



**first
steps**



Mission

To partner with Hoosier families whose young children are experiencing developmental delays and connect them with services that help them promote their child's development.

Vision

All Indiana families have a strong foundation to advocate for their infants and toddlers to grow and flourish to their highest potential.

Values which are...

- Family-centered
- Strengths-based
- Relationship-based
- Holistic
- Culturally competent
- Routines-based
- Individualized





What is First Steps?

- Early intervention services for children birth to 3 years old with developmental delays or at risk for developmental delays
- Established and funded through federal law and state rules (IDEA Part C)
- Provides early intervention services that can help eliminate/reduce the need for later services and thus save costs.



How and where First Steps services occur...

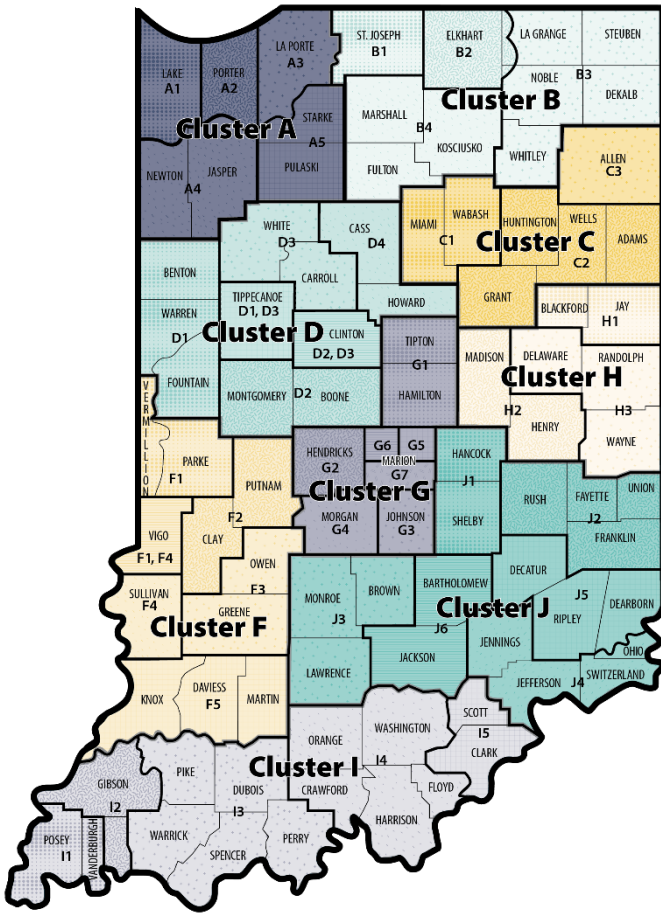


~The family is the center of First Steps services and family engagement is key.

~First Steps builds upon the parent/professional relationship and supports parents as the advocate for their child.

~The goal is to work with the family/caregivers to develop a plan which educates and empowers.

~“Natural Environments” are places and routines that are typical for the child and family.



- The state of Indiana is divided into 9 service regions called Clusters
- Each Cluster is required to have a System Point of Entry (SPOE)
- There are 42 Provider Agencies statewide



Who is eligible for First Steps services?

~ An infant/toddler who is 0-3 years old.

~They must have a developmental delay or have a diagnosed medical condition that makes it likely that they will develop a delay.

~Specifically, there must be a 25% delay in one area or a 20% delay in two or more areas of development:

- Cognitive
- Physical (gross motor, fine motor)
- Communication (receptive and expressive)
- Social/emotional development
- Adaptive skills



Medical categories of eligibility for Part C services:

- Chromosomal abnormalities
- Genetic or congenital disorders
- Sensory impairment including vision or hearing
- Inborn errors of metabolism
- Neurological abnormality in newborn period
- Congenital infection
- Low birth weight (1500 grams/3.1 pounds)
- Severe attachment disorders
- Severe toxic exposure - pre and postnatal exposure (including FAS)

What type of services does First Steps provide?



Assistive Technology
Audiology
Developmental Therapy
Nutrition
Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy
Psychology Services
Service Coordination
Social Work

Speech Therapy
Transportation
Vision Services



Number of children receiving each type of service:

(As of 3/31/2021)

- ❖ Speech Therapy: 15,218 (65%)
- ❖ Occupational Therapy: 13,200 (56%)
- ❖ Developmental Therapy: 12,543 (53%)
- ❖ Physical Therapy: 11,843 (50%)
- ❖ Audiology: 709 (3%)
- ❖ Nutrition: 326 (1%)
- ❖ Psychology: 167 (1%)
- ❖ Social Work: 27 (0%)



Indiana State First Steps Profile Report

As of 6/30/2022



The total number of children and families served annually:
27,712





How much does First Steps cost?

- ~There is never a fee for an eligibility evaluation.
- ~Regardless of eligibility, all children are entitled to service coordination.
- ~On-going services might include a co-pay, depending on family income and resources.



Anyone can refer a child to First Steps...

- Parents
- Physician
- Child Care Provider
- Grandma
- Etc.



What is the referral process?

Step 1: A referral is made to a local SPOE office.

Step 2: A Service Coordinator sets up the initial appointment with the family.

Step 3: Eligibility Determination Assessment

Step 4: Eligibility meeting; the IFSP is developed.

Step 5: Services begin!



Evaluation & Assessment Tool



The State of Indiana has chosen the Assessment Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS). Which is a comprehensive curriculum-based assessment.

~The purpose of assessment is to:
help establish eligibility for services and to
develop meaningful, functional, and developmentally
appropriate outcomes/goals.

Individual Family Service Plan



The **IFSP** is a process and a legal document that considers a family's priorities, concerns, and resources regarding their child with special needs.

The purpose of the **IFSP** is to identify and organize resources to facilitate priorities and goals for the child in the context of their family.

Some common myths and facts about IDEA/Part C



MYTHS...

- Early intervention services are mandatory
- Children 'qualify' for certain services
- First Steps is a medical/clinical or education model
- HIPAA requirements

FACTS...

- First Steps serves ALL children in Indiana who are birth to 3 yrs.
- Part C services follow a developmental model
- FERPA guidelines
- EI services are fluid. Children can come in and out of the program
- 45 and 30 day timelines

Thank you!



@FirstStepsIndiana



**Division of Disability and
Rehabilitative Services**

www.firststeps.in.gov

1.800.545.7763

firststepsweb.fssa@fssa.in.gov

Constance Young

Director of Training and Outreach

constance.young@fssa.in.gov