

***First Steps Family Survey***  
***Statewide Summary***  
***May 2011***

***Total surveys mailed out: 4724***

***Number of surveys returned: 1078***

1. How old is your child?					
99 (9.18%)	309 (28.66%)	513 (47.59%)	136 (12.62%)	21 (1.95%)	
Less than one year	1 yr - less than 2 yrs	2 yrs - less than 3 yrs	3 years and over	Did not answer	
2. At what age did your child first begin receiving First Steps services?					
555 (51.48%)	264 (24.49%)	209 (19.39%)	1 (0.09%)	49 (4.55%)	
Less than one year	1 yr - less than 2 yrs	2 yrs - less than 3 yrs	3 years and over	Did not answer	
4. It was easy to learn about First Steps.					
466 (44.42%)	488 (46.52%)	77 (7.34%)	18 (1.72%)	16	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
5. It was easy to find out if my child was eligible for services.					
533 (50.28%)	466 (43.96%)	54 (5.09%)	7 (0.66%)	8	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
6. It was easy to obtain the services that are needed for my child and family.					
576 (54.14%)	417 (39.19%)	60 (5.64%)	11 (1.03%)	3	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
7. No unnecessary services were included in the IFSP.					
636 (61.04%)	391 (37.52%)	12 (1.15%)	3 (0.29%)	20	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
8. When my child was evaluated, all concerns about my child's development raised by me and others were addressed.					
692 (65.28%)	345 (32.55%)	17 (1.60%)	6 (0.57%)	5	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
9. The results of my child's assessments or evaluations were explained to me in ways I understood.					
690 (65.28%)	354 (33.49%)	9 (0.85%)	4 (0.38%)	7	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
10. I received information and explanations about our family's rights to file a child complaint.					
604 (59.33%)	366 (35.95%)	38 (3.73%)	10 (0.98%)	40	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
11. I received information and explanations about our family's parental rights.					
656 (62.30%)	381 (36.18%)	12 (1.14%)	4 (0.38%)	8	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
12. I feel the service coordinator listens to me and encourages my opinions.					
700 (66.10%)	324 (30.59%)	18 (1.70%)	17 (1.61%)	3	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
13. Our service coordinator helps my family get the services we need in a timely manner.					
651 (61.53%)	353 (33.36%)	36 (3.40%)	18 (1.70%)	7	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
14. In creating our Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), I am asked about areas where our family feels things are fine and where we feel we need help.					
695 (65.81%)	347 (32.86%)	11 (1.04%)	3 (0.28%)	10	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	
15. We receive all the services listed in our Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).					
698 (66.22%)	330 (31.31%)	18 (1.71%)	8 (0.76%)	12	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	

16. All the services I felt necessary were included in the IFSP.	688 (65.09%) Strongly Agree	340 (32.17%) Agree	18 (1.70%) Disagree	11 (1.04%) Strongly Disagree	8 Does Not Apply
17. First Steps service providers were effective and knowledgeable in working with my child's disability.	721 (68.15%) Strongly Agree	309 (29.21%) Agree	18 (1.70%) Disagree	10 (0.95%) Strongly Disagree	8 Does Not Apply
18. I feel the First Steps service providers listen to me and respect my opinions.	727 (68.71%) Strongly Agree	314 (29.68%) Agree	7 (0.66%) Disagree	10 (0.95%) Strongly Disagree	2 Does Not Apply
19. First Steps services give my family the tools to directly improve my child's development.	694 (65.72%) Strongly Agree	338 (32.01%) Agree	20 (1.89%) Disagree	4 (0.38%) Strongly Disagree	3 Does Not Apply
20. The services included in the IFSP were explained so that I understood them.	674 (64.31%) Strongly Agree	367 (35.02%) Agree	6 (0.57%) Disagree	1 (0.10%) Strongly Disagree	8 Does Not Apply
21. I believe the services my child and family receive are appropriate and necessary.	724 (68.56%) Strongly Agree	318 (30.11%) Agree	12 (1.14%) Disagree	2 (0.19%) Strongly Disagree	3 Does Not Apply
22. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings are scheduled at a time and place that are convenient for me and my family.	717 (68.55%) Strongly Agree	312 (29.83%) Agree	11 (1.05%) Disagree	6 (0.57%) Strongly Disagree	9 Does Not Apply
23. Over the past year, First Steps services have helped me and/or my family:					
a. To participate in everyday routines even though we have a child with special needs.	584 (62.26%) Strongly Agree	325 (34.65%) Agree	25 (2.67%) Disagree	4 (0.43%) Strongly Disagree	105 Does Not Apply
b. Feel more confident in my skills as a parent/guardian.	619 (61.71%) Strongly Agree	362 (36.09%) Agree	15 (1.50%) Disagree	7 (0.70%) Strongly Disagree	47 Does Not Apply
c. Understand my child's needs.	667 (64.95%) Strongly Agree	340 (33.11%) Agree	15 (1.46%) Disagree	5 (0.49%) Strongly Disagree	24 Does Not Apply
d. Be more optimistic about my child's future.	665 (65.52%) Strongly Agree	323 (31.82%) Agree	20 (1.97%) Disagree	7 (0.69%) Strongly Disagree	37 Does Not Apply
24. Since being part of First Steps, I can work with professionals.	565 (60.43%) Strongly Agree	352 (37.65%) Agree	11 (1.18%) Disagree	7 (0.75%) Strongly Disagree	108 Does Not Apply
25. Since being part of First Steps, I know how to advocate for what my child needs.	595 (60.71%) Strongly Agree	350 (35.71%) Agree	26 (2.65%) Disagree	9 (0.92%) Strongly Disagree	70 Does Not Apply
26. Our family is better off because of the First Steps program.	722 (69.22%) Strongly Agree	300 (28.76%) Agree	16 (1.53%) Disagree	5 (0.48%) Strongly Disagree	12 Does Not Apply
27. Our child is better off because of the First Steps program.	781 (74.88%) Strongly Agree	250 (23.97%) Agree	8 (0.77%) Disagree	4 (0.38%) Strongly Disagree	5 Does Not Apply
28. Approximately how often does your family use the help of your service coordinator?	312 (30.35%) Weekly	95 (9.24%) Bi-Weekly	284 (27.63%) Monthly	324 (31.52%) Every six months	13 (1.26%) Annually

# *Annual First Steps Family Survey 2011*

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*Note: Comments are typed as written on the surveys with the exception of the correction of most misspellings. Names and other personally identifiable information of children, families and providers have been redacted.*

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Working with Missouri First Steps has been an awarding experience for my family.

We love our PT and SLP.

The only complaint I have is with the speech teacher. She does not communicate with me at all. I suggested that we have a book at the daycare in which we both can communicate on my daughter's progress.

They really have helped us a lot with our son. Exceptional job in helping us coordinate things and helping with our son.

My son has needed and will continue to need the help provided by First Steps. Our family as a whole has needed the help of First Steps to ensure the development of my son is progressing. Thank you.

The initial therapist we worked with was unprofessional. She was 45 minutes late (without calling). The next two appointments she cancelled and rescheduled. The current therapist is awesome. Very professional much more informative and even sends remind/follow up emails. The current therapist goes above and beyond.

My daughter was born with a congenital heart defect and at 9 months old was diagnosed with epilepsy and we didn't know about this program until our PAT service provider mentioned it to us when our daughter was almost one year. I would like to see some information about this program at children's hospital and others - also at clinics for special needs kids.

Missouri First Steps is a fantastic program and without their help and guidance my son would probably still not be walking. Thank you for the physical therapists.

What a wonderful program for children who need additional support. Provide more funding to keep this program afloat.

I felt like there were options out there regarding different types of therapy that were not offered unless I specifically requested them (ie - special instruction, swimming, etc.) I wish these options had been presented to me earlier before I found out and had to ask.

I love having the therapists interact with my son.

Our therapists have been great!

We are so grateful to have our therapists helping our daughter. She has made awesome progress. We love them. Thank you for being there for us.

Everyone has been very kind and loving to my child and that means so much to me! Thank you!

Challenges with rescheduling appointments.

First Steps is an amazing program that gives parents all the resources they need to help their children. We love our coordinator and our three therapists.

I love my therapists and service coordinator. Everyone is very helpful and truly care about my family and my child receiving services.

Our speech therapist has been a tremendous help in learning how our son, born with cleft lip/cleft palate, will develop his speech. Her treatment plans are tailored to him and have been very effective.

Thanks so much for having this program! It has changed our everyday lives!

We just got a new service coordinator, that is why I put does not apply on all the service coordinator questions. We have not dealt with him/her yet.

Thank you!

