

Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Administrative Policy Manual

Policy: Early Childhood Services Policy

Board Approved: 6/14

Revised: 11/19

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Section: 5.1

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The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, hereinafter referred to as the Board, provides support to parents and caregivers of young children with developmental disabilities and delays by sharing knowledge, tools and resources to promote and enhance their child's development year around.

Early childhood services are provided to eligible children from birth through age five. These services are voluntary, unless court-ordered. They are designed to be consistent with the following principles:

1. Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts;
2. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children's learning and development;
3. The primary role of a service provider in early intervention is to work with and support family members and caregivers in children's lives;
4. The early intervention process, from initial contacts through transition, must be dynamic and individualized to reflect the child's and family members' preferences, learning styles and cultural beliefs;
5. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Early Childhood Family Service Plan (ECFSP) outcomes must be functional and based on children's and families' needs and family-identified priorities;
6. The family's priorities, needs and interests are addressed most appropriately by a primary provider who represents and receives team and community support; and
7. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research, and relevant laws and regulations.

The Board provides service coordination and conducts required eligibility evaluations and assessments at no cost to the family. As long as it is fiscally manageable, early intervention services of specialized instruction, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy when provided by employees of the Board, or contracted personnel in such positions, will also be provided at no cost to the family.

I. Governance

Services for children from birth through age two are consistent with Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities' early intervention rule (Ohio Administrative Code 5123-10-01 through 5123-10-04.

Service Coordinators are dually certified by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities as Early Intervention Service Coordinators consistent

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with the requirements of OAC 5123-10-04 and the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities as service and support administrators consistent with the requirements of OAC 5123:2-1-11.

Developmental Specialists are certified by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities consistent with the requirements of OAC 5123:2-5-05.

Therapists are licensed by their respective Boards. (Ohio Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology or the Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Athletic Trainers Board.)

II. Service Coordinator Assignment

All children receiving early childhood services are assigned a service coordinator. Families may request a new service coordinator at any time by contacting the early childhood service coordination team leader or the director of Early Childhood.

When a child under the age of three is referred to early intervention, a service coordinator is immediately assigned to work with the family during the eligibility process and throughout their participation in early intervention.

When a child over the age of three is referred for services, a service coordinator is assigned once the child has been determined eligible for services. Children and families requiring a higher degree of support will have these needs considered at the time a service coordinator assignment is made. Some indicators that a family has more than usual support needs include:

- The child is enrolled on a Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver;
- The child meets the definition of “current need” as defined by OAC 5123: 9-04;
- The child and family are actively involved with Licking County Children’s Services;
- The child lives with one or more immediate family members that are eligible for board services; or
- The team identifies other significant support needs that impact the assignment of a service coordinator.

III. Eligibility and Evaluation/Assessment

1. Birth through age two-
Children eligible for Ohio early intervention services as defined in OAC 5123-10-02 are also eligible for the Board’s early childhood services.

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The Board conducts developmental evaluations that are consistent with the requirements in OAC 5123-10-02. The Board's evaluation team uses the Battelle Developmental Inventory-2 (BDI-2) to determine eligibility. If the child is eligible for early intervention, the team a child assessment will be conducted in accordance to OAC 5123-10-02. Child assessment may be completed utilizing formal tools, observation and /or care giver interview.

Re-determinations of eligibility and annual child assessments are completed in accordance with OAC 5123-10-02.

A family directed assessment is offered to each family of an eligible child birth through age two in accordance with OAC 5123-10-02. This is offered before the initial IFSP is developed and annually thereafter. The family may decline to participate in the family assessment. The Board uses the Routines Based Interview (RBI) with ecomap to conduct family directed assessments.

2. Ages three through five-
Eligibility for children ages three through five is defined by OAC 5123-4-01.

The following are used to determine the presence of developmental delays in children that are three, four or five years of age:

- a. The preschool evaluation team report (ETR) for children referred to a special education preschool program; or
- b. The BDI-2 for children who are suspected of having two delays but have not gone through the preschool ~~multifactor~~ evaluation process or when determined to be appropriate by the child's team; or
- c. A comprehensive developmental evaluation completed by a medical provider.

For three, four and five year olds the Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP) or other similar tool may be used for assessment purposes. The assessment is completed when determined appropriate by the service provider (SP).

For children ages three, four and five, the RBI is utilized as a family directed assessment and is completed prior to the development of the initial Early Childhood Family Service Plan (ECFSP) unless an RBI had been completed within the six months prior to the child turning three. The RBI is administered annually thereafter.

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IV. Planning

For infants and toddlers enrolled in early intervention, the IFSP format provided by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities is used consistent with the provisions of OAC 5123-10-02.

For three, four and five year olds, an ECFP is used by the Service Provider (SP) to document desired outcomes and related strategies. The plan is family-centered. Outcomes are based on the family priorities. Service Coordinators (SC) complete a one page profile that contains basic information about the child which is shared with the child's parent/family, Service Provider and with parent permission is shared with the child's IEP team. The Service Coordinator helps the family address other needs not addressed by the Service Provider, such as referrals to social service and community resources, funding sources, adaptive equipment, etc.

Joint action planning which occurs at the conclusion of every visit ensures the parents' active participation in the use of new knowledge and skills between visits. It involves discussion of what the parent agrees to do between visits to use the information discussed or skills that were practiced. It can also include tasks the service provider will complete before the next visit. The joint action plan should also include a focus for what will be addressed during the next visit.

