **primary provider** visits with you and your child regularly. These visits are often in your home or at other community places. At each visit, your primary provider will work with you on your concerns and questions regarding your child's development. Together you find ways to support your child in everyday activities. Other providers may visit you with the primary provider; they are called **supporting providers**.

What Are First Steps Teams?

Two teams of people will work with your family: the **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team** and the **Early Intervention Team (EIT)**. These are separate teams, but some people (including your service coordinator and your primary provider) are on both teams. It is important for you to know the difference between these two teams.



INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP)

TEAM: You are an essential member of the IFSP team. Together you and your service coordinator select the other members of this team. These may include family members, friends and people who provide services. The IFSP team also chooses the person who will be your primary provider, and this person then becomes a member of the team.

The IFSP team creates an **Individualized Family Service Plan** for your child and family. An important part of your role on the IFSP team is sharing your concerns and priorities for your family. The IFSP team listens to the outcomes you want. Together you make decisions on activities to help reach these outcomes. At future meetings, you and your primary provider will tell the IFSP team about progress made and any changes you would like

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*The First Steps program provides
the tools you need to help
your child be successful.*
.....

to see. Your team will then update the outcomes and the decisions about how to achieve them. The IFSP team may determine a supporting provider is needed. The IFSP team will decide how often the supporting provider visits you and your child.

EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM (EIT): The EIT is the other team that supports you and your family. EIT members include your service coordinator, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech therapist and a special instructor. (Your primary provider is a professional from one of these fields.) The **primary provider** represents your family at regular EIT meetings and shares your child's progress. Together they find answers to your questions and new ways to address your concerns. Your primary provider makes sure that the EIT and IFSP teams are working together.



Building Teams

In the First Steps program, all team members play an important role:

- Your family knows your needs best and has the greatest influence on your child's development.
- Extended family and friends also support your family.
- Your service coordinator helps guide your family through First Steps.
- The IFSP team members bring experience and knowledge to the plan for your child and family.
- The primary provider and supporting providers share ideas and suggestions through home visits.
- The EIT members add their training and experience to help your family.

Advantages of Having Teams

You might ask, "How do teams help me and my child?" The following are some advantages of the team approach in early intervention:

- You build a strong relationship with your primary provider, who works side by side with your family.
- You and your primary provider discuss your family's daily activities. This makes it easier for you to help your child between home visits.
- Your family benefits from having other providers on the EIT. The primary provider gets new ideas from them about ways to help you and your child.
- Your family's time is respected. You share your family's needs and concerns with one person – your primary provider.