It is wonderful service and my son has learned so much from the teachers! Also, all the teachers and coordinator were very wonderful and helpful and we will miss them. Thanks for all you've done!

The therapists have been wonderful for my child. I have moved a few times and they had always found ways to contact me. That showed me their deep concern for helping me help my daughter. They are wonderful ladies.

I wish our speech therapist was able to continue to help my son every week. Services have gone to two times every month instead of four times. I asked if I could hire her privately and pay but was informed it would be a conflict of interest. She is really good!

I've been very disappointed in how often our visits are cancelled. There have been so many cancellations that we've often gone 5-6 weeks between visits. We have had to cancel approximately three times because of ill children, but we have been cancelled on many times. It is very helpful and we appreciate the services. We just were hopeful it would be more.

If it wasn't for our service coordinator with First Steps or the program itself, my child would not be where she is at today! Thank you so much.

We have been so happy with the services our daughter has received and feel that they have been extremely helpful with the great success she has had.

First Steps is a wonderful program!

It really was wonderful having the therapists visit us to help our daughter. All my children looked forward to their visits.

First Steps is a great service. The people that see my son are wonderful. Thank you.

I appreciate the program, wish the special instructor had more experience with our child's disability - it seems to be more general child development she is knowledgeable in. I learn more specific ways to work with him off the internet.

Our therapist is a miracle worker! She is a true blessing to our family!

Awesome program!

First Steps is an amazing program. Our therapists are awesome and my whole family loves them, especially my son. Thank you for providing such a wonderful service.

First Steps was a great tool for us but we had such a late start we don't really feel like we got the best of it. I blame myself as a parent for not knowing more but we did have our children parents as teachers and I feel like they stalled our concerns as well. I think these programs need to work closer together to identify at risk kids sooner.

This is my second child to have in First Steps. I can tell you that your experience with First Steps is highly dependent on your service coordinator. Our current service coordinator is amazing and everything a service coordinator should be. Our previous one with my other son was woefully lacking and because of it my child missed out on services he needed. Thankfully the current experience has been so much better!

It is a great service. I would like to thank all First Steps staff for the job well done. My family and I are very happy with the services.

We have trusted and loved each person who has entered our home to help our family. Everyone is personable and you can tell they truly care.

First Steps is an awesome program for disabled children! I wish there were more therapists available. First Steps taught me how to work, teach and exercise my baby. Without them my child wouldn't have been as advanced as he is today! Thank you so much! I wish First Steps could continue like on a monthly therapy treatments past the child's third birthday! Thank you First Steps!

I really thought my last IFSP was a waste of time. I was asked questions that had nothing to do with her therapy. I had to reschedule it and ask that the therapist be asked to attend. I was really unhappy with this visit. I don't feel we were treated the same as in prior visits. Therapists were really not allowed to talk and were often "told" what their goals should be.

I just wanted to give a huge thank you to my daughter's speech teacher. She has really worked hard. And if we hadn't been recommended to this program, my daughter would not be where she is today. Thank you!

I feel like First Steps was and is such a blessing. We love our therapies and our service providers. I have learned so much to be able to help my son. Our life has been easier with the help of our coordinator. Thank you all.

We love First Steps!

Amazing with my girls and family. They are both kind, patient, and knowledgeable. We are so glad they have been here for our girls. Thanks!

Think it's a great program glad my child is involved in it.

I am very pleased with the First Steps providers my son has had except for speech. We have recently switched. The new one we have is wonderful. I am glad that I am going out of First Steps because I am not fond of the new way things are being done. I have heard a lot of complaints. I do not feel it is right to have a couple therapists doing all the providing when they are not professionally trained in all areas. They each have their specialty and that is what they went to school for.

We have had three service coordinators in a year and each is less professional, less knowledgeable, less organized and more of a pain in the ass than a helpful partner. I hope we transition out before we "help" try to train another service coordinator.

As a dad I am never included. Only one provider leaves written notes and information and makes herself available if I have questions. The service coordinator has never spoken to me or set an IFSP when I can attend despite my wife's requests.

Our service coordinator lacks BASIC knowledge of options for transition and has no advocacy or disability information/referral skills. It's a good thing our family has this already covered. No SLP is available to us so she writes the IFSP to leave it out instead of for comp services. She recently did the "new" IFSP with us after doing the "old" two weeks before. The "new" questions are invasive and intrusive and more like a "fishing" trip than targeted, purposeful and supportive of our child and our family. To be blunt, our service coordinator is "the boil on the face of First Steps." And we have NO choice; she "serves" our county.

Thank you for the services provided by the First Steps. We all greatly appreciate First Steps and hope the program will be allowed to continue.

We are very grateful for all the providers. They are very professional and courteous. We could not do this without you. Thanks.

We love our PT! She is so fun and professional. One of a kind.

Our therapists are the best! Thank you!

Since my son started the program he has improved in an incredible rate, so much so that he may not need the services anymore.

Fantastic!

Why aren't physical therapists allowed to use a horse as a medium for therapy as long as First Steps doesn't have to pay for the horse?

The First Steps program is beyond doubt, so much better than the early intervention program from the state we used to live in. Thank you for making a difference!

My son receives weekly OT and PT services through First Steps. Because of these regular visits I have learned (and am still learning) how to challenge and work with my son throughout our daily routine in ways that help facilitate his development.

Everybody is wonderful! We are very blessed to have this service offered.

Our service coordinator has been amazing! We were so lost and frightened before we started with First Steps and our coordinator has been there to guide us through this process.

Our service coordinator was very helpful and friendly to our family.

First Steps are some amazing people that have helped my daughter in so many ways. First Steps are the best and they will always be the best.

I had never heard of the program until I had my son but am very fortunate to have access to the program. It has been a positive influence in our lives. Thank you.

Significant delay in restarting services due to change of household.

You need to find more reliable OTs and STs. I've had no luck with either therapists.

They have helped me obtain resources to help pay for specialty formulas, which is tremendous help. Also, they keep in contact with my daughter's doctors which I greatly appreciate.

This program is wonderful. It has helped two of my children. I learned about First Steps through PAT program. I didn't know about it until my PAT suggested it.

We have had outstanding therapists and service coordinators. I have been very impressed with the program and am thankful for it. I just wish more kids could qualify so they can get the help they need, too.

Very poor timely responses for coordinator. Love my therapist for my son. They respect me and my abilities to help him.

My therapists are great. My First Steps coordinator does not communicate well and speaks to me condescendingly.

Our PTA was FANTASTIC! Thank you!

Our child was 6 months old when we finally learned about the First Steps program. She was born in Columbia and on a weekend so I feel that is the reason we never heard about it. Since receiving help with our daughter through First Steps, her life and ours have improved greatly! Her speech therapist is awesome!

We are very thankful for the First Steps program. Our son has made great strides being in the program. Therapists and service coordinator are wonderful!

Our service coordinator is excellent and every therapist she has paired us with has been fantastic. We wouldn't know what to do without First Steps.

I adore our service coordinator. She is compassionate and extremely knowledgeable!

I am greatly impressed and grateful to First Steps. My child has made great improvements in the short time he's been involved with First Steps! VERY PLEASED!

15. We did not get PT services until my son was about 18 months old because they could not find a provider in my area. Once we got a PT provider, it was a huge help!

First Steps has helped out a lot. If my other child needs help with First Steps I will ask for group to help me. They are the best.

Our therapist is so helpful. She has been the best therapist and has helped us so much.

The First Steps program is the greatest! Everyone works so hard and with such compassion.

We needed help with nutrition since my child was under weight and the doctors kept addressing this issue it actually months for the nutrition lady to come out in his life span of the time months was way too long. I found other resources but this was a big disappointment to us. All other services were great. They really helped me when meeting with the early childhood special ed lady from the school which was very important to me as I was intimidated by the process. Thanks so much.

Without the service we would not be able to do a lot of things we do today.

I give all credit to our speech therapist! She educated us about resources, made referrals to other agencies available to us. Our coordinator seems uneducated about our child's diagnosis and has poor social skills. We often feel she speaks down to us as parents despite our education level and backgrounds in social service!

So helpful and dependable. Thank you!

Our transition is bittersweet because the facilitators and therapists we've worked with through First Steps have become part of our family!

We really love and appreciate our service coordinator and our son's speech therapist. Everyone has been amazing and supportive and helpful. We are so thankful for this program and the help it has given our son!

I greatly appreciated it when the ST or DT would e-mail me their observation updates, since I was not always able to be at my daughter's therapy sessions.

First Steps has really helped. Wish we had gotten it sooner.

Its been great having the services. Everyone did a great job. Thanks

Our therapists are the best! They really adapt to the moods and abilities and weekly struggles of our foster child. They adapt, rearrange and are able to switch a focus based on him and where he's at that day!

