



First Steps IFSP Meeting Observation Tool

November 2018

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of Special Education

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator – Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; fax number 573-522-4883; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.

First Steps IFSP Meeting Observation Tool Instructions

Purpose: The First Steps Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Meeting Observation Tool is designed to measure the use of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) during IFSP Meetings. The intent of the observation tool is to examine the interactions, discussions and overall tone of the IFSP meeting, not to serve as a script for conversations during the IFSP meeting. The tool can be used to observe Service Coordinator and Provider practices during IFSP meetings to help identify the need for targeted technical assistance and/or additional training.

The tool also assists the regional System Point of Entry (SPOE) Directors with the annual needs assessment. The needs assessment identifies the strengths, challenges and any related training and technical assistance in the region, based on observations of Service Coordinator activities. Observation data is submitted annually to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as part of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) report to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education.

Description: The observation tool consists of four essential IFSP meetings practices: establish and maintain a collaborative and respectful climate, prioritize the family's concerns, determine IFSP outcomes, and prepare the family for next steps. Each essential practice identifies three or four observable components necessary to achieve the essential practice. Each observable component has three or four key indicators that specify the EBP, with examples and/or prompts in parentheses.

Procedure: The observation tool is intended to be used in its entirety during the first observation of the Initial, Six-Month or Annual IFSP meeting; however, each essential practice may be used and scored independently for follow-up observations. The tool utilizes a four-point scale for each observable component. The observer selects one rating per component based on the level in which all key indicators are consistently implemented and, when applicable, demonstrated throughout the meeting. The essential practices do not have to be observed or scored in the order indicated in the tool. A notes section provides a place to write comments about the observations that support the ratings.

References: The First Steps IFSP Meeting Observation Tool was developed with information from the following sources:

Agreed-Upon Practices: http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/topics/families/AgreedUponPractices_FinalDraft2_01_08.pdf

Key Principles: http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/topics/families/Principles_LooksLike_DoesntLookLike3_11_08.pdf

Division of Early Childhood- Recommended Practices (DEC-RP): <http://ectacenter.org/decrp/>

Reaching Potentials through Recommended Practices Observation Scale – Home Visiting (RP² OS-HV): http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp/RP2_OS-HV.pdf

Acknowledgments: DESE staff in the First Steps early intervention program would like to thank the following individuals for their feedback and guidance during the development of this tool:

SPOE Directors and Providers on the Program Improvement Work Group

Sherry Franklin, Technical Assistance Specialist- The Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center

Anne Lucas, Technical Assistance Specialist- The Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center

Debbie Shaver, Ph.D., Evaluation Specialist- IDEA Data Center (IDC)

Date of the Observation:	Type of Meeting:	Person Observing:	Person Being Observed:			
Essential Practice #1: Establish and Maintain a Collaborative and Respectful Climate for All IFSP Team Members, Including the Family.			All indicators observed	Most indicators observed (2 of 3 or 3 of 4)	Some indicators observed (1 of 3 or 2 of 4)	No indicators observed
Observable Components						
A. Explain the purpose and process of the IFSP meeting with all members. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Explain all team members, including the family, are encouraged to participate in IFSP discussions (e.g., share ideas, ask questions, discuss observations, problem-solve). <input type="checkbox"/> Describe how IFSP discussions reflect the concerns, priorities and resources identified by the family. <input type="checkbox"/> Describe how IFSP discussions lead to the identification of services and supports to assist the family’s priorities.			4	3	2	1
B. Share information with all team members in a clear manner. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Use simple and short statements. <input type="checkbox"/> Explain complex ideas or concepts so they are more easily understood. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid the use of jargon so all team members understand what is being shared. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate these indicators throughout the IFSP meeting.			4	3	2	1
C. Use active and reflective listening skills. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize information shared by all team members (“It sounds like you...”, “I hear you saying...”). <input type="checkbox"/> Pause frequently during conversations to invite team members to ask clarifying questions or offer input. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask open-ended questions (“What do you think about...”, “Tell us more about...”). <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate these indicators throughout the IFSP meeting.			4	3	2	1
D. Facilitate the IFSP meeting to include the family as an equal team member. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the family knows the child best (e.g., the child’s likes, dislikes, strengths, and challenges). <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on what the family wants to accomplish when developing or revising the IFSP. <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge and validate the family’s perspective and their unique situation (e.g., “That must be challenging for you.” “I can tell you are excited when. . .”). <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate these indicators throughout the IFSP meeting.			4	3	2	1
			Total: ____/16			
NOTES:						

