

***First Steps Family Survey***  
***Statewide Summary***  
***May 2015***

***Total surveys mailed out: 5,570***

***# of Surveys Returned: 810***

4. It was easy to learn about First Steps.			
459 (56.88%)	295 (36.56%)	47 (5.82%)	6 (0.74%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I received an explanation of the First Steps parental rights from my service coordinator.			
655 (81.16%)	144 (17.84%)	4 (0.50%)	4 (0.50%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I know my First Steps parental rights related to my child's special needs.			
609 (75.56%)	184 (22.83%)	10 (1.24%)	3 (0.37%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. At First Steps meetings, I am comfortable asking for services and supports that my child and family need.			
641 (79.63%)	151 (18.76%)	10 (1.24%)	3 (0.37%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. I feel I am an active part of the team when we meet to discuss my child.			
660 (81.99%)	136 (16.89%)	5 (0.62%)	4 (0.50%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. My primary provider in First Steps helps me teach my child.			
633 (78.63%)	155 (19.25%)	12 (1.49%)	5 (0.62%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. My First Steps providers work with me to help my child in everyday activities.			
620 (77.21%)	167 (20.80%)	11 (1.37%)	5 (0.62%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I am able to help my child learn new skills because of First Steps services			
600 (74.63%)	185 (23.01%)	14 (1.74%)	5 (0.62%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. My First Steps providers are knowledgeable and professional.			
650 (80.95%)	139 (17.31%)	9 (1.12%)	5 (0.62%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. First Steps helps me know how to find and use the services and programs available to my family.			
526 (65.50%)	241 (30.01%)	27 (3.36%)	9 (1.12%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. First Steps helps me know who to contact and what to do when I have questions or concerns.			
572 (70.97%)	208 (25.81%)	19 (2.36%)	7 (0.87%)
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. Would you like to share your First Steps experience in a newsletter given to families in First Steps?			
177 (31.05%)	393 (68.95%)		
Yes	No		
16. Would you like more information about participating on a First Steps advisory council in your region?			
119 (20.88%)	451 (79.12%)		
Yes	No		

# Annual First Steps Family Survey Comments 2015

*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.*

Where to start? This program has been incredible for my daughter and our family. I am so grateful! A special thank you to our coordinator, our ABA, our OT, and our speech therapist. Wonderful therapists. Grateful forever to our ABA. You are amazing and special. The progress since we started this program is remarkable. My daughter is learning new words and skills every day. I can say with sincerity that without this program, we never would have seen this much progress with our sweet daughter. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!

My experience has not been good. A consult was made when he was discharged from hospital. The coordinator called within a few days. I felt like she was very pushy, made me feel guilty if I did not accept these services. She came to my house for the initial meeting. Returned later on with the person who would be coming weekly. All this person did was ask questions as to things he was able to do. At his follow up doctors appt she wasn't pleased by this. She wanted hands on done by physical therapist and occupational therapist. A physical therapist came a couple of weeks ago to evaluate him. She gave me some exercises to do along with those the doctor had given me. The occupational therapist came a week later to evaluate him on a Saturday. It was his nap time, he was tired and cried most of the time. She kept trying to get him to do things and he wouldn't. I told her he could do them she said well I'm not seeing it. She asked if he had a hearing test I said yes and he passed it. She said I don't think he can hear out of his right ear after she shook a rattle on each side of his head. She also made a point of saying she was nice nurse. She called the next day on Sunday and wanted to come back to reevaluate him. She couldn't write up her report based on what I said and what she hadn't observed him doing when she came he was awoken from his nap after being asleep for 30 minutes. It was a repeat from the day before. He was crying and tired. I did not care for this person. I don't want her coming back to my house. I felt like I was being called a liar in my own home. All I want is what is best for the child in my care. He is 5 1/2 months old and been out of the hospital 3 1/2 months without any treatments being started only the exercises I do for him.

Our providers do an excellent job with our son. He learns something new each week. Both providers are always positive and motivated to work with our son.

Thank you very much! My little boy made great progress!

We have had the best experience working with First Steps. We have had several different services through them for my son. Currently he is in speech therapy. He loves seeing his therapist each week. Our team is amazing helping my son get the therapy he needs and our family is very appreciative! Thanks for all you do.

Our PT is AWESOME! She is so caring and knowledgeable!

I am so thankful for First Steps. It has made a huge difference for my child and our family. Thank you!

Our provider are awesome! We love our visits with them. They are very friendly and helpful.

Our team is wonderful!

First Steps has been 100% helpful. They have always responded very quickly to any additional info or questions I've requested.

Our provider is excellent. Our son has made incredible strides because of her and frankly she is the only reason he is even receiving your services. Which leads me to a major complaint. My son had a significant expressive language delay, which was acknowledged by First Steps, but because he receptively understood what we were saying he was not accepted. What good does it do him to know what he wants to say if he doesn't have the ability to do so??? He also was orally/feeding delayed because of long term medical issues from birth. His first evaluation didn't even include an evaluation of these issues! Therefore we were denied help and told to wait 3 months to have him reevaluated. We did, and my son was now 3 more months behind. Then she evaluated him and recognized that my son's issues needed to be assessed as one big picture, instead of checking boxes on an evaluation and refusing care because he didn't fit into your box. She asked for a professional exception because she CARED about getting us and my son help. I shudder to think of how delayed he would be if it weren't for her. Now, First Steps, is going to pull her from my son a mere 6months before he will graduate from the program. Because she can't attend a meeting! My son will have to adjust to a new provider because, yet again, First Steps is unable to recognize what is best for the children instead of their own needs. Ridiculous! We are so very impressed with the care, compassion and expertise that has been granted by her, but so very unimpressed by the program as a whole. Your lack of caring, flexibility, critical thinking and individualized care is robbing families of much needed resources. What a shame that the families of Missouri are putting their tax dollars towards something that will likely be denied to them when they're in need. Get it together First Steps! You have the potential to do so much good and you're throwing that potential away.

I'm a middle school teacher, have a son with a limb difference, and am interested in working with First Steps for children who have limb differences and their parents.

I have been disappointed in the coordinators so far. The teachers have been good though. I also feel that since it is based on a percentage of salary, the fee is too expensive compared to private tutoring. Currently getting two hours a month which averages about \$40/hour.

Our Service Coordinator has been great working with our child.

Very glad to have this program as an option. Staff is very helpful and does an amazing job!

My child continues to grow in his language skills by leaps and bounds. He has also gained self confidence in communicating and socializing with his peers. I have been very happy with my child's early intervention services.

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I am very disappointed that my child's primary provider is going to be switched. Campbell has had a very rough year with language development, along with numerous health concerns/conditions. She is very slow to warm up to people and trust them. That level of trust has just been established, after 9 months of hard work, with our speech language pathologist. She is a caring and knowledgeable therapist for my daughter. She goes above and beyond, always. I wish that First Steps could have found a way to do what's best for the child, and provided the opportunity for my daughter to continue therapy next year with her original provider. Consistency is what my daughter needs. Thanks for your time.

Absolutely love our providers. They truly have my daughter's best interests at heart, and have been wonderful advocates for her. Our daughter has come so far due to the care and support received from them. Though my son, my daughter's twin brother, was not in the program. I always felt I could ask our providers for guidance/suggestions on sleep issues I was having with him early on and questions regarding other developmental milestones.