First Steps has been amazing. Our coordinator and therapists are all great. We will be very sad when our son transitions out and we don't get to see them any more. Thank you.

Out service coordinator was not timely in getting a service for my daughter. This delayed the delivery of equipment she needed by 5 months.

We are already professionals in the field of education, but the therapists have given us more of the specific things our son needs us to help him with. We are thankful for the program and only wish it allowed for OT and PT more than once a week.

My confidence as a parent/knowledge for my child's needs, understanding, advocating and knowing about the First Steps program already existed due to my profession. But I do believe the First Steps program is very beneficial and we appreciate all they do for us.

Comment: I do not like the different coverage of services depending on your address within the state. For example, my cousin's child's hearing aids were paid but ours was not.

We love our therapists!

I love everyone at First Steps! Everyone has been so helpful with me and my child. We truly appreciate all you have done for our family.

We are very happy with all the help we have gotten for our son. Thank you!

Thanks First Steps. You have made improvement on our sons disability.

The service coordinator we have is wonderful she listens to our concerns and aids us in the right direction of things to do for our child. She makes sure our son has the proper equipment to help with his disability.

Service Coordinator was not a good informant for our situation and did not meet in a timely manner. So we switched coordinators.

I can't express how much our coordinator and therapists have helped our son and our family. They make everything so easy. They genuinely care for our son and our family.

We have had several problems trying to keep providers. There are not many local providers in our area. Our service coordinator has done her best to help with referrals and any other issues.

My kids speech therapist is excellent in communicating to the family what we can do to advance his speech. His SI is great at looking at things he does that we would never thought to pay attention to. They're both very positive and helpful. We'll miss them when he's too old for First Steps.

My son has come a long way in his life with the help of First Steps. This program is wonderful and we are so grateful to have it.

Very nice people, just did nothing for the development of our son.

My child was hospitalized for a lengthy period of time and even though we put our services "on hold," our service coordinator and therapists continued to call and check on my son's well being. Such wonderful, caring people!

I cannot say enough good things about First Steps. It is always so easy to change a service or get something that we need. We have had nothing but good experiences with all of our providers. They have always been so supportive and encouraging!

We have been very pleased with the First Steps program. Thank you very much for all that you do. You are wonderful!

I think that the program is very helpful but feel like one of my child's two therapists could be a lot more timely with her visits.

Does this at daycare so I'm never there to watch.

All of my child's therapists have been wonderful. They have been so helpful and really have my child's best interest at heart.

My daughter is getting the proper care she needs and I thank all those who helped my child in her goals. Missouri First Steps is a great program. Thanks again.

My daughter is tolerating everything much better. One therapist is working with her walking and crawling which I'm a little worried about now because she's almost a year and a half. Another therapist is working with her fine motor skills. Thanks.

My team of providers are the best. I could not have asked for friendlier or a more knowledgeable staff. I am so glad Missouri continues to support a program that helps every family, not just low income.

PT was hard to find and when they got one I had/have to babysit her to make sure she comes when supposed to. Also, don't think she does all she is supposed to do with child.

I would recommend First Steps to anyone with a child who may be behind or show signs of disabilities. They have significantly helped in just a few months. I am more understanding and optimistic regarding my child's outcome and abilities. Has a better situation and quicker future due to First Steps. I am so pleased with the therapists and progress made. I was lost before. Now there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you!

Just wish I had more notice of when she wants to come out to the house to work with my child. She usually asks the day of if I'm available.

After a few months we felt that the First Steps provider has nothing new to offer.

We truly enjoyed each and every experience with First Steps. Our team was great. They truly were a blessing to our family.

Our service coordinator is only in contact with us before his IFSP meeting. When concerns of my son talking I basically had to push for initial evaluation. I was very disappointed about that. Also at his last IFSP meeting many things were incorrect. I had his speech therapist corrected his paper work.

Our service providers (PT and OT) are outstanding!

We have really enjoyed being a part of the first steps program. It has really helped us with our daughter. The only complaint I have is our daughter is supposed to see an OT and we have yet to see one.

Overall we have had a fantastic experience with First Steps. However, I was very disappointed in my service coordinator's therapy suggestions. My child is autistic and the service coordinator did not even suggest ABA therapy until I asked. ABA is the best research-proven treatment for autism and I am so horrified that the coordinator didn't know that. Once I suggested it she did help me get ABA services.

This program has been great help to us and our child. We are very grateful to all of the people involved in helping us. Thank you!!! Without this program I don't know where my child could get the help he needs at this time. It is a great program!

Wonderful Therapists!

It is an essential part of my child's future and a great program!

I am so grateful for the First Steps program and the services are outstanding. The therapists do an outstanding job. They go above and beyond!

Our team and all the others we have worked with have been a God sent!

Our speech therapist has been great and has truly helped my son learn how to express himself and speak much better.

This is a wonderful program with incredibly caring, genuinely sincere and knowledgeable people. The information and help we have received has been above and beyond what we originally expected. I thoroughly enjoy our visits, as does our daughter. We all thank you very much.

I think a weekly schedule for the home visits would be great. I never know what my child is working on from week to week.

A poor job of 1) identifying children that need services (their screening process and DIAL-3 needs to be more aggressive) and 2) telling/connecting parents with First Steps. I was a former teacher and still did not get informed about First Steps. I had to ask other moms and research myself.

Great program! Need to inform more. Found out through family at mental health.

We really feel comfortable with everyone that we have worked with and greatly appreciate the First Steps program.

My child was a foster child in my care for 2.5 months. She received PT weekly and improvement was noted.

We are really pleased with the First Steps program thus far. Our sons speech therapist is wonderful at working with him and us. We are seeing results already!

This program is amazing and I don't know what we would have done without it.

Our therapist has been excellent. She has truly given us the tools to help our son make significant gains in his communication skills. We don't know what we would have done without her.

The First Steps program has been helpful to me in knowing how to do therapy with my child and in recognizing developmental stages. I think the therapy has only been as good as the therapist - sometimes very good, sometimes very average.

The service is not working. Speech therapist cannot get through to our daughter for the last 6 weeks. We started her in day care for 1 week and she seems to be verbally communicating more.

I hope someday clear communication between First Steps providers and the child's doctors is coordinated. The therapist need to talk and report to the doctors.

This program has been a lifesaver for us. I could never do this on my own.

I found it unnecessary for someone to come to my house and explain the whole program BEFORE my child even qualified. It would seem to make more sense to have me sign papers and go through everything (2 hours) after my child qualified. I heard "if your child qualifies" a hundred times.

We've greatly appreciated this program. Thank you! I felt confident with everyone we worked with.

So Grateful! We Love it!

They have been wonderful! My son has come so far because of his hard work, but especially because of these ladies!

We have not been with First Steps very long and so some question are difficult to answer.

I wish that my son's speech therapist would go over how she thinks my son is doing instead of saying he is doing good. She never sits down to tell me what he has improved on and what areas he still needs improvement.

I'm so pleased with this program. Thank you.

Resources to help gas, food, bills, home making and respite for everyone would have helped more than anything.

Initially, my child did not qualify thru First Steps' evaluation process. I later sought out an appt with a pediatric neurologist. Once my child obtained a diagnosis, First Steps were very accommodating and eager to assist us. It was just difficult to know my child had developed mental delays and not know what services she would qualify for. Thank God I took the initiative to seek out a pediatric medical professional. But from the beginning of qualifying thru the diagnosis First Steps have gone out of their way to help my child in every way they could.

No services have been needed yet.

All people with First Steps have been wonderful. Thank you for all that you do.

First Steps is an excellent program for children with special needs. My team really picked me up during my lowest points of caring for an Autistic child. Thank you so much!

My team has been so helpful. Don't know where we would be without them!

Our therapists are great and they make me positive. I sometimes wonder if the tools are needed for my kid. We've just started receiving the service, and I don't know how it will work in the future.

I couldn't be happier with First Steps and this process. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Our DT specialist is amazing and a life saver. Her genuine care, concern and assistance is wonderful. The speech therapist and dietician are amazing as well. We only see them once a month. They all work together so well. I feel we have an amazing team. Our service coordinator does a great job of explaining the process and team coordination. I couldn't be happier. Thank you! Our P.T. provider was amazing! She helped with everything. She went above and beyond!

Our service coordinator is amazing. Our PT is a true life saver. She is a very talented and professional. We have also loved our OT. Such great people!

Absolutely amazing! She cares about my son and the whole family! Thank you!

Only issues I have is, some providers not showing up when scheduled. I understand people have problems, or unexpected situations but weeks at a time is outrageous; ABA providers are excellent.

Our service Providers (PT, OT) are outstanding!

