What is an IFSP?

The Individualized Family Service Plan, or IFSP, is a family’s written plan for Infant-Toddler Program services that a baby with hearing loss will get. It shows how the family and a team of experts will work together to provide the services the child needs to grow and develop and that a family needs to help their child. The IFSP is family-centered, meaning that parents will be active team members and the key decision makers in the IFSP.

How do I get an IFSP for my deaf or hard of hearing baby?

Before an IFSP can be written, a baby must be found eligible for services. If you suspect your baby has a hearing loss, or if you already know your baby has a hearing loss because of a hearing screening, you can request a multidisciplinary assessment. That is a comprehensive evaluation that checks on all areas of your baby’s development.

The evaluation team may get information about your baby’s development from the following places:

- Audiological evaluations
- Your baby’s medical history
- Doctor’s reports
- Direct observation and feedback from family members (including you) and professionals who have worked with your baby
- Results from developmental tests

If the multidisciplinary assessment shows a hearing loss and/or other areas of need, your state must coordinate an IFSP meeting. The evaluations, IFSP meeting, and service coordination must be done at no charge to the family.

How does the referral process work?

Anyone can make a referral, including parents, medical care providers, neighbors, family members, foster parents, and day care providers. You can also call the local regional center to request an evaluation for the child.

Who writes the IFSP?

The IFSP team writes the document together. The family and service providers make up the team.

What goes into the IFSP?

- Your child’s current development areas and needs. This may be referred to as the "Present Level of Performance."
- Family information. This includes the resources your family has for supporting your baby, as well as your priorities for your baby.
- Goals. The expected outcome of early intervention services must be described.
- Services. The IFSP must outline all services that your baby and your family will receive. This information should include how often they will be provided, how long each session will last, where they will be provided, and if services are not provided in your home, the IFSP must explain why not.
- Costs. The IFSP must identify who will pay for the services.
- Service coordination. The person overseeing the IFSP must be named.
- A transition plan. There must be a plan for moving your baby out of early intervention services and into special education by the time your child reaches age 3.
The Early Intervention / IFSP Process

Identification and Referral
- EI program receives referral, collects information on referral source's reason(s) for referral and results of screening or assessment.
- Service Coordinator assigned. Child record established.
- Service Coordinator contacts family to gather family’s concerns and general information about child, provide information about program, and determine family's interest in scheduling initial visit.

Intake and Family Assessment
- Service Coordinator: 
  - Provides and explains rights;
  - Obtains written parent consent for evaluation and assessment of child and request/release of information forms;
  - Provides prior notice for evaluation.
- Service Coordinator meets with family and:
  - Conducts screening if appropriate;
  - Compiles program;
  - Determines if child automatically eligible (diagnosed condition);
- Service Coordinator schedules Initial Visit with family (confirms in writing); determines need to conduct screening.
- Service Coordinator acknowledges referral in writing with referral source.
- Service Coordinator requests existing developmental and medical information.
- Service Coordinator: 
  - Determines if child automatically eligible (diagnosed condition);
  - Determines necessary evaluation and assessment to identify child's developmental status and unique needs in each developmental area;
  - Determines composition of evaluation and assessment team;
  - Schedules evaluation and assessment with team and family at place and time convenient with family;
  - Provides written notice; and
  - Provides and explains rights.

Child Evaluation and Assessment
- Service Coordinator prepares family and coordinates team preparation for evaluation and assessment.
- Team, including family, conducts evaluation and assessment, determines eligibility, and provides prior notice and rights based on eligibility decision.
- If NOT eligible, service coordinator links with appropriate community resources and how to re-contact program if concerns in future.
- If eligible
  - Implement services for which consent was provided. For those services that consent is not provided, service coordinator provides and explains parental rights (including information on complaints / mediation process); provides prior notice to not provide these services and how to re-contact program in future.

IFSP Development
- Service Coordinator provides family with prior notice for initial IFSP Meeting and prepares family for meeting.
- IFSP team meets to develop IFSP including:
  - Reviewing parents' priorities and concerns;
  - Establishing functional / measurable outcomes;
  - Identifying strategies;
  - Identifying necessary services and timelines for initiating services.
- Service coordinator obtains parents consent for IFSP services (signing IFSP).
- Service coordinator links with appropriate community resources and how to re-contact program if concerns in future.
- Service Coordinator prepares family and coordinates team preparation for evaluation and assessment.
- Team, including family, conducts evaluation and assessment, determines eligibility, and provides prior notice and rights based on eligibility decision.
- If NOT eligible, service coordinator links with appropriate community resources and how to re-contact program if concerns in future.
- If eligible
  - Implement services for which consent was provided. For those services that consent is not provided, service coordinator provides and explains parental rights (including information on complaints / mediation process); provides prior notice to not provide these services and how to re-contact program in future.

Service Delivery and Transition
- Service Coordinator ensures that service providers implement timely IFSP services.
- Service Coordinator coordinates ongoing service provision and ensures timely IFSP reviews and annual IFSP meeting to modify IFSP.
- Service Coordinator: 
  - Provides prior written notice / rights) and coordinates timely transition conference;
  - Coordinates developing transition conference;
  - Ensures LEA notification;
  - Obtains consent for release of information to appropriate entity;
  - Ensures implementation of transition plan to ensure smooth transition.
- Service Coordinator: 
  - Provides transition follow-up;
  - Provides prior notice/rights to discontinue services;
  - Closes child record.

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*Note: Programs differ in who is assigned to each responsibility. Service coordinator could be other service provider.*