We adopted our son as a new born and he was born at 28 weeks and had been exposed to drugs. He was visiting 5 different Dr.'s when we brought him home, 4 that were specialists. As first time parents we didn't know what our little miracle should be achieving at what stages. When I heard about First Steps (at the hospital) I felt relieved to know that there would be someone (a group of people to help our little guy). His first visit was at 3 months old and he was only five pounds. The visit was wonderful, everything was explained in great detail and they each had such compassion for our family. Our therapists will forever have a special place in my heart for all they have done for this little man. He now begs for her to come over and play. I know that the reason our little man is where he is, is from the help we received from our therapists.

Providers shouldn't pressure parents to not follow medical plans that the parent and doctor have agreed upon. Overall I have been pleased with First Steps.

I am very grateful for First Steps. A special thank you goes to the lady who has been with my son from the beginning. She is extremely knowledgeable and when she doesn't know an answer, she finds someone who does. She is an excellent asset to First Steps and is a main reason my son is making so much progress.

Great staff, but my family is frustrated with "teaming." In rural areas like ours it is hard for providers to travel over an hour and make that hour coordinate with other providers. It is stressful for our providers and frustrating to us. In addition our team communicates very well through teaming meetings, so the overlap of being present together is unnecessary chaos in our small home, especially because my other children are present and want attention from so many adults in one place at one time. Teaming doesn't work for us and I'd appreciate another option.

Our therapist is a true blessing. She is professional, helpful, passionate, and amazing to work with. The only complaint I have is that your scheduling or evaluation staff was just as friendly and passionate. My family thanks our therapist everyday!!

I have really enjoyed our therapist. She is wonderful to both I and my son. My son is doing 100% better with the therapists help & I'm able to help him too because of her. Thank you.

Our therapists are wonderful! They have helped my daughter and my family in so many ways. They truly have a heart for what they do and it shows. Thank you!!

My therapist is just amazing. She's so informative and my daughter loves her!! Thank you Missouri first steps

Billing process is very confusing. The explanation of benefits is confusing saying amount denied and amount disallowed. Couldn't even be explained by coordinator or over the phone. Only thing said was only have to pay monthly fee. I understand you are showing me how much everything costs, but it's a poor way w/no explanation. And it's nuts to be 2 months behind on monthly fees. Love our coordinator, love our physical therapist and love our parent educator. We do appreciate First Steps. Thank you! Thank you!

My son is certainly delayed on his milestones, but his pt has been great with helping him get on track and helping me to know how to give him that extra push. The first steps program has worked wonders for our family.

The FS program was great for my son. I am thankful for the services provided. Because we also had an outside PT to supplement FS I have no complaints, however, if we were not able to have such a service the FS set up would not have given my son sufficient PT time because she was his primary and other services were required. Also, it sometimes felt like our service coordinator's goal was to give us as little as possible especially when it came to equipment. I feel that my assertiveness and proactive participation was always necessary plus supplemental services to get the complete job done and best for my son, not just to made do. Either way I am still very thankful FS exists and happy my son received everything he did get.

First Steps has been a big help for us. I hate to see it end. Thank you for everything you have done for our son.

We have been with the program only 7 months now, but it has been such a supportive and an amazing program! The therapist my son have are amazing, patient, and most important: very positive! Kudos to our team! Each person involved with Roman has been an angel! Thank You First Steps!

I absolutely love this program and the teachers! My child has learned so much from them! I just wish it was more than once a week and more than an hour, but it is still a wonderful program!!

I have not been overly impressed with our First Step services. I wish our therapists were more involved and came more often.

In the short time we've been receiving services I have seen a hug change in my son. First Steps is invaluable! Thank you!

We absolutely loved our physical therapist and would recommend her to others. She's very knowledgeable and helpful in getting our child on the right track with his development.

Great service, our child has grown so much in such a short period of time. Thank you so much.

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First Steps has been an asset to our family and I'm grateful that my son has been able to get the help he needs from this program. We recently had an issue with our service coordinator, though, not wanting to add more speech therapy for my son, but we were able to reconvene and get a plan in order. There is much more to our story that is too in depth to write out, but if you would like to know the details, feel free to call me. Otherwise, first steps is a great program and I would recommend it to anyone in need of assistance for their child. Thank you!

Our team are all incredible and have helped my daughter flourish! I will forever be thankful!

Great Team! Our son will continue with the program through the summer of 2015. If his success continues, I would consider #15 & #16 in the survey. I'm measuring his "success," by just continuing to see improvement. He is doing very well! I'm thankful for First Steps!

First Steps is a wonderful program. Thank you for all the assistance to my foster children. We've only had the best of experiences.

Are exceptional therapists without compare. I cannot believe how much improvement we've seen in our daughter since their visits and their professional - yet warm and personal support has meant the world to us during this tough season. They truly care for her and are so invested in her success - we could not have dreamed of better therapists and they are to be highly commended! We will miss them dearly in the fall. The one thing I wish we could've changed was not doing "team" visits early on - where we tried to tackle both speech and behavior in that same hour; was not near as productive and effective as the last few weeks have been with them coming separately each week (every other week) we have been able to cover so much more ground in each area just working with them one-on-one. That's probably the only thing I would change. Thank you so very much!

Our therapist is absolutely amazing and my girls love her. We are all so thankful for the First Steps program and the opportunities it has given us. Thank you!

Our therapist is absolutely amazing and my girls love her! We are so thankful for the First Steps/United Services program and all the support & opportunities they have given us. Thank you!

I love our PT!

When we brought my now 5 1/2 year old son home at 25 months we were told he was receiving services through first steps. Then our 2 year old daughter came home at 6 weeks we continued to see 2 of the therapists but also added two more! Our daughter sees a PT, OT, speech, and a dietitian. I couldn't be more blessed by their help and dedication they have shown to my daughter. A little over a year ago we moved about 20 minutes west...out of county. All of them (got permission) still came to continue therapies for our daughter. I truly feel and know they love her. I know they want her to succeed...and she has. I know it is because of our team that our daughter is as successful and strong as she is today. Thank you ladies from the bottom of my heart.

First Steps is an amazing program with amazing teachers. If we did not participate in program, our child would have serious educational, and physical setbacks. Now, I feel confident that my son is on the right path, as he gets ready to start school in our educational system.

My first steps OT has been AMAZING. Our little one loves her and so do we. She has been so patient in working with our preemie.

The First Steps Program has been such a blessing to my family. My children don't have the severe needs other kids may have but I have twins that were born premature and having the amazing First Steps Providers in our home to help with development has made all the difference in the world. My little girl has surpassed our expectations for development and that has a lot to do with the First Steps Program and the amazing providers we have been blessed to work with over the past year.