I appreciate my physical therapist. She's really good.

First Steps is an awesome service program. Thanks for all.

I would like a speech provider to help my son improve his ability of speaking.

Speech therapists in our county that deal with infant feedings were in short supply and it is hard to get an appointment. When we did see her results were amazing. Consider adding therapists in this area please.

Our family just adores our service coordinator. Our development teacher makes sure our daughter is getting the services she needs. We love them both. Thank you.

Our PT is wonderful!

Our physical therapist has been very effective in helping our daughter learn the skills she needed to walk, stand, climb stairs, and gain confidence in her abilities. We're so grateful for her service and expertise.

Thanks so much. My daughter is doing great.

This is our 3rd child to receive First Steps services. I recommend them any time I can. We are blessed to have them.

The ladies that come to my house are such a pleasure to be around. They are great with my child!

I am very pleased with the services and outcomes that First Steps has provided for my family. The staff, especially the speech pathologist that we work with, is very qualified and professional. All of our needs have been met.

I found the initial process very untimely. I don't feel that my time was used wisely when meeting with the service coordination because everything could have been done over the phone. I was disappointed that my evaluator was an unlicensed professional (retired teacher) instead of related to my child's needs (speech). I don't think the DAC is an effective means of evaluating children who are higher functioning.

My child did not get First Steps the first year she was born and going in to her second year finally got a hold of someone. No one would call me back.

First Steps visits us Monday afternoons. After a week of working with my son it is a good feeling to see First Steps and receive feedback. I'm always ready and excited for a new week after our meeting, too. They give us encouragement and do-able tasks so we are always successful! Thank you!

We're grateful for this affordable and very valuable service!

We love our team! Awesome help!

Thank you for your great help with my child's diagnosis.

Wonderful Staff! Thanks!

I am a foster parent to a child in First Steps. I'm sure continued services will be needed when the child returns home.

I believe that my son's therapist is due a lot more recognition than I could write in that small area. First off, I have to say that your program is unbelievable! As a single mother of three, I was concerned when I notice that my son wasn't improving as he should have been developmentally. I was introduced to your program from a genetics specialist and I called right away. Once I met the service coordinator, she made me feel at ease with the program right away. From the beginning, the process has been extremely easy and stress free. Everyone I have worked with has been very friendly, helpful and understanding.

As for my son's therapist, she is an amazing woman. She has visited my home once a week every week. With each visit she arrives, with a smile and a very pleasant demeanor. She always seems genuinely concerned regarding my son's progress. When she arrives my son lights up with a huge smile. He loves playing and working with her. I am always present at every session and I participate when directed to by her. There are times that we can see progress by the end of that day's session, which amazes me. She is obviously very knowledgeable and performs her job above and beyond what she should. She is very dedicated to her work and it shows! I couldn't of asked for a better person to help my son.

We LOVE First Steps! Everybody we work with are amazing and truly help my daughter!

We really enjoy this program and I love the teachers. They're great women and I like that they have kids of their own and show me ideas they do with their own children.

Awesome!!!

Very happy with the program.

Some services that my child could have used I was never told were available through First Steps, so I had to find help on my own other places. It would be very nice to know what you offer!

Hard to say so far - don't feel like our SLP has much of a plan. The sessions don't consist of much beyond what I normally do with my child during play time. Have seen some progress but not sure whether or not it's related to therapy.

We are very happy.

Scheduling for IFSP meeting did not allow family all service providers to attend simultaneously. No follow up was given and goals were not discussed! Having a difficult time receiving written report of evaluations that were given to service coordinator.

I truly believe my son is doing as well as he is directly because of the therapies he received from First Steps! Thank you is not a big enough word to describe my feelings about First Steps. My son's quality of life is better because of you.

I am very thankful for this program. My child has made significant progress that I don't believe he would have made without the therapy he has received.

I have nothing to complain about this program. It has been very nice to see my daughter progress and learn different things. She makes me proud to be a parent.

I feel that it would benefit my child to sometimes do OT and PT separately. It would provide him more service time. I think service plans need to be easier to change. Every child's development varies so time frames and amount of services needs to be easier to change to address the child's needs.

Great program to make sure we are doing all we can be doing for our child in order to maximize his potential! Thanks

This program was a Godsend to our family. Our child has changed so much in the short time he has been part of this program! Very satisfied!

My service coordinator is awesome! My first service coordinator she was also very helpful in the beginning and both of them have always been very optimistic and a joy to be around. My physical therapist has been with my son since day one and we love her! All the therapists are very nice and easy to get along with. That made the process easier.

I wish there was a way we could TRULY express our appreciation and gratitude to the First Steps personnel. As an educator I saw that our baby needed assistance, but I didn't understand where to turn to get that care. First Steps came in and changed our family. It gave our daughter a new lease on life and hope for a bright future. First steps was a blessing from the Lord and we will be eternally grateful for all they have helped our daughter accomplish. I have highly recommended the services to others. Thank you First Steps!

You have a great program, and we've been blessed to become a part it at a very crucial time of our lives!

We spent the first 3.5 months in Children's Mercy and everything was set up for me. This is a great program. They helped every step of the way! We are currently doing speech therapy and it is helping our son a lot. Thank you!

I just wanted to thank you for helping my daughter with everything!

I feel like they just ask how he is doing and observe. They don't do direct treatment or state short term goals for themselves much. I think therapists need to be directly observed by a supervisor.

Thank you for your great program!

Thank you to our daughter's physical therapist. You changed our worry to happiness and you are nice to our daughter.

The service providers always make me feel that my daughter is their only patient (even though I know she is not). They customize it for her needs and strengths/weaknesses. I like that they prepare handouts/pictures/tools to use to continue working with my daughter after they leave.

First Steps helped our son to reach his milestones. Thank you for your hard work and dedication! The teams approach should be reevaluated. Having more than one provider at a time did not work well for us.

Our entire experience with First Steps was phenomenal. All the lessons we learned will stay with us and we'll never forget the people who helped us.

I love it! Thank all of you who helped with my child.

Our speech therapist has been very professional and warm and loving to our daughter. She has helped her learn to use words to ask for things and made it easier to understand.

A Godsend to us. She listens attentively and offers a lot of reinforcement. She is such a wonderful advocate for special needs children and a delightful person.

I think we might not have known about the program if she hadn't been so early. We are very grateful for the program. We were able to address some issues before they become a problem.

I believe our child is not getting the time with each of his therapists (PT and Speech) because First Steps are sending them out together, but still billing for 2 hours, when my child is getting 1. This is called double billing, and the only person its hurting is the child. Your group is supposed to be focused on the child's best interest, clearly you are off the mark.

I do not like the new system that First Steps has adopted in the past couple of years. I understand that a child does have a therapist that they need to see more and that particular therapist is more familiar with the case. However, a child's needs change over time. They do not always need that particular therapist more than the others. The child may also need another therapist as much as the other. I feel it is ridiculous to rob a child of a particular therapy to meet a certain quota. This system is not meeting the needs of children. If the goal of First Steps is to help children, they need to make sure the actual needs of the child are met. If a child needs to start seeing another therapist more, they should not be denied that therapy just because another therapist started out as the main one. The therapists also need to stick to their level of specialty. An OT should not be doing a speech therapists job and vice versa. This system needs to be thoroughly reviewed. I realize that First Steps has to cut cost, and I understand. But if First Steps would review this program and make it where a child's main therapist can be changed according to their needs, and shuffle the therapist to an individual as needed basis - not the idea that they must see a particular therapist the most, in the long run, it would probably save money and meet the needs of the kids. What is the point in writing and IEP if it is not going to be individualized to the child's needs.

28. Every 3 months now, originally Bi-Weekly

It would be nice if the parents are informed that the services of First Steps programs are available by the state fund for the special needs children (at the pediatricians' offices, medical centers, WIC programs). We just found about this program accidently from Parents Magazine and fortunately it wasn't too late to start.

The program has been a real blessing to us. They have worked very hard to make things better for our young man. With this help I feel that we will some way get our little fellow going. Thank you.

After special difficulty dealing with unclear test results and hurried bedside manner of our NICU follow-up with St. John's, getting our son evaluated more thoroughly at our home really helped ease our minds over our son's capabilities and prognosis. We are so grateful for the First Step services. We have seen a huge improvement in him since beginning the home visits once a week. Thank you for this family centered program!

As a professional in the field of early childhood education and a parent of a child in the First Steps program, I cannot begin to explain the exceptional services my child and family has received from our service team. Our entire family, including our five year old daughter, has received instruction on how best to work with our son. He has made tremendous strides since entering the program. I will forever be thankful for the professional, yet caring work our team has done for our family. Early intervention truly worked for our family and I will forever be an advocate of the benefits of the First Steps program.