Date of the Observation:	Type of Meeting:	Person Observing:	Person Being Observed:			
Essential Practice #3: Determine IFSP Outcomes for the Child and Family, Considering the Family’s Priorities.			All indicators observed	Most indicators observed (2 of 3 or 3 of 4)	Some indicators observed (1 of 3 or 2 of 4)	No indicators observed
A. Identify and/or revise outcomes for the child and family that are functional. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Connect child/family outcomes to priorities shared by the family. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss how outcomes will build on what the IFSP team knows about the child’s present level of development (e.g., “Right now, your child can... so the next step for this outcome would be to...”). <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss how outcomes will support child/ family’s participation in natural occurring routines (e.g., “You mentioned your family goes to...” “You stated you would like your family to be able to...”).			4	3	2	1
B. Identify and/or revise strategies and activities to support the identified functional outcomes. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss what the family is already doing in familiar places (e.g., “What have you tried when you go...?” “Where else would you like to...?”). <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss familiar things that motivate the child to learn (e.g., “What is your child’s favorite toy?” “How does your child show you what she/he likes...dislikes...?”) <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss how to support the child’s interactions with familiar people (e.g., older siblings, child care provider).			4	3	2	1
C. Identify and/or revise the criteria for determining progress toward achieving outcomes. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss what can be reasonably achieved in an agreed upon time frame. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss when the IFSP team will know the outcomes are achieved. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss and/or review how the outcomes may need to change to reflect the needs, priorities and lifestyles of the child and family.			4	3	2	1
Total: ____/12						
NOTES:						

Date of the Observation:	Type of Meeting:	Person Observing:	Person Being Observed:			
Essential Practice #4: Prepare the Family for Early Intervention Services and Next Steps.			All indicators observed	Most indicators observed (2 of 3 or 3 of 4)	Some indicators observed (1 of 3 or 2 of 4)	No indicators observed
			Observable Components			
A. Identify services and supports necessary to achieve the identified outcomes. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the family’s resources related to the outcomes (e.g., “Who is helping you with this now?” ”How is that agency/person assisting you and your family?”) <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss any additional resources the family needs (e.g., child care options, utility assistance). <input type="checkbox"/> Identify or review the Primary Provider who will assist the family with IFSP outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify or review whether the Primary Provider needs assistance from others (e.g., use Incremental Decision Making, identify supporting and/or ancillary providers).			4	3	2	1
B. Identify next steps in preparation for services to begin or continue. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the process for services to begin, continue or change (e.g., timely services, when Providers will visit, how often). <input type="checkbox"/> Identify the best way to communicate with the family when scheduling visits or meetings (e.g., who to contact, method of contact via text, call, email). <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the Service Coordinator and Provider roles (e.g., the Service Coordinator checks in frequently with the family to address questions/concerns; the Primary Provider visits the family regularly for services).			4	3	2	1
C. Identify next steps in planning for upcoming IFSP meetings. Key indicators include: <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the frequency of IFSP meetings based on when the next meeting with the family will occur (e.g., Six-Month review, Annual, Transition). <input type="checkbox"/> Explain how changes in the family’s life may impact future services or settings (e.g., having a baby, changing job, new child care, changing insurance coverage). <input type="checkbox"/> Explain how the Early Intervention Team (EIT) supports the family (e.g., Providers keep progress notes, Service Coordinator reviews progress notes, the EIT strategize during meetings).			4	3	2	1
Total: _____/12						
NOTES:						

References for Essential Practices and Each Observable Component

Essential Practice	Observable Component	Sources for Technical Assistance and Follow-Up Training
#1: Establish and Maintain a Collaborative and Respectful Climate for All IFSP Team Members, Including the Family.	A.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #2 7KP #4 DEC-RP Teaming & Collaboration- Families are Full Team Members Checklist
	B.	AUP (First Contacts) #2 (IFSP Meeting) #1 7KP #4 DEC-RP Teaming & Collaboration- Communication for Teaming and Collaboration Checklist DEC-RP Teaming & Collaboration Practitioner Guide 1.1
	C.	AUP (First Contacts) #2 7KP #4 DEC-RP Teaming & Collaboration- Communication for Teaming and Collaboration Checklist DEC-RP Teaming & Collaboration Practitioner Guide 2.1
	D.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #2 7KP #4 DEC-RP Family- Family-Centered Practices Checklist DEC-RP Family- Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist DEC-RP Family Practitioner Guide 1.1
#2 Prioritize the Family’s Concerns Considering Child and Family Assessment Information.	A.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #3 and #4 7KP #4 DEC-RP Family- Family Capacity-Building Practices Checklist
	B.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #3 7KP #5 DEC-RP Family- Family-Centered Practices Checklist
	C.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #3 and #6 7KP #5 DEC-RP Family- Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist
#3 Determine IFSP Outcomes for the Child and Family, Considering the Family’s Priorities.	A.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #7 7KP #1, #2 and #5 DEC-RP Family- Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist
	B.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #6 and #7 7KP #1 and #5 DEC-RP Family- Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist
	C.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #6 and #8 7KP #5 DEC-RP Family- Family Engagement Practices Checklist
#4 Prepare the Family for Early Intervention Services and Next Steps.	A.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #7 7KP #2 and #6 DEC-RP Family- Family-Centered Practices Checklist
	B.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #11 and #12 7KP #4 DEC-RP Family- Family Engagement Practices Checklist
	C.	AUP (IFSP Meeting) #1 AUP (IFSP Meeting) #12 7KP #4 DEC-RP Family- Family Engagement Practices Checklist

AUP= Agreed Upon Practices

7KP= Seven Key Principles

DEC-RP= Division of Early Childhood- Recommended Practices