Please do NOT use my following comments in a newsletter - either online or printed, if you have to use my last name. I do NOT want my last name used in any way, either online or printed. Thank you! My comments are as follows: I was constantly worried about my daughter's development, I just felt like she wasn't progressing as she ought to be. However, without any other children to compare her against, I wasn't sure if I was being over anxious or justified in my concerns. Her pediatrician and the PAT lady noticed some delays and our PAT lady informed me about First Steps. It is a gross understatement to say that my daughter has thrived under their care, guidance and support. For the first time since she was born, I'm finally able to enjoy being with her, instead of just constantly fretting about her developmental issues. The team involved in her development are nothing short of fantastic. They have been so supportive, coming up with alternative ideas and ways of addressing her issues when one fails. Our primary provider knows my daughter better than anyone after myself and my husband. Her input has been truly invaluable. I cannot adequately express how utterly frustrating and worrying my life was prior to our involvement with First Steps. The constant battles I faced with her issues were exhausting and frustrating, the techniques I tried, didn't work. I felt like I was in this battle alone but having the assistance, experience and knowledge of the first step providers to hand, has made all the difference. I would diligently take on board their suggestions and together we've got my little one further along the road to where she ought to be. Their experience also meant they picked up on issues I didn't know were even present with my daughter. Such as the need for PT due to pronating feet (something I thought she'd just grow out of and was normal), to speech delays (which I didn't realize were as pronounced as I was informed they were). Due to our OT's experience, keen eye and attentive attitude we could get our daughter the help she needed with these issues. I simply cannot sing their praises highly enough. My daughter has gone from swatting at the OT during her visits to vent her frustration, to hugging her each visit. A transformation which astounds both the OT and I! Each of the service providers we have, arm me and educate me with so much knowledge and a variety of techniques to use to help my daughter through her various issues, on a day to day basis. They have been invaluable to me and in turn, through their constant good deeds, patience, advice and kindness, they have become our friends.

The program is great I think it is really helping my son.

I would be willing to share our story and other items - however I have a concern and I do not want it being traced back to me - which is why I am staying anonymous. One of my daughter's providers is ALWAYS late and leaves early and it frustrates me because she loses her service time. I wish I knew who I could speak to about this, without it getting back to me. I wish there was a way to provide a survey every few months on the services her OT/PT/ Nutritionist provide. I feel if they knew they could be held accountable for being late - they would be more prompt. We have been with them for 2 years, I feel as if they have gotten too comfortable and laid back and don't always do their best anymore. I am becoming very disappointed with the services she is receiving.

Thank you so much for this outstanding program we have benefitted so much from First Steps.

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Great program! I wish I was referred sooner by our pediatrician.

First Steps has really helped my son to bridge the gap between his adjusted and chronological age. Our service coordinator SL PT have been amazing!

We are so grateful to First Steps for working with us to help our daughter! We see this process working everyday! She has improved leaps and bounds!

Our therapist is outstanding. We are grateful for her.

I want to say my team is exceptional. Our OT, which is our primary teacher, we love her. She has helped us in many different ways. My daughter was not able to sit on her own when we started, but she is so close to crawling already it just makes me so happy and really brings tears to my eyes just talking about it. Thanks.

I feel First Steps has GREATLY improved my son's quality of life and abilities to participate in our family activities. My providers are excellent and very responsive to my needs. They answer questions! I do NOT like the teaming model and the fact that the primary provider (PT) has to come at the same time as other providers (OT). The OT is working on my son in regards to feeding issues (i.e. taking a bottle, positioning in high chair, using a sippy cup, eating table food). It is IMPOSSIBLE for the PT to work on what she needs to work on (i.e., transitions, standing, pulling up, crawling) at the same time as the OT is working on her things. So, twice a month when my OT and PT come together, the PT only gets to work for part of the session while the OT works for the other part. I do not feel as though this is an effective use of either providers time.

My daughter would not be where she is today without her First Steps team, We will miss them so much when services stop. This program has been such a blessing for my family!

I cannot even put a value on the help that both my PT/OT have given to my son. I am a healthcare professional myself and it is different when it is your own child. Without early intervention I don't think my son would be eating or crawling. Thank you!!!!

I'm a teacher which is the reason I had prior knowledge of the First Steps program. I think First Steps would benefit from having its own website separate from DESE. The website is not the easiest to navigate and I have clicked on links that have not worked. First Steps could also benefit from having a presence on social media. I think there are probably more families that could benefit from this program that just aren't aware of its existence. My background in teaching along with my involvement in PAT allowed me to have knowledge of this valuable program that has helped my son immensely. Without that background I probably wouldn't have known about the program. My pediatrician referred me to a private physical therapist but I declined that and sought out First Steps. They are very personable and worked hard to develop a relationship with my son. When I have had questions, they have both been easy to reach via text or phone call. They always give me exercises/activities to work on throughout the week. They are both amazing assets to the program.

We have had ongoing issues and delays with equipment. Some taking more than six months to receive at a time. She had already grown out of it. Very inefficient process. We LOVE our PT/OT/PT. They are all wonderful and part of our family.

The early intervention services provided through MO First Steps have been very helpful in getting my daughter up to speed with her peers. This is such a valuable program in the state of Missouri to get children the early services they need to do well.

Our team has helped us to understand how to work with our son and communicate with him, and help him learn new skills and help us to teach him new skills. They are amazing. :o)

You guys do great work. And have helped me a lot with my son. I have really enjoyed my experience with each person on my sons team.

I was pleased with the First Steps program. The instructors/therapists were extremely professional and provided a powerful all inclusive learning experience for my child. Watching them help him strengthen previous weaknesses was a rewarding experience for us as parents. My child made steady progress, which was the overall goal we all wanted him to achieve. I wish that he could continue this program beyond the age of three.

A Great program to make sure your kids are on the right track.

I just want to give a special mention of my daughter's speech pathologist and her PT. They are both two of the most caring, patient women I have ever met. I can tell that they clearly care about my daughter, and the help they've given our family has already had a huge impact. It makes my daughter so happy to be able to do things she couldn't previously do. They are both absolute gems!

Teaming method doesn't work for all children!!

Ashley, our family care coordinator, as well as our PT are amazing. Our twins were born prematurely, and have required PT since they came home. Our PT is so attentive to the girls needs and is always giving me ideas of how to push them a little harder and work with them when she is not here. If it wasn't for First Steps, I don't know what we would do. This is such a wonderful program, and I feel blessed that my twins have gotten their needs met through this program. Thank you First Steps, and a huge thank you!

My First Step providers have all been wonderful and they have helped my son progress and I couldn't have helped him without the help from my providers. Thank you very much.

Since they have begun working with my child, the progress he has made in his social interaction and speech/language development has been amazing. I know that they care about my son, and enjoy watching him succeed just as much as I do.

I am really thankful for First Steps. I wish that we didn't have to choose just one primary provider though. My son needs OT and PT equally. I wish he could see his First Steps PT weekly instead of twice a month. That is really my only complaint.

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First Steps has help me with ideas and techniques to help my child with her everyday development and I am appreciative of the help.

You need to find a way to pay online. Almost every other bill can be paid online with a credit card. It creates additional hurdles for families when trying to use an HSA/FSA.

I love my First Steps provider! She really takes her time working with my son and she makes sure to always explain things to me so I know why she is doing what she's doing and what I can do to help/teach my son. I appreciate her and the First Steps program so very much! Thank you.

First Steps has been life changing for our family. When we first enrolled, we had spent months shuttling our son to weekly PT/OT visits in outpatient therapy. We hadn't seen substantial progress and were terrified that our child wasn't sitting up, grasping for objects, and generally developing as he should. Our therapists have been heaven-sent. Our son sees one therapist weekly and one therapist monthly. These women are so knowledgeable, patient and kind. We really feel as though they love and care for our son like he is one of their own children. They have also been there for us as a sounding board and shoulder to cry on and have helped us so much in not only guiding our son's development, but helping us to encourage his growth and learning in all ways. First Steps is such a special program and we have recommended it to so many parents like us, who were feeling scared and alone when their child was behind and didn't know where to turn. We can't give enough thanks to our therapists. We cherish them dearly. Our son started walking yesterday and one of the therapists was the first call I made after my husband. Keep up the GREAT work and thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

I wish the program went up to kindergarten instead of having my child @ 1 care facility that knows & loves her for 3 years & then being told I have to switch her from the current pre-school to a new one for 2 years until kindergarten & then read just again when in kindergarten. Makes more sense to have the option to continue @ current place with current team or go to state facility if the family wants. We will choose to just lose services for 2 years vs. switching her & then switching again for kindergarten.