I am very impressed with how quickly we saw results with my child. This program really is helping. Thank you.

Our child is in the program due to severe prematurity. She has no disabilities at this time. However, we value the program since the therapist can evaluate progress and detect any future speech or learning disabilities, etc. Missouri First Steps is a great program.

I am thankful that this program is out there! Without First Steps I wouldn't be able to get my daughter to therapy every week! I would like to thank all the therapists who have or are working with my daughter! You are greatly appreciated!!!

I just would like to say thank you for all the time spent in my home. It really helps me understand my daughter's growth and what I should or shouldn't be worried about. The program also does a good job of working with my schedule. Thank you again. I would refer you to anyone with special needs children.

We love First Steps and the tools we've learned to help our child do better in all aspects. We don't know where our child would be in his development without his teacher! Thank you!

First Steps is a life saver. Without the knowledge of our OT our daughter may have starved herself due to her poor feeding issues. We were and are blessed to have such wonderful helpful people working with us. Thank you!

I am very unhappy with the "team" setup because it doesn't allow for flexibility as best serves my child. The team is set up before the therapists have a chance to work with the child and the lead setup initially may not be the best lead for the child. My son needs a speech therapist as his lead but because of the way it was established she is not able to get the hours with my son. I wish now that I had not let myself be talked into the team setup. I have worked with First Steps before with my first child and know what a positive experience it can provide. At this point I feel like the team setup hinders the therapists from getting the time with the child that they feel is needed and what they recommend. To be told that we shouldn't change a team lead even when that team lead is no longer necessary takes resources and time away from other children who would benefit from their services. There are so few therapists available that I feel this issue should be addressed. I think the team idea is a great one but the way it is set up currently is problematic. My suggestion would be to initially set up the team with a team leader and after 1-2 months of therapy and meeting with the parents and the First Steps coordinator should be held to determine if the current team setup is the most beneficial for the child and is not taking resources away from other children. Being a parent who already is dealing with the issues of raising one or more children with special needs is difficult and at times can make a parent feel helpless and alone. It makes it even harder to bear when you know that your child is not getting what they need to give them the best chance of success during their most critical developmental/learning years because of the new way the First Steps system is set up. I am a firm believer that change can be good but sometimes the change needs tweaking soon after being made.

First Steps is Awesome

We have not met with our service coordinator since beginning the program in January 2011. I was under the impression she would contact us more often.

Everyone that works with my child is very caring and very helpful to my child's needs and to mine. I thank the First Steps program for everything they have done for us. I am so thankful that there is a First Steps program.

My team was fabulous! They always had a great attitude and were very knowledgeable. They were a very nice fit for our family and daughter.

Thank you for the help!

Only comment is sometimes the therapist downs my concerns or makes me feel stupid for my concerns/questions.

I have three children and two of them use First Steps. One with more speech and one with physical problems. First Steps has helped my children and myself learn and develop together. Our therapists always work with our schedule and our service coordinator is always here for us! Thank you First Steps!

My son's speech therapist has been amazing! We are very thankful she is working with him.

Excellent service! Don't know where we would all be without our therapist! She has helped with so many things besides therapy!

Speech therapist and physical therapist are great!

We are more confident parents because our daughter's therapists have given us fantastic suggestions. We know that they really genuinely care about us!

Great therapist!

The service coordinator does not do what the IFSP specifies and our insurance as well as ourselves are paying for these services. Poorly executed program! NOT HAPPY!

This is my over all view. But not all intake personnel were friendly or supportive.

First Steps is a wonderful program! We are grateful to have such a program for our son.

Getting started is a lot of evaluation time and paperwork. Once we got started it proved to be a great program and so much help.

Our daughter enjoys her speech therapist very much and has developed her verbal ten fold since working with her. We enjoy the level of communication this has given us with our daughter and we are looking forward to First Steps helping us transition to the next help stage when she's three.

Our coordinator and speech therapist are great! We appreciate them very much.

My son would not be where he is today developmentally without First Steps. A wonderful program with talented, caring professionals.

\* My child is speaking more, has calmed a little more, and now eats a little better.

\* Completed with Spanish-speaking interpreter.

Thank you for the help and support! Your therapists are A+! Children with chrom deletions should be automatically enrolled. It was not until our daughter was diagnosed with epilepsy that we had a chance to get her enrolled.

In 20 months, we've had three service coordinators. It has been hard to get established and report with any of them. However, providers are excellent. I understand we are grandfathered into the old program which allows us one on one time with each provider. This has led to great success with our child's progress.

We went through three service coordinators. We only had issues with the last one assigned to us and only after she made it clear to us every time we talked that we were her only family that was SO far north compared to the rest of her case load.

We went through three service coordinators. We only had issues with the last one assigned to us and only after she made it clear to us every time we talked that we were her only family that was SO far north compared to the rest of her case load.

Our speech therapist is genuine and authentic. She seems to care.

We will always be supportive of funding First Steps needs. The program is key to a child's success. Early intervention!

Re: 25 - By no means do I want this wonderful program to change, but my child's team is so great that if at any time any of us feel something might help him, it happens rather easily. We've never had to really fight or advocate for any service or resource as of yet.

My service coordinator has been wonderful to work with! She listens and puts our plan in motion when it comes to my daughter. Our therapists are an amazing team and we are blessed to work with them!

When our son started First Steps at 11 months he couldn't lift his head or crawl. He finally started walking last week at 29 months old. We don't like to think where he'd be without First Steps. Our Therapists and coordinator are top notch. Thank you!

We were told we could not have an IFSP meeting outside of our normal six month meetings, which is not the case...very disappointed in this.

Our service coordinator has been wonderful.

Thank you for all you have done for my little girl.

Our therapists were both amazing therapists and women. They understand and help us understand what steps we need to take. Thank you!

Everyone we have dealt with through First Steps is amazing! My son loves them so much! They treat him as if he were their own! We love them so much! My older son loves therapy day and they always bring something for him to play with! Thank you! This is an amazing program!

The therapists who have been with us over the past three years become like family. I completely trust and respect them and their judgment with my daughter's needs. I don't know what we would have done without them!

I'm disappointed that we are losing my son's PT/Speech therapist and will need to change therapists not only now but when he turns three. But our First Step providers have been awesome so far.

We have been extremely pleased with the services we have received through First Steps over the past 1.5 years. Our son has made great improvement thanks to the program. Thank you so much!

We really appreciate all the hard work his team members have put forth to help educate us and to help our son function to his highest potential. They are our Angels!

First Steps has been wonderful for my daughter. Her therapists are very educated and caring. My daughter has made huge strides since we started with the program! Thank you!

We love our team!

First Steps is a great program. My only wish is that my son could have qualified sooner - he really needed speech therapy but he was not delayed enough at the first evaluation. He qualified the second time. It didn't help us since his comprehension was age appropriate to his speech.

We are fortunate to have the ability to go to the Kenny Roger's Children's Center in Sikeston, MO. If we were not able to my child could not get PT/OT. Because there are not providers that come down in their area. I personally think this is sad. My daughter gets PT, OT and ST each one hour a week.

Thank you so much!

Wonderful and friendly service! I always refer your program to those who need help.

We have been happy with parts of the first steps program. However, I do not feel that our service coordinator is very in tune with our case. The only time I hear from her is at our evaluations or when I call with a problem.

Parents should receive services from professionals in his/her own area of expertise. No teaming.

Teaming is an awful idea!

First Steps has changed our lives. Our therapists treat us like family but always with a high level of professionalism. They are extremely knowledgeable and very invested and flexible. I'm glad we have another year!

We've been very blessed with a great team of people to help with our son. We're in the process of transitioning to ECSE and have had a great deal of support. We're very lucky!

I think this is a very good program for kids with needs.

Our speech therapist has been a great aspect in my daughter's life. My daughter has a way to go but we'll make it. My daughter gets very excited when she comes and brings her "books and puzzles" to play with.

OT has been wonderful for my son. She's prompt and understanding. She deals great with both myself and my son. Speech/sign is new to us, a little late in establishing first response, but our first meeting was good.

The program has been beneficial for our child, no doubt. Although, when I requested OT two time per week instead of two times per month I felt the process to get that seemed unnecessary - another team meeting to discuss. And then to come up with goals to help in our daily routine instead of just being able to work on specific fine motor skills, I also felt was unnecessary. She just needed more help with find motor and I felt like we had to make it work into her daily routine, instead of just listening tasks, for approval. Also, I feel some of the dress of a few therapists may be inappropriate. Too much tight clothing. Although, I have never said anything.

Upon completion of the First Steps program in April 2011, I think that there should have been an exit meeting so that we could determine how much progress we had made. After a year in First Steps, our family still did not have clear methods for addressing issues and the therapist, while informed and caring were still at step one even at our last visit in trying to determine what methods could work best with speech, behavior and sensory issues.

I feel the knowledge and resources in Jefferson Coty pale in comparison to neighboring counties (St. Louis County and St. Louis City). It has been a struggle at times to get needed services added and find effective and knowledgeable providers.

She goes above and beyond what I think her responsibilities include. She looks for equipment, etc. in her daily travels that may provide more opportunity for our son to improve. She doesn't have to do this. She does it because she truly cares about my grandson's improvements.

I feel that First Steps needs to work with the doctors recommendations.

Thank you for your support!

I am so thankful for First Steps and the providers that worked with my son to address his communication delay and sensory concerns. He has made great progress in the past year and a half. Though he still needs to attend early childhood special education, he would not be where he is today without First Steps.

Did not answer 12-14 because there wasn't a clear answer for me to give. Our coordinator we started the program with was amazing! Our current coordinator that we have had the past 6 months has really been poor in comparison in her job as a coordinator.

We absolutely love our speech therapist! She's extremely knowledgeable and encouraging. She has a very excellent understanding of young children as well as speech issues. She has helped us as parents to better understand and equip our daughter for future success!

There is a definite shortage of OT and SLT in our County. My son needs these services and they are not available. I understand he will age out whether he has rec'd all the services necessary or not. Speech therapy is immensely important in children with Down's Syndrome and we need more therapists. The therapists we had initially was not very creative in her approach and my son was not responding to his techniques. She never did an initial survey with me to find out the signs he was using; and, as a result, the therapist that came after she did (only one time due to long distance) thought my son was doing nothing (he uses approx. 14 signs). I was stunned to find that out - she never gave me any updates the entire time she worked with my son. The updates I rec'd after she stopped coming were not accurate.

Good program!

Extremely helpful program. Another team to help advocate and bounce ideas off of. Not at all invasive treatment. It fit into our family great and the tools and knowledge I have to continue strengthening my child's development. Worth the subsidy monthly fee.

This program is amazing. Without them and all of you couldn't be the way we are. We owe everything to you, not just for what you have taught our son but everything you helped us to get and do.

My daughter has a speech problem and I think she needs some help.

The services provided to my son will help him throughout his life. I feel sure they put him on the right track to have a normal life and overcome his brain injury . We are forever grateful.

The First Steps program has helped my child develop his cognitive and motor skills better. This program has been a great asset in our lives. Keep up the good work!

Our coordinator is fantastic! Just can't say enough good about her!

My daughter is still rarely speaking at 27 months. She will repeat words. She understands directions and follows directions very well yet she rarely speaks on her own.

Thank you! This is an amazing part of my daughter's life and I have learned so much from our therapists!

First Steps is a great program. It has helped my son.

First Steps has changed my sons life. At 18 months he was displaying symptoms of Autism. Now many things are better. 1) He makes eye contact! 2) He is speaking words and sentences. 3) Tantrums are improved.

I feel so grateful for the First Steps program. My son receives benefits from First Steps on a weekly basis with three therapy sessions a week. First Steps is also helping us obtain a developmental psychological assessment through our doctor. I especially appreciate the collaboration and support between First Steps and our primary pediatrician.

I feel like our service coordinator has made a big impact on us as a family and on my child. I don't know how I could have done it with out the help of her and First Steps.

Our youngest son (now 4.5 months) will begin First Steps soon. The new design forces therapists to come at the same time. My husband and I are extremely concerned about the decrease in contact time each month and the presence of two therapists. Our son's disability requires different approaches by different therapists. We fear he will not be given the advantages he needs under the new model.

Parents feel like First Step therapies have taught her a lot. After the therapists leave the family and child do the thing the therapists taught them. Thank God and every therapist for the help.

Our service coordinator is wonderful. She was always available when we needed and very responsive and understanding. We love the therapists who work with our son and don't know what we would do without them. First Steps is invaluable.

They are really good.

Without the First Steps program I don't think I would have been able to help my child learn things she needed to learn. I am thankful for this program in so many ways!

Our speech therapist is absolutely amazing! She has made a huge impact on my son and has made me a better parent.

Amazing! My SLP has exceeded my expectations. Her rapport with my child is wonderful. Other staff members are very supportive and provide great information when needed.

We love love love our therapists! But the coordinator has not been to any meetings to get my son in an early childhood education program through our school district.

We had a wonderful experience with First Steps. Our service coordinator and our son's speech therapist are amazing people. We worked together great as a team and we truly felt as though they loved our son as much as we do. I would recommend First Steps to anyone. Our son has come leaps and bounds compared to where he was before he started. We are sad to see everyone go since he has just turned three!

We did have a problem with our past coordinator but as soon as I finally called to complain, they switched us right away. My service providers were very helpful in that aspect.

Amazing!

The First Steps program is outstanding. Our speech therapist is amazing to say the least. She works so great with our son and has helped him improve a lot since just January 2011. He loves when she comes and is so awesome at her job! I love this program! Keep up the outstanding work, all of you!

Please do not assign one therapist to cover different services. OT are not experts on language and vice versa. I know that it may be a cheaper option but it is much better to work with the therapists that are experts in specific areas. Great Program! Thanks!

Wonderful program and great therapists!

If it weren't for the instruction we received during this program, our son would still be very behind in his development. Thank you so much!

I am very thankful for our therapist. She got my child moving. He use to have no hope. Thanks a lot.

Disappointed that First Steps ends at three years of age and in the changes in the program that have take place in the last year.

Thanks for everything!

The ladies we worked with were more then helpful. Go0d job ladies!

It's been a blessing working with First Steps.

Our service coordinator has been difficult for all my service providers to work with. My child needs more equipment to develop further and the service coordinator has made it difficult to impossible to get. My IFSP meetings are not scheduled in a timely manner. They are also scheduled at times that not all my service providers can attend. In fact, they receive little or no notice.

I have been extremely pleased with my son's speech therapist. She is very king, caring, professional. The service coordinator was nice but difficult to reach. There was a lot of phone tag going on and several times she had my information wrong (incorrect phone numbers for both myself and my son's daycare).

First Steps is wonderful. I would recommend them to any child that needs the help they offer!

It was fabulous!

The IFSP meeting seemed awkward as the parent. I wasn't sure what needed to be said. I didn't like the format of the meeting. I feel there were many concerns that didn't seem to fit in anywhere - eating/choking for my little one is a huge issue however it doesn't happen everyday. Our therapists are wonderful!

Wonderful program! Very family friendly!

First Steps has been amazing. The therapists are wonderful and great at working with our son. His PT has been so good with him and just a positive figure in our lives. She really helped us teach him how to push himself to walk, crawl, jump, etc.

Our service coordinator spoke to us only three times over an eight month period. From my understanding they are supposed to be in contact once a month.

My son is no longer in the First Steps program (he is 3). But while in the First Steps program we had a very positive experience. The therapists and coordinator were always professional and put my child's needs as a priority. They worked with our schedules making meetings and therapies extremely convenient as both my husband and I work full-time.

First Steps is an excellent program that I enjoy and would hate to see the program discontinued! I strongly recommend this program!

I really couldn't imagine what we would have done without all of the wonderful staff we have worked with over the past nine months. My son has improved in every area of concern and I always felt my child's needs came first and my concerns were heard and addressed head on.

It is a great needed service that has helped my child and our family in many ways Thank you First Steps!

All of the therapists that we have had the honor to work with have been exceptional! They are very knowledgeable, friendly and ROCK!!

I truly love the program. Without it, we wouldn't be able to afford what my child needs. Our OT is wonderful!

First Steps has been a Godsend to our little girl and I really appreciate their care and concern in the work they do with her.

First Steps acted promptly upon receiving proper medical diagnosis from our pediatrician and posting with touch point. I feel if we did not have the financial means and initiative to persistently achieve the proper paperwork required by your program our son would not have received the wonderful speech and occupational needs necessary for such early intervention. Therefore it is sad to think that families with lesser means and less education about your program are not treated in a timely manner. Time is of the essence with a toddler with autism, PDD, ASD Disorder. Hopefully the future will expedite processing in a timely and efficient manner for ALL babies in need.

We are thrilled to have the help!

It's great! It helps me understand the challenges my daughter faces and what she is going through.

Our coordinator is the best! She has helped us understand how the system works, gives great advice, and been a great friend during the hardest time of our lives. I am so very grateful. This is a wonderful program. Thank you all.

All of the specialist that work with my daughter are wonderful. Our special instruction provider is truly amazing. We can tell our daughter loves working with her. She is so great with her.