First Steps has been exceptional to work with!

Wonderful program

My son does much better 1 on 1. I think the option should be available to separate SAT and OT rather than having to combine the sessions. I feel like he isn't getting as much out of the program as he could be.

In regards to #4: I heard of First Steps from a neighbor. The website offers very little information. I called First Steps and a meeting was setup, but was still given very little information.

First Steps is a wonderful resource! One major downfall is the time it takes to get equipment. The vendors inform us it is because the forms are sitting on desks waiting to be signed. This is not fair to my deserving child!

We have had a wonderful time first steps and we've seen a lot of improvement.

Our therapist is the best. She has held my hand since day 1. I love and hate we have to part. She has been a gem putting my son and our family first!!

I really don't like the "team model." My child needs separate appointments for PT, OT, and ST, and 1 hour joint appointments are not very valuable.

I have been so pleased with our PT and our Main Therapist. They are efficient, kind, and so easy to work with. They acknowledge our concerns and offer assistance whether through email, text or face to face. I am so pleased with son's progress in this program!

Our service coordinator is excellent--very organized and professional. We absolutely love working with our physical therapist. She has been extremely helpful with the development of our daughter who was born 3 months premature. The hospital connected us with First Steps when our daughter was discharged. It was so easy to access the service.

I have never received a First Steps newsletter, which is referred to in Question #15. I would like to receive it.

Thank you for providing this valuable service. Our family greatly appreciates all the help we have received.

First Steps has made a huge difference in our lives. Our primary provider is simply amazing. My one point of improvement would be that I think the lack of emphasis on direct therapy minutes is detrimental to these youngest children who would greatly benefit from hands on therapy minutes.

We love First Steps and what it has done for our son. We are so thankful we looked into the program.

We LOVE First Steps! Our son gets great support from our First Steps therapists, and so do we. Our son is making progress because of the help we get from our therapists.

I would like to let you know how wonderful and helpful our First Steps therapist has been. This experience has been great!

We have had a wonderful experience so far. So thankful for these services!

The new therapy items we have been able to get through first steps have been very helpful. We are very thankful for our 2-vibe and splints. We also would be lost without our OT and PT!

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I have only one suggestion - auto withdraw billing/and paperless statements. please don't let this suggestion take the spotlight away from our amazing first steps experience and people. first steps has helped my children and my family in ways words can't describe. thank you.

I have been very impressed by the overall care and concern these women have for my child. They seem just as eager to see her excel as I am. I'm very thankful for the program.

We love our First Steps therapists. They are like part of our extended family. Our child is thriving and doing so well, and I know a large part of that is because of his early intervention. An amazing resource to families of all backgrounds. Thank you!!

My comments are based on my past primary provider whom we had until March 2015. The new primary provider who will be with us through the remainder of my daughter's IFSP is exceptional. The marks for her would be strongly agree for all of the comments I selected as disagree or strongly disagree. The strength of the primary provider is pivotal in parent education.

I wish that the service coordinators weren't hired via a state agency. I like consistency of programs and people. We entered program when state's contract was ending with company that provided service coordinators....so two/three months in we had a new service coordinator. I totally disliked this aspect.

I have found providers to be excellent resources - but have seen a high turn over of service coordinators in our two years (whether leaving or assigned to new territories). I also feel that the paperwork takes too long to process in order to get equipment, orthotics, etc.

I only have one issue with First Steps and that is billing and payments. I do not like that I cannot pay the bill online and that I have to write a check and mail it in. We pay all other bills online or through automatic bill pay. I cannot find First Steps listed as a company on my bank's bill pay and I am afraid to enter it manually that it won't get where it needs to go. I ended up being behind on the monthly service charge because with twins who were under a year old and working full time, I didn't get the check written. I was able to rectify the situation and send payment before services were stopped. I appreciate that I was given a long grace period for that but I recommend you look into automatic payments and automatic bill pay. Since this is a monthly fee, having it automatically deducted would help my family. I did appreciate the letter I received and the service coordinator contacting me. Writing the check was on my list to do and I just never got to that item. I love our First Step providers. Also, previously we had a PT we did not like. She was always late and didn't listen to us. Luckily, after we spoke our concerns, we were matched with someone else who we love, is professional, great with my boys (both were receiving First Steps, until one was dropped in Dec.) and is knowledgeable. Also, my boys were preemies so this survey should have a spot for adjusted age and actual age. Thanks.

Our entire experience with First Steps has been amazing. Our speech therapist has a wonderful relationship with our daughter and she has been able to teach her so much. We are astounded how far she has come and can't thank first steps and our therapist enough! This is truly a blessing.

We feel so fortunate that we were referred to First Steps. Our son went from speaking very few words and only participating for a few minutes at a time, to speaking in full sentences and staying on task to complete the activities with his instructor. Our son is about to turn 3 and finish his involvement in First Steps. He (and his parents) will greatly miss his teachers.

Our speech therapist was incredible. Our daughter flourished under her guidance and expertise. We are incredibly grateful.

I love the program! Someone approached me after seeing my daughter's issue while working with another child at her daycare. We would never have known of the problem. Thank you so much for helping my daughter and my family just because you could!

Our son's OT has been a wonderful asset! Sam is our first child and was born 10 weeks early. We are grateful for this resource to help ensure he develops as he should.

Our first steps PT & OT are flexible in the days and times that they see us - It is helpful. They are also skilled at making suggestions/changes that we can do to help our daughter learn and grow.

What a great program, thank you. First Steps and all who are behind the scenes! God Bless You All.

Our primary therapist is very knowledgeable and helpful. She is very professional, and I can tell my son benefits from therapy with her. She is hands-on and constantly challenging him. Our son responds well to her and has developed a good relationship with her. We had a secondary therapist as well from June 2014-December 2014. I ended up removing her from my child's "team" because she was not giving him quality therapy. She would talk for 20-30 minutes and then start doing stretches on my son. She was very talkative and only 5% of the conversation was about my baby. I know what good occupational therapy looks like because my son does outpatient therapy at St. Louis Children's Hospital. His therapist there is hands on 50 minutes out of the hour that we are there. I mention the secondary therapist because I am worried that other kids might be underserved by her. If we had to rely on her solely for my son's OT, he would not have made the progress that he has. Early intervention is so critical.

First steps have help me and my husband teaching our daughter about everything from new born up until now. Give us useful pointer to help us deal with all of her needs. Thank you so much for all of the help that we received, much appreciate it.

It is important to respect everyone's time involved.

First steps has been a valuable asset to our family, and I'm sure it will serve as valuable in the future. I do have some concerns about our provider/coordinator. Our provider's schedule has not been very flexible, which makes it hard when trying to schedule appointments every other week. Also, we have not heard from our service coordinator since our 2nd month of participation. I feel that someone should be checking in to see that our needs are being addressed and taken care of to some degree. Thank you.

This program has been so helpful to our family and our daughter. We are very grateful for the opportunity to work with first steps. Thank you!

Our OT has become like family we love her and she is a phenomenal therapist! Thank you all for helping our little guy grow and learn the skills he needs!!

Words cannot describe how awesome you all are! Thank you so much for everything you have done!

Thank you for your help. My son loves all the help you have given him.

Our First Steps provider is very knowledgeable and professional. She has provided us with information that has helped us teach our baby many skills. She always answers our questions and we have lots of questions! We learn new techniques every month that helps us teach our baby new skills. We love our First Steps provider!

We have an OT and my son loves her!! Everyday she comes he gets so excited! She is helping him with eating as well as working on his tone. She is very easy to talk to and extremely friendly! We are so thankful for everything she does!

I am very happy with our First Steps provider. I am a stay at home dad by choice and they treat me like I'm human and are very helpful. Most people who find out I'm a stay at home dad think I just don't want to work. They understand and don't look down on our decision. They are very friendly and knowledgeable. Thank you for everything.

She is wonderful with my daughter. Very patient. I have learned so many tips and tricks from her that have helped my daughter grow. When she started the sessions my daughter had a vocabulary of 2 words. In just 7 short months my daughter knows tons of words and is now putting together 3-4 word sentences and phrases. First Steps helped me get my daughter accepted into the Early Childhood Development program through our school district. Sophie will start that in August when she turns 3. We are so excited! With the additional help from the school and the social interaction with the other kids my daughter is just going to grow in leaps and bounds. I could NOT be happier or say enough good things about her and my experience with MO First Steps.

We have an amazing therapist. She is very good with my son and is always here and on time. I would tell anyone about her!

My child is always happy to see his therapist and eagerly joins her to participate.

I learned about First Steps through my pediatrician when my oldest daughter, now 9, was a toddler. I truly feel that this is a great program that is not widely publicized to parents with children who have just a specific need, like speech therapy. My services team has been amazing - Marion Hope has been an amazing and thorough group. I do feel that our experience with First Steps has been so great because I know what types of services I desired for our son and pursued them for him. The only thing I think that could help me more was if I was receiving copies of my son's progress and what needed/or is being worked on. (I can get this on my own, but I truly think parents should get a copy of this w/out asking for it.)

I first entered my son into "Parents with Teachers" because I was noticing my son regressing in some areas. The lady advised me to contact First Steps and told me sometimes it is tough to get into. After I contacted them, they followed up with a screening with a few different people right away. I met our service coordinator. She then set us up with our ABA therapist and speech therapist. Mind you, I don't see our service coordinator that often and I see our therapists twice weekly, but these ladies have gone above and beyond. The speech therapist is such an asset to our family and in which I believe, a huge asset to your program. I don't know what I would do without her and my son has come so far with her help and teaching. She over exceeds all of our needs and is an all around amazing woman. I love this program and I really hope that you keep growing and make it where other families with needs get the help they need through your program. My son is autistic and we could have never made the strides without the complete help of our therapist and for that I thank first steps.

An amazing program that is professionally staffed with both caring and knowledgeable specialists

I love First Steps. My child has improved so much from the start.

We absolutely loved our therapist. She was a blessing to my family!!!!!!!

I do not feel that the teaming model is helping my family. He would benefit more from all therapists coming separately so that he and I could focus better on the information given. It also cuts into our therapy time with our primary provider when the other providers come with her and all we focus on is the other area. I would prefer my child get all his designated time with each individual therapist, instead of one hectic hour a week in which we are trying to address all of our concerns as well as accomplish some therapy. We love our therapists and they do a great job, but I know their hands are tied and they are just trying to do their job as they are supposed to. We look forward to changes being made in this important program to better suit each individual family.

I think the first step program is an awesome program to families who really need the help and can't afford anything else. First steps has helped me and my family out so much words can't explain how thankful I am.

Our therapist is a vital part of our son's success in speech. I feel so blessed to have her on our team!

MO First Steps has been a blessing for our family in so many ways. Our twin boys are developmentally behind with their speech and just in the two months we have had come to our home our boys do more vowel sounds, animal sounds ("hoo, hoo" for owl) and a few new words! They also have learned some signs which helps us all to have less frustration! We would not be able to afford speech therapy for our boys without first steps and the convenience of them coming to our home is HUGE. Also, they have worked with our school district to schedule testing for possible speech therapy and other areas for when they turn 3. We had no idea the school down the street was all preschoolers and could be a continuation of help for our boys when they become too old for MO First Steps. We would have been lost without this program. I pray it stays in place to bless other families like it has blessed ours! Our boys love her so much they refer to her as the sign for cookie and point to our front door wanting to know when she's coming to visit again! (Cookie is one of the first sign she taught them because they love Cookie Monster on Sesame Street).

Being a first time mother to a preemie was scary. After learning about and participating in the First Steps program, my nerves were eased. Having someone with knowledge of development milestones present to assist me with my son, has been awesome. The team we have worked with over this past two year has really helped me with aiding in my son's development.

I am so glad I found this program. You have helped both of my boys out tremendously and have taught me how to help them too!

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We love working with our therapist! She is so amazing with our little girl!

Thank you for the services you provide. Life has gotten much easier for our family since having our child enrolled with first steps. He has made great improvements in so many areas since being in this program.

My team is great to work with. Our speech therapist has a great rapport with my son and he responds well to her visits. She has given us many tips to help encourage his speech. Our therapist is easy to get in touch with and very helpful. I thank the First Steps team in helping with my son's development.

I have been very happy with all aspects of First Steps - the therapists have done amazing work with our twins and their progress in PT, feeding, and speech has been excellent. The therapists are like a part of our family now :)

I would also be interested in working at FirstSteps and helping anyway I can even volunteering.

Please send us everything in email. That way would be a lot more simple for us.

We have been very pleased with the process of First Steps and direction we are headed in with our son. We feel he will be supported by the program and with our help will make huge progress! Thank you for the awesome program!

I have been very impressed with this program and feel that it has helped my daughter in so many ways. As a mom who was beyond scared of my daughter's diagnosis, these ladies have helped calm my fears and help me feel confident in my abilities.

I love the First Steps Program. Our therapist is wonderful with teaching my son. Very pleased with his progress will be very sad when his time with 1st step ends.

I love this first steps, this is my first experience with first steps. The therapists are wonderful, they show and explain things to me while here. I am so so so happy and amazed the progress our foster child has made in just 4 months. Thank you first steps!! You all are wonderful.

Thanks for all of your help.

First Steps has been incredible for our family. My son has a very complex medical history and our providers have had such a huge impact on our family and his development. I feel I have learned so much from them and they are truly an extension of our family.

My son's therapist's are phenomenal! They have been very helpful keeping me informed on how I can help my child. They are always open to any questions I have. I am very grateful for the First Steps Program!

Our daughter just "graduated" from the First Steps Program (she turned 3 on May 6th). We had an absolutely wonderful First Steps experience and are so thankful that a program like this is available. Our service coordinator was wonderful and our speech therapist was outstanding. She always made certain we understood the things she was working on with our daughter and also helped to teach us ways we could help our daughter's team and practice correct speech. We will miss visits each month! Thanks to all of those involved with this program.

I cannot tell you how invaluable our provider has been in our son's development. She has made such an impact in providing me with tools to use with our son to increase his skills and learn techniques to motivate him so that he would participate while having fun. Our provider provided support and motivation for me (as a caregiver) as well - reinforcing the work I did at home with our son, helping to re-focus me if I was having trouble on an exercise. She provided documentation to the "normal" job description. We were told about First Steps when we were introduced to our son in the NICU. I am so glad we have been able to participate in the first steps program. Thank you. P.S. I don't want to leave out our therapist who is fabulous and patient with us as we asked the same questions many times. Also our team has been extremely supportive and helpful with all of our many concerns about our son's diet and weight concerns.