Great!

I am glad we have First Steps. We are going to miss everyone when we have to leave.

Excellent job with our family!

I disagree with questions 24 and 25 because I was able to do those things before becoming part of First Steps.

Our service provider has been terrific and easy to work with. The coordinator was okay but lacked knowledge in our area and didn't know what local resources are available. I stepped in and pushed the coordinator to get moving on things or to realize the family situation when dealing with services and transitioning.

The First Steps program has greatly improved my child's quality of life. No matter where he is now, this experience has been hard on our family. We have wonderful therapists though.

Service coordinator and all the therapists are outstanding! They have all done a tremendous job and greatly helped our family!

Our speech therapist was wonderful! We have made a bond with her and really like her! My son already misses her.

We have four therapists who work with us and each one has been valuable and helpful on our journey. Our coordinator is available whenever we need her and quick to suggest solutions.

Our service coordinator has taken longer than she should to address needs and forgotten to follow through on paperwork and scheduling. She has not responded to email/phone calls from myself or service providers that contact her about my sons needs.

This program is effective and has helped my child tremendously. As a family we feel comfortable working with the staff and welcome them with open arms into our home.

I find the therapists through First Steps to be wonderful. However, the First Steps program is a mess! The new system does not address my child's handicaps. Thank goodness we are getting out! I would not recommend this train wreck to anyone!

Our coordinator frequently forgot paperwork that needed to be completed and signed by our family/myself. It seemed that I always received paperwork after the meetings to fill out and send back.

Thank God for First Steps and the consolidated superior services and therapies it offers.

I am very pleased with the services and people involved in our First Steps program.

Our service coordinator has been awesome to work with along with our therapists. This program has helped us and our kids make it through the last year!

I'm very pleased with my therapists. I appreciate their services so very much.

I believe this is a wonderful program for families who have children with special needs who may not get the needed help in any other way.

Our therapists were both very professional and became members of our family. We still talk to them often and appreciate all they did for us.

My daughter has aged out of First Steps and transitioned easily into a mainstream preschool classroom. The services we received from First Steps were priceless and greatly improved my child's quality of life and her future. Thank you!

Our therapists has been great working with our son every week. He is now more likely to sign or draw attention to his needs and he's become more social. They have helped us stimulate our son better so he isn't so prone to fits and has taught us when to teach him.

First Steps is a wonderful service and I would recommend it to anyone who has a child with a disability.

Great service provider!

My therapist is an amazing worker for First Steps. She has turned my little girl's life around!

Great program!

Great Program!

First Steps has been wonderful for our family. I would recommend them to any family!

Our service providers were fantastic. They were knowledgeable, prepared, creative and became important persons to our family. They are truly missed. Our daughter would not be where she is today if those two ladies had not been a part of her early development.

First Steps has been a wonderful program for my child and our entire family.

The whole reason we contacted First Steps was for speech delay that was in April 2010. We did not get services for speech until end of October (weekly). In July it was offered once a month. I feel like we lost a lot of time.

Regarding question 23: My child has not been in the program for a year, so I feel these question do not apply to his situation.

I love the work you guys do with my son. First Steps is a very valuable program. Thanks for all you do.

Everyone we've worked with at First Steps has been amazing. Thank you so much for your hard work and dedication to our family! Don't know what we would have done without you.

Awesome! We love our entire First Steps team. We have benefited and grown as a family. Thanks so much for your help!

My coordinator has done excellent. I have a lot of concerns in regards to the speech therapists that I've had. They wouldn't show or are inconsistent. I'm also finding that a decent P.T. is hard to find due to the state's "qualification" standards. Because of this I have to CAREFULLY screen my child's therapists and what their degrees, licenses and previous work histories are.

Our therapist was so wonderful to work with throughout this entire process, even during her pregnancy. She was professional and always responded in a timely manner. All of the therapists I interacted with were so helpful. This program is the BEST! A great help!

Everyone involved that we have dealt with has been wonderful. They are extremely friendly, timely and helpful!

All teachers were great for my child's needs and help him a lot and come far in his development.

We had never heard of the First Steps program and was first referred when we addressed concerns with Parents As Teachers. I wish the First Steps program was more commonly known about because it has been wonderful for us and could be wonderful to so many other families who may have needs and not aware these services are offered.

It is a shame that First Steps changed to one provider for OT/Speech/PT. I'm thrilled that we get grandfathered in to seeing each of these providers and professionals so that all of our children's needs are addressed weekly by the correct type of provider.

It is a shame that First Steps changed to one provider for OT/Speech/PT. I'm thrilled that we get grandfathered in to seeing each of these providers and professionals so that all of our children's needs are addressed weekly by the correct type of provider.

I have the most awesome therapist to work with my child. She is doing things with him to make him want to play with her. I recommend her to every parent. Keep up the good work.

Thank you for helping me. Programs such as First Steps improve the community of very young children.

I just hope you are able to find a professional and committed physical therapist.

First Steps has been a wonderful program for my child and our entire family.

My initial experience with First Steps was terrible. It took weeks to get my son's evaluation even scheduled and then he was going to be denied services when he was clearly non-verbal. I had to fight to get him into your program after which we did get a diagnosis from a neurologist of ASD. My original service coordinator was the worst, most unorganized coordinator I have ever had the misfortune to work with. Since her departure my experience with First Steps has greatly improved and has become what it should have been all along.

The program is understanding with my child, who has a difficult time doing simple tasks. The staff are very patient and understanding not to push in activities to harsh. In my son's case it took three months for him to pull himself up on a table when teaching him my way. I didn't know to teach him to bend at knees and pull by arm. So thankful to be taught this.

I strongly feel that speech therapy does not mean that a child has a or is disabled in any way.

We had an excellent experience. We are better able to provide and meet our child's needs. This is a very important and necessary early intervention program. Thank you!

Workers made process from enrollment to meeting in school for further help very easy and thorough. I would refer anyone to First Steps!

The service coordinator waited till the last minute for updates to be done and wouldn't allow the therapists time to sit in on any meetings. Most of the time the therapists didn't even know. I had to tell them and if they did hear from the service coordinator it was the day of or the day before. Otherwise therapists were great!

Extremely pleased with interactions I've had with our service intake person. Our three therapists are excellent in dealing with my daughter and the rest of the family. Very grateful for the services they provide.

Amazing! The therapists really seem to care and made me feel at ease with everything! They gave my child a voice. I don't know how to thank them. Truly amazing!

My service coordinator is wonderful and should be recognized for a job well done. My therapists should also be recognized. They go the extra mile to make a family feel better about their child.

Wish there was more therapists in our area. Thanks for all of your services.

I adore my daughter's therapist! She is the best! My daughter lights up when she comes around!

First Steps has been very helpful for our family as well as my child.

I am so glad that there is a program like First Steps. This program has helped ease my worries of my child developmental delay.

So far everything is great, considering my child has only been involved for a couple of months and now my other child is going through evaluation.

I was very pleased with her help, quick responses, and overall concern for my child and family!

I do not agree with the new model and feel I have to jump through hoops to add services for my son who has down syndrome and obviously needs them. The system is outdated and too complicated to add services or increase therapy. It is a shame that kids have to fall behind in order to qualify for any services!

I have been very displeased with the comments I get about scheduling appointments for my child. I wonder what working parents face regarding this issue.

Wonderful!

Super!

Love my therapists! They are wonderful people and we are truly blessed to have them in our lives.

My family and I are very thankful for Missouri First Steps. It has helped my family better understand my child and her challenges. We thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our son's coordinator goes above and beyond in my book! She is absolutely amazing and we are very lucky to have her! His therapist is truly a blessing to us as well.

My service coordinator has not met all my child's needs. I got one evaluation for my son in February. It is June and it is still waiting on for her approval. I believe you need one that won't procrastinate.

Very pleased with this program

Very pleased with this program.

We want to say thank you so much for helping my child and my family.

First Steps has been a very positive thing for our family and child. It has been almost impossible finding help from other organizations. I hope Missouri knows how valuable you are and do not plan on making budget cuts.

Thank goodness for First Steps. I don't know how I could have cared for my daughter without them.

This program has helped greatly. My child is better because of First Steps. The service coordinator has made sure that if we have any concerns to call right away. She has been great.

My child's teacher is very knowledgeable and give me tips as to how to work with Vanessa. She comes on time and is always well prepared. She has helped my family tremendously and we'll miss her and First Steps once Vanessa enters early childhood.

We love our speech therapist. She is wonderful with our kids. They enjoy their time with her and have increased their speech. Thank you!

I had an amazing coordinator. She is great with follow-up and ensuring we know about all the services available. In addition, my daughter enjoys her therapist who she will miss. I only wish the program extended past 3 years of age! Love First Steps!

I have been so impressed with the ladies who have worked with my son and with his progress. I feel blessed to know them all and so thankful they are helping my son to improve.

My family is very appreciative of this provided service. We enjoy the weekly visits by the teacher.

We had the best OT out there. Without her my daughter would not be where she is today. Thank you.

The people we work with show great compassion and we can tell they really enjoy what they do.

Thankfully we are in the old service model. The new team model with one primary provider is a detriment to children with global delays. Please reconsider changing things back.

This program has given us so much beyond words. I can never repay that. I hope the agency and its workers feel a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. We are so blessed and fortunate.

I am very grateful for the program. Thank you so much.

It was amazing how my child learned to do things we had worked with him on by every next meeting.

Our teacher and coordinator have been so helpful over the past nine months. Couldn't ask for two better people to work with our son.

Awesome. Very efficient and made me feel more confident as a parent. Really went the extra mile.

I feel like our service provider's schedule is more important than ours- our therapy had been Wed/Fri but she switched to Wed/Thur because it was her preference. Also, she reschedules if she has a conflict (sick child, vacation, etc.) but if we can't make a session she doesn't make it up. Our service coordinator never sent the info about specialized classes (swimming, horseback riding, etc) that she said she would. Overall, I am very grateful for the services we receive. Great program. Provided a great amount of support. Set a foundation of what I need to expect from her next providers after turning three. I am very grateful for all of her providers and coordinator. Not only professional but caring.

We love our speech therapist. She is wonderful with our kids. They enjoy their time with her and have increased their speech. Thank you!

I wish my service coordinator was more helpful.

Thank you all very much. You're a blessing to all of us, especially our child.

At times throughout our 3 years with First Steps we had to switch service coordinators three times due to "restructuring by First Steps." It was frustrating having to start all over with a new coordinator; however, the last change which was due to a request on my part led us to our current coordinator - awesome! She was a great facilitator of additional services our daughter needed. The therapists were all great and knowledgeable.

This program has been absolutely amazing for our family. Not only are the therapists knowledgeable and truly vested in my daughter, but I truly feel I'm not alone. I feel blessed to be a part of First Steps. THANK YOU!

I have been impressed with this program and the professionals which have worked with our children. They have been both encouraging to us as parents and in the development of our children.

The length of time needed to get started in the program is too long and much of it that's required seems like wasted time and paperwork.

Very pleased with the progress of our child!

First Steps has greatly improved our child's quality of life. Thank you so much for being here!

It is a great program and you need to make it known to the public. We found out about it through the Parents As Teachers program. Now that the PAT program has been cut, I'm afraid more children won't get help.

As a parent, I am very grateful of the services that were provided for my son. In under a year, my child has made a tremendous amount of progress from beginning with sounds in communication to now talking in 2-3 word sentences. His speech therapist is AWESOME! Thanks again for this wonderful program.

We are absolutely delighted with the services our child receives. He has made great strides, and we (the parents) better understand his needs and motives. I would recommend this service to anyone who was interested.

My child has spd and since I live in a rural town he cannot get the SPD guided care I feel is appropriate.

Thank you so much for being there for us!

This program is essential to families! It provides education, structure, therapies, and support that many families can't afford. First Steps interventions prevent future drains on state money because children are able to reach their potential and participate in society.

I feel very supported by our service coordinator. Having First Steps helped relieve the "what do we do?" anxiety that comes with discovering your child has special needs. I'm very grateful for this program.

We used them a lot more at first, but my kids have since excelled!

We are very pleased with the First Steps program! Without it I don't think my daughter would be where she is at today!

I love the First Steps program. It has helped my kids and know how to do that. I have been very pleased with the services.

First Steps is a fantastic program and has provided invaluable support to our family! Thank you!

I have a great service coordinator. I couldn't ask for a better one. First Steps have truly helped my child and family out a lot. I just wanted to say thanks a lot.

Great program. My son would not be where he is now without First Steps. Sad to be leaving.

Our son has Downs Syndrome and we are so happy and grateful for the progress he has made this past year. It is truly incredible. Our service coordinator has connected us with very competent professionals who truly care about us. Sometimes the paperwork is much, but it is all definitely worth it! THANK YOU SO MUCH! YOU'VE GIVEN MY SON A BRIGHT FUTURE!

I wish providers had references. Our dealing with therapy relief were terrible. Our speech pathologist never stayed for the allotted time and the PT let my son get hurt on more than one occasion.

Thank you for helping us and getting in the right pass.

The new IFSP format is absolutely useless. My coordinator asked u show my child did during certain times of the day. She has autism so obviously her day is all about routine if we stick to the routine everything comes out roses but if we stray from the routine it is awful. We NEVER stray from the routine, we have adapted and because of that it makes my day quite easy. Personally I prefer a routine anyway, it makes planning easier. So after telling the SC that my day was easy, all day, she suggested that maybe I put not easy on some of the areas because if my entire day was easy it doesn't make it look like my child should be in the program. After reading through the IFSP it becomes apparent that it appears my child does not have a disability because my family has adapted so well to the situation. How does this IFSP help us at all? It doesn't. Please go back to the previous format or consider a new format so this tool can be as useful as it previously was.

Also, it is quite demeaning when the SC and the therapists can't use medical jargon because many of the parents cannot understand it. When these uneducated parents go to the doctor what kind of words do you think are going to be used there? Doctors don't have time to dumb things down for their patients and many simply won't just as a matter of principal. One of the key ideas of the First Steps program is educating parents to better care for their child and I can't imagine how dumbing things down for them educates them at all. I propose that you use the medical jargon and if a family needs something better understood then the SC's or therapists need to explain it to them. This helps everyone, the SC doesn't go to the doctor appointment and say hold on they may not understand those words.

In addition to the things above, I have also been receiving communications from First Steps via email and I believe it is federal law that you require consent to deliver communication in this manner. I have not consented to receive communication this way. Please consider adding this to the required forms.

I feel like my daughter could of benefited better if she was in a group setting not only her but other children because she was able to develop at a typical child's pace even with her disability. I think that is because she has a brother so close in age to show her what to do and encourage her.

THANK YOU! We will be forever grateful for the educated and compassionate individuals who have helped us. Our coordinator, is OUTSTANDING.

Outstanding job!

It would be helpful if, on the Family Cost Participation Statements, it would list dates of service and service provided. Thank you!

Our coordinator is amazing. All of our therapists have been amazing! We truly wouldn't know where to start without your help. Thanks!

The only delay we ever experienced was getting a PT for our son. By the time one was found we basically didn't need their services. I believe this took 2.5 months. Otherwise, I've been very pleased with this program.

We used them a lot more at first, but my kids have since excelled!

We used them a lot more at first, but my kids have since excelled!

Our daughter has come a very long way since we started services and our DT, PT and speech are wonderful. Our OT has been most helpful! I don't know what we would have done with her. She is a wonderful source of any information and guidance. WE LOVE HER! Thank you First Steps!

Due to low scores our daughter would of qualified from birth yet we received no mention of First Steps until she was diagnose at 2 years old. We would of loved the help from the start!

Our Service Coordinator was very knowledgeable with the PT that our son received. She would get as excited with his progress as we would. She's very good at what she does.

Awesome job!

When initially evaluated, several service providers thought my son might be autistic. It wasn't until he was evaluated ten months later by a physician that gave him that diagnosis that they commented to that effect and his services were increased at that time. I wish they might have expressed concerns earlier so diagnosis and increased therapy (which is helping greatly) could have been started sooner. Everyone has been wonderful to work with! Made everything so easy to understand!

We learned about First Steps through Parents as Teachers. Now that Parents as Teachers is almost nonexistent I fear that other parents will not learn about First Steps and get the amazing help that it offers.

I cannot stress enough how much this program has helped my son. Thanks to his therapist he has improved in all the areas we were concerned. It has given us great hope for his future. If it weren't for First Steps we would have never been able to afford the help my son needs. Thank you so much for this program!

I wish the service coordinator would be a little more involved. The IFSP states she is to communicate for 15 minutes once a month or every two months. I haven't hear from her since our transition meeting in December. Other than this, First Steps has been a life saver.

We have used our service coordinator approximately four times in ten months - not monthly but more often then every six months.

First Steps has been an amazing program for my child. The progress she has made in ten months is unbelievable. Our service coordinator and all of our providers have gone above and beyond.

I am really glad my child receives First Steps, and I'm happy with all his improvements.

We are so grateful for the First Steps program! It has been so helpful for our child with special needs and our family. The financial burden for services needed would be so much greater without this help and we love our therapists and service coordinator! They show great concern and care for our son and help us to help him reach his potential.