I feel that I am extremely knowledgeable about pediatric health; being a peds nurse and having my masters in public health but First Steps gave me specific ideas for my child when he needed immediate intervention. I know that his motor, speech, physical outcomes would have been much different if we did not have this essential service of First Steps. Thank you!

Thank you First Steps!!

The multiple levels of hierarchy of state-wide first steps, the local coordinators, the county resources and the ultimate providers are confusing. First Steps documentation should be written in plain language at the 12th grade reading level if not lower, in order to be helpful. It tends to look a lot like just compliance paperwork.

My PT should receive honors and be recognized in your program, not only as a wonderful physical therapist, but as a caring individual whom takes great strides to embrace her patients/child in need. My daughter started the First Steps Program with many needs to strengthen her muscles and catch her up to necessary physical abilities. My work schedule was hectic and our PT took great strides, at many times, to work with me so I could be there for sessions. Our PT was always patient and showed such care and compassion for my daughter. My daughter did not take to outside people easily, but my PT was calm, loving and experience. My daughter took to her immediately. Our PT has been an angel that God sent to us and my daughter has become a well balanced and much happier child under our PT's lessons, as she was able to learn mobility from her and skills to help her grow and become the child she is today. I believe without our PT, my daughter would still be set-back and not have the necessary knowledge we learned from our PT to help her in everyday life, play and run and be happy. An now, my daughter is! Jennifer has always gone above and beyond for us and I will always be in-debted to her for what she has blessed my daughter and me with! Thank you Jennifer, from my heart! I will never forget the gift you gave my daughter, EVER.

My son's provider is amazing! I don't know what we would do without her. She is knowledgeable, kind and helps all of us! We love her!

We are so lucky to have them in our lives. Our daughter is doing great and that's due in no small part to all of their help.

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At first it was a little confusing with the changing and resources and who was in charge but our therapist was amazing for our daughter! She had gross motor delay and I think our therapist's interventions made all the difference in her progress. It took five months at most and to this day, I can't tell she ever had any delays! I can't say enough about the programs and resources and our therapist!! They didn't really put any emphasis at 6 and 9 months on intervention via 1st steps at our pediatricians office but I feel my persistence and knowledge base from radical parents of our child made everything come together and everyone came together to get her back on track!

They have both been enormously helpful & encouraging as we progress through meeting my sons developmental needs and goals. They are knowledgeable and compassionate and I feel they are as invested in my sons development as I am. I am very happy with our care team - they have been a huge blessing for our family.

We had phenomenal providers.

My son has a therapist as his primary and she is WONDERFUL! You can tell that she loves what she does and she is very good at it! I feel that when she is in my home she does what she can to go out of her way to accommodate not only my son's twin brother but my daughter as well. My kids love her. My only issue is at first she missed a lot of days because her kids were sick but she always made them up!

I really love this program and I'm so thankful that my child gets to utilize your services. Thank you so much for all that your staff does to help my daughter learn and grow. It has been a wonderful experience.

First Steps has been such a great source of support for my family that I felt motivated to pursue employment as a FS SC when an opening became available in SPOE 6. I am now in training at Center for Human Services and will begin building a caseload in Boone County very soon.

Wonderful experience. Very knowledgeable and helpful providers!

First Steps has been amazing for us!

First Steps is wonderful!

Availability of program should/could be provided at birthing centers throughout the state or at pediatrician offices.

First Steps has been such a blessing in our lives. What a wonderful program!

In the short time they have worked with my child I have seen great improvements. They are very knowledgeable and give me lots of tips for helping my child.

We did not find program useful. We did not find any benefits to our child provided through this program. We will not be continuing our sessions and would not recommend this program to others.

Thank you to all the wonderful First Steps providers. You help make our child's day go so much better! You are there to answer any questions we as parents may have about our little one and their struggles and that too is much appreciated.

Great Program!

First Steps is a wonderful program with many useful and helpful resources. We love our therapists and our daughter would not be where she is today without their help!

I was very happy with all my first step experiences. Now that my son has met all our expectations, we will be phasing out of first steps. Thanks so much.

Going to miss First Steps! Thank you.

Everyone is so friendly and I hear so many good things about this program.

I have never work with anything like first steps before. I really love the program and it has helped me with my child a lot. I love the therapists that we are working with. They are very friendly and explain anything I have questions about. I am very happy I get to work with First Steps.

Some questions are N/A because our child has only been evaluated and found to be okay without a therapist coming to work with him. So we have kept First Steps just in case he would show signs of falling significantly behind.

It's wonderful that services as First Steps is available in our area. It's good to know how to move forward when milestones are not being met.

First steps has been a great service. The only complaint I have is some of the providers aren't reliable. Other than that it has been a good program.

Staff are awesome!

First Steps has been wonderful to our family. We feel they are apart of our family. They are very supportive to my husband and I. They are awesome with our child. He has blossomed under there help. We do not know where we would be without First Steps.

The therapist that works with my child is fantastic, and very easy to talk to.

We rated our answers on the survey based on our first OT who worked with our daughter from January through March. She was excellent and not only worked with our daughter, but also helped teach us how we could implement a variety of techniques at home. As a result, we began to see changes in our daughter. We are certainly grateful. We recently began working with a new OT. She has seen our daughter twice and has another session scheduled for 5/7/15 at our daughter's daycare. She doesn't seem to have the same laid back demeanor and good rapport with our daughter that our first OT had, but we are hopeful that the rapport might improve over time. Due to scheduling conflicts, she is unable to see our daughter in our home and as a result the only option is for our daughter to receive therapy at her daycare. This is certainly not our first choice as we feel we learned valuable tools watching and engaging in session with her while she was in our home. We expressed our concern with the Lead Service Coordinator who was very kind and understanding. Unfortunately she explained of a shortage of occupational therapists and was unable to find an OT who could work with our schedule of either Mondays or Fridays so that we could participate in our daughter's therapy. She did explain that we could send notes back and forth with our occupational therapist that would see our daughter at daycare, but as one would imagine that is not really the same as being an active participant in therapy. Our hope is that the OT will be able to engage with our daughter and that they will develop a good rapport. If we feel that it isn't a good fit, our plan is to discontinue services until another OT becomes available in our area that is able to work with our schedule of Mondays or Fridays so that we can be active participants in services for our daughter. If this is not possible, we will do our best to implement what we learned with our OT. All in all, we are certainly appreciative for the tools that have been given us to help our daughter.

We had not heard about the First Steps Program prior to our daughter being born and having medical needs. Our life was upside down and it was a very scary time for our family. We were still trying to adjust to our "normal" and keep our daughter alive. First Steps came to our home, evaluated our daughters needs, and she was quickly accepted for therapy. It was a breath of fresh air to have therapy come to us, at our home, instead of us taking our fragile 2 month old to a facility for all ages and lots of sickness present. We quickly realized that First Steps was more than just "at home" therapy. The staff at First Steps truly care about the kids development and growth. They do not see the kids as "sick" but look at the positives and how to push then forward so when they do feel better they will not be as behind. If one method does not work then the staff are open to try something different until they find what works. This was a relief because my daughter did not fit in a "box" of this is what works all the time so they customize and continue to customize her therapy needs to help her be the best she can be. My husband and I are 110% committed to our child's development and growth-we do not want her challenges become her limitations. She will grow up knowing challenges make us stronger. We push our daughter and we ask the "experts" the hard questions because we want the best for daughter and we expect the best. With that said- we could not have been fitted with a more perfect therapist for our daughter and our family. We truly feel God brought our therapist into our life. Sge pushes our daughter and when she succeeds she pushes more, she educates us so we can perform therapy thru the week, she answers our questions, and she is not afraid to push us as parents- we are a team. Our daughter is doing things we did not think she would be able to do because of the work my husband, myself and our therapist have done and continue to do. Our doctors in St. Louis are thrilled with her progress and we are so proud of her. We are Grateful for First Steps and we are Thankful for our therapist.

Our therapist is WONDERFUL! She's always on time, very helpful to giving me suggestions, and my child loves her. I feel very comfortable when she's doing therapy with my child and I would strongly recommend this program to anyone. Thank you for all you do!

We are extremely new to First Steps, but the experience so far is nothing short of great. One person we have seen throughout our journey with First Steps often and she is AMAZING! Her honesty is so refreshing! Please do everything possible to keep her on board - she is a huge asset I feel! We haven't started our floor time, but get to meet with them this Friday. I'm sure they will be great if they are anything and everything like we have had so far! Thank you from a grateful mom to helping my son get to his full potential. Can't wait to see what is to come for my son! Just the info provided to us has helped us in changing our daily routine with our son which has shown huge improvements just in a few week time!

My son's OT is a god send. I don't know where his progress would be if not for her. Another is amazing and helps me understand what is going on and advice on services. Thank you.

I love working with your program. I have had the pleasure of working with three different therapist through my son's therapy. They are all amazingly ladies. I love watching my son form a loving relationship with his therapist. I also love learning the new activities I can do in our day to day routine to help him grow and learn. It has truly been a blessing to work with everyone in the program. My son looks forward to his therapy and loves the hour that he gets to spend learning and playing. Thank you so much! May God bless you all and your program!

My only complaint was how long it took to get visits started. I brought home a 1-month-old foster baby post-op open heart surgery with a feeding tube and weaning medications. She needed to see a Speech Therapist to help her learn to use a bottle. By the time I got regular visits scheduled, I pretty much had it figured out. Would have been more helpful if she could have started sooner.

Well, I wish that they would offer speech therapy to my son. But they said that he didn't need it at the time. When the parent asks to do something, then they need to do it instead of saying no, lets work on other things first.

We have been so blessed by and thankful for First Steps. Our coordinator Pamela has been so helpful, knowledgeable and available! Our physical therapist Tara is phenomenal, we love her! Together they got us approved and things moving so quickly. Working with these ladies and First Steps has been fantastic and I will be sad when we graduate out of the program next year.

Thank you for all you do. I have been blessed to work with the First Steps team.

I have been extremely pleased with all interactions with First Steps. I first learned of First Steps through our Parents as Teachers Instructor. I've had WIC, Medicaid, Pediatricians, therapists for my kids and not one of them ever mentioned First Steps. We live in a very rural area and drove a long way to seek treatment, bringing all the kids along. Having First Steps therapy in my home is AMAZING! The kids can play while we focus on the baby's therapy. I've now had two children use First Steps. The entire team; coordinator, PT, OT, speech -everyone has been incredibly professional, very dedicated, and we have seen tremendous results. I am very grateful for the First Steps Program! Thank you!

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We found out early in our pregnancy that our child was going to be special needs. As we met with different doctors to prepare for our child each doctor recommended First Steps. Shortly after our child was born we had our IFSP and started her therapy. Each person we have come into contact with from first steps has been wonderful. Our child currently has physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. Our child loves her therapist and look forward to her therapy days. Each therapist does a great job working with our child and showing us what to work on through the week. Each week our child improves thanks to the knowledge of those that work with her. Our child still has struggles but I believe she's doing as good as she is because of early intervention and caring people that want the best for her. Each person feels like family. First Steps has been a blessing to our family, it has changed my child's life forever and for that I'm forever grateful.

Our team is amazing and have helped out greatly, we consider them apart of our family and will miss them dearly when our son transitions to preschool.

Fabulous team. They are absolutely fabulous and I couldn't have done this journey without them. They are simply amazing!

First Steps has changed our son's life. I am so grateful to the women who have helped us. They have empowered me to be a more confident mother for which I am grateful as well. Our provider has been with us every step of the way and I feel I have made a friend for life. She is passionate about what she does, and it shows. I just wish the program continue after age 3.

Our physical therapist is great. She helps not only our son learn and develop, but she also teaches us new ways to help him. Since we moved here and started First Steps, our son has come such a long way. She is a great physical therapist. Thank you for such a great program.

Our therapists have been a true blessing to my family. Since they have begun working with my son, the progress he has made in his social interaction and speech/language development has been amazing. I know that they care about my son, and enjoy watching him succeed just as much as I do.

It was frustrating when our provider was out for maternity leave because there wasn't anyone else offered to us so my child went weeks without any services. I think the providers have to many kids to see. I also felt like scheduling was an issue at times.

I have loved everyone that has been involved in our son's and my families life. Thank you all very much.

We entered into the First Steps program later than most families do (our son was nearly 2), but we're very grateful for the services that have been provided in the past year. We have enjoyed the use of medical equipment in addition to physical and speech therapy services. We have also been made aware of various organizations around the St. Louis area that can help us, and we don't feel we would have known about those without the direct reference from our First Steps therapists. We only wish our medical providers had been better informed so they would have put us in contact with First Steps much earlier, without us having to inquire if there were programs like First Steps to help us.

You guys are doing a really great job with my son.

I have seen an improvement on my sons speech.

Our therapist is great with our son. He has made a lot of progress over the past 10 months because of her consistent work and determination to get our son where he needs to be as far as oral communication. She works at his pace and is careful to follow his lead. She helps him learn to give us context clues in order to lower his frustration level. This program has helped our son on so many levels. Our service coordinator is always great about keeping us informed and up to date on changes for the future. Thank you!

Variety of activities is low. Wish provider would introduce new learning strategies to keep my child engaged. Speech services are amazing though!

My main therapist is amazing! She has been the one seeing my son through most of his time through any kind of therapy that has been provided. Practically since he returned from the NICU. I would definitely recommend her to anyone who has a special needs child. She is loving and patient with my son which for others is hard to do. My son chance loves her and gets excited every time he sees her, even though he gives her a rough times on some days :). But I wanted to make sure to put that in there because that is important for me to let First Steps know that she is one hundred percent doing her job and not just because that is her job but because her heart is in it as well. I can honestly say that I do not know where my son would be right now in his development in certain and almost all areas if it was not for her. She is a big support for my son and I. And if she is allowed to read this it would not bother me. I hope for it to brighten up her day even more. She always has a positive attitude and a smile on her face. Thank You First Steps.

My son is medically complex boy with a tracheotomy and g-tube. First Steps therapists were not able to meet my child's needs. They lacked experience with the level of needs my son has. We had an OT that insisted on doing oral feeding with my son for 9 months when I was concerned about aspiration. His OT and PT then required one oral reading goal on his IFSP. When I refused they quit his case without any closure. It was handled extremely unprofessionally by the therapists and his coordinator. I had to request a new coordinator and gave up trying to find new therapists. I am currently only using Dietitian services because of the inadequacies of the entire program. My son was found to be aspirating and was placed on no oral feeds by hi GI and a Pubnonologist. It is a horrible reflection on the incompetency's of the program that therapists insisted on oral feeds despite my resistance when in the end their sessions is probably what lead to recurrent aspiration pneumonia. I will never recommend the First Steps program to others.

Thank you so much for all of your help. My son has progressed very well and my family is very pleased with the services and assistance we've received from MO 1st steps. Thanks again!

The majority of our First Steps services were conducted in Callaway County. We began receiving services in Jefferson County in March/April 2015. We have been very satisfied with the services here. Thanks!

I am so grateful for the therapists who work with my daughter! With out them my job as a parent would most defiantly be more difficult! Thank you!

Our speech therapist is great. She gives us all the current information that we need to help our child. We can ask any questions we have and are able to get immediate answers. We have been with first steps for over three years with 2 children and don't know what we would have done without their help.

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First steps has been such a blessing for my family and I. Our second child who is receiving First Steps has flourished since he has started. Our First steps Therapist has been awesome and is always available to answer my questions when needed whether it being through text or by phone. I would highly recommend First Steps to those who have a child who is struggling with developmental milestones.

Our experience has been amazing. Everyone that we have corresponded and worked with have been professional, knowledgeable, and overall just wonderful. They are all so informative and have given us so many amazing tools to help our son. We are very grateful to be working with First Steps. Our son has already made incredible steps with his communication! It's so very exciting to see all of his accomplishments. Thank you!

Our therapists were some of the nicest women I have ever met. From the first time we meet with boys, they were nothing but encouraging. For being a first time mom with twin premature boys I was so overwhelmed and nervous and everything else. They really calmed my fears and gave me their support, advice, understanding and they Cared! We were so blessed to have these wonderful women caring for our sons so much! I will miss them they helped me in every way possible, sometimes just listening to me talk, and giving me ideas. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

It's been a wonderful experience for our daughter; and her therapists have brought her a long way! Thank you!

My first steps team are exceptional individuals. They are truly a blessing and the primary component to my son's success. My service coordinator is informative and welcomed my family to First Steps with open arms. I have the greatest primary provider and she treats my family as her own. She has not only worked with my son but has truly addressed any developmental questions I might have regarding my 4 small children. My son's PT has been a delight as well. Without First Steps - or I should say these 3 women - I would be lost. I consider each to be members of this family now. They have changed the quality of my son's life!

I am concerned with the "teaming" model. I understand this is government funded, paid by taxes, and is very low cost to me, but when an OT & PT show up at the same time, my child is not going to get full attention to both services; its usually 50/50 or mainly PT. This is also basically charges at 100% for each service when I (my son) did not receive 2 full hours...only 1 hour total. In any other situation this would be very wrong and I would fight it. I need this to be better explained to me and/or changes so my son can get his full time with both the OT & PT. Feel free to contact me regarding this. I also have questions/concern about what services/equipment I can ask for even if my OT/PT don't feel it is needed as that time (but other PT's do).

My son is doing great! My only wish would be that the services (physical therapy) would occur at a time when I could be there.

We've had PT providers that are amazing with two year old twins and did an awesome job of engaging and challenging them. Yet, we've also had two physical therapy providers that hardly interacted and really didn't seem comfortable with toddlers or knowledgeable about appropriate exercises. Are therapists screened to ensure they can work with kids in a productive way?

Our main therapist we have met with over the past year and a half. She has been phenomenal. She has walked with our family through catastrophic epilepsy, developmental regression, brain surgery, developmental progression, periods of seizure relapses, and more. She has cried with us as well as celebrated incredible moments. Her genuine care for our daughter is outstanding. She has done a great job of educating us as far as services available for our child, providing appropriate toys for her, and helping us help her. Another lady joined the team a year ago and has been great as well. She has educated me immensely on different therapy types and truly grasps at what level my daughter operates and what her biggest needs are. I would highly recommend them to anyone.

First Steps has been wonderful for my son. Not only has he learned so much, I feel I have learned also. Wonderful program.

My first steps provider has been a Godsend. She has helped tackle all issues and my foster son adores her. We appreciate her help and everything she does to help our family.

I wish I had learned of the First Steps program sooner, as it is a great program. I was extremely pleased with the OT. She worked so wonderfully with my daughter. I only have two negatives and that was how long it took to get services started after the first meeting/eval and then the joint visits with Speech and OT. I believe these services should be at separate times to get the child the full benefit of all services needed. Otherwise in our case OT was all that my daughter really received, in my opinion. The speech therapist was very nice, but during joint visits, she didn't really participate. I say this as a former home health/hospice nurse where we purposefully scheduled all disciplines at different times so that the patient/client would get undivided attention and the needed services from each service provider. Otherwise a great service for kids who need extra help!

At the end do a final evaluation and suggestions to keep working on with your child to keep the progress going. I felt because he turned 3 it was boom the end. Didn't get to see on paper the progress. From the date on the bill and when it is received in the mail take a while. Then when I open the bill up I feel it is due very quickly. Not much time from getting the bill in the mail to when the payment needs to be sent so that it is on time.

I think First Steps should have a meeting once a month for families and the kids of first steps to meet up so that we can talk and have support as we deal with the life of having disabled babies. It would help the children learn that they are not the only ones who are disabled. Honestly my oldest daughter started first steps when she was 1 year 10 months due to her not being able to communicate to me. We started speech therapy after learning she had a development delay that made it hard to understand her or for her to tell us her daily wants and needs. First helped so much that when I had my second daughter and she had all her health issues I remember learning sign languages from my first one. I am glad for having first steps through all this.

My son has greatly improved since we started. He's learned many signs and often makes them without prompting.

We learned so much from having them help us. Learning that our child had autism was the scariest feeling I have ever felt, but they made me feel like I could handle teaching and learning from my child. I am so grateful for having them in our lives.

For the first few months we were assigned a lady as our PTA. I had to fire her because she absolutely sucked. I think she needs to be fired from First Steps. I've heard that other families in my area have complained about her as well. She seemed to have very little knowledge of what to do to help my child progress nor did she act as if she cared or was concerned about his needs. She scheduled appointments last minute and showed up late without remorse. She is overall terrible at her job and as aforesaid, needs fired and needs to pursue a different career because she is obviously not passionate about the work, children, or families she is assigned to. We are now working with two other ladies and they are both absolutely wonderful!

I was completely unaware that there were any services available like First Steps, until my children were tested Positive for ASD. I am a little frustrated that First Steps is not more widely known. I am thankful for the providers and how far our youngest child has come in such a short amount of time. Thank you for all you do.

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I am very thankful for the first steps program working with child and myself.

When our child was born she was diagnosed with cleft palate and a 169 chromosome duplication. Her doctors told us about first steps and how they help children with special needs. We started first steps when she was 3 months old. An activity coordinator came once a week to make sure she was meeting her milestones. Around 8 months of age she was having problems eating baby food so we were put with speech. Within a couple of weeks our child was eating like she didn't have cleft. When she was 15 months old she was still very behind in her physical development so PTA and PT started seeing her. They helped go from crawling to walking in 2 months. She is still in speech for a delay which is from her having cleft. I am very pleased with the help the first steps has offered our family. They help answer questions on all my concerns with her development. I am thankful we were referred to First Steps. I thank you guys for everything you've done and will continue to do for our family.

Very grateful for this program that I really knew little about before. I definitely share this with friends. Thanks.

My experience with first steps has been informative and extremely helpful. Your service providers are all caring and knowledgeable people. Thank you for a great three years!

First Steps is a valuable tool to help families obtain information and services to assist them in helping their children reach their full potential. Very appreciative of the program.

Our daughter has really improved with her speech. She tries to repeat everything she hears.

Thanks, great program.