V. Service Delivery

Each child/family from birth through age two is assigned a Primary Service Provider (PSP), whose role is to support the child/family through parent coaching which is focused on the functional outcomes written in the IFSP. Parent coaching increases parent confidence and competence in promoting the child's participation in everyday life routines and activities, this naturally serves to foster skill acquisition across multiple developmental domains.

Each child/family from birth through age two has access to the support of a team consisting of highly skilled practitioners including a developmental specialist, a physical therapist, occupational therapist and a speech-language pathologist. One of these individuals will serve as the PSP. The PSP acts as the liaison between the family and the rest of the team.

Families with children ages three, four and five will have a developmental specialist as their service provider. They are encouraged to include any other providers of services arranged for by the family and/or service coordinator as active member(s) of the child's team, including preschool special educators and therapists and private providers of therapy services.

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VI. Documentation

Documentation of services delivered by early childhood service coordinators, primary service providers, and other professionals employed or contracted by the Board are documented and stored electronically. Data and records of all children enrolled in Ohio Early Intervention will be maintained consistent with the requirements of OAC 5123-10-02.

VII. Procedures

Birth through age two:

1. Upon referral to Early Intervention a service coordinator (SC) is assigned. The SC is responsible for explaining parent rights, obtaining consents and providing prior written notice in accordance to OAC 5123-10-01 and 5123-10-02.
2. If a delay is suspected and the child is not otherwise eligible, the early intervention service coordinator will initiate a referral for a developmental evaluation to be completed. Members of the early childhood team complete the evaluation process in accordance with OAC 5123-10-02. Consistent with this rule an evaluation is not required if the child is eligible by diagnosis on the list or diagnosis on the form E1-12.
3. If the child is determined eligible for early intervention, a child assessment for initial need determinations will be completed in accordance to OAC 5123-10-02.
4. If eligibility has been established and the family wishes to participate in the Board's early intervention services, the most likely PSP will be selected by the early childhood team. The selection is based on child/family strengths and needs; the recommendations of the evaluation/assessment team; and availability of family/team members. Caregivers are invited to participate in the selection of the most likely PSP via phone call, video or physical attendance at meeting.
5. The early childhood team meets weekly to promote collaboration and consultation amongst team members.
6. Completion of the Family Assessment and development of the IFSP is coordinated and facilitated by the early childhood service coordinator and is completed within 45 days of the referral date. The most likely PSP also participates in the completion of the RBI and development of the IFSP at which time final determination of PSP is made. The child's IFSP contains

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functional outcomes identified by the team and the services needed to address those outcomes.

7. The primary service provider addresses the functional outcomes on the IFSP through parent coaching.
8. A joint action plan is developed by the PSP and the family/caregiver at the end of each visit.
9. Early childhood services are provided in the home or other places the child normally spends time.
10. When an outcome in the IFSP is met, the PSP will notify the early intervention service coordinator. The service coordinator will schedule and conduct IFSP review as needed. Reviews will be conducted at least every 180 days.
11. As required by OAC 5123-10-02 at least 90 days before the child's third birthday, the service coordinator shall include at least one transition outcome in the IFSP and ensure that a Transition Planning Conference is conducted. The SC can assist the family with the child's transition from early intervention to preschool or other appropriate services as requested by the family.

Ages three through five:

Early childhood services continue to be voluntary when a child turns three years of age. Most children will be enrolled in a special education preschool program by their parents/caregivers. Ongoing early childhood services are intended to compliment, but not supplant, a preschool special education program.

1. If the family/caregiver wishes to discontinue early childhood services a demographic change form will be completed by the service coordinator and change of status noted in the Board's information system.
2. If the family/caregiver wishes to continue to receive services, the Director of Early Childhood Services will assign a developmental specialist (DS) as the service provider (SP) if the family was formerly assigned a speech/language pathologist, occupational, or physical therapist as PSP. If the child was assigned to a developmental specialist prior to age three, they will continue to receive services from the assigned DS as they transition to over three services unless the parent requests a change.
3. The SP will update the Routines Based Interview unless one was completed

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within previous six months and facilitate the development of the Early Childhood Family Service Plan to include functional outcomes and strategies needed to meet those outcomes.

4. The SP will visit the family/caregiver at least monthly to assess progress on outcomes listed on the service plan and to update the joint action plan.
5. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to contact their child's Individual Education Plan team for assistance with developmental issues that are outside of the developmental specialist's expertise.
6. Early childhood services are discontinued when a child turns six years of age or when any of the following occur:
 - A child achieves developmental milestones for current age;
 - Parent/caregiver feels confident to meet child's developmental needs without the assistance of the early childhood services; or
 - Any other reason the parent no longer wants services.
7. The early childhood service coordinator typically will not change at child's 3rd birthday unless the family requests a different service coordinator or re-assignment would benefit the child/family due to changes in their situation, etc.
8. Service coordinators serving children ages three, four and five will document services provided consistent with the requirements of OAC 5160-48-01 so that available federal funds can be accessed by the Board.
9. Prior to turning six years of age the Board will arrange for the Level of Care functional assessment to be administered to determine the presence of substantial functional limitations in at least three major life areas. Permission was granted to use this tool in lieu of the Children's Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (COEDI) to determine eligibility.
10. If at any time the child discontinues early childhood services; or service coordination, the service coordinator will complete the necessary documentation to exit the child from services.

VIII. Parents' Rights and Procedural Safeguards

For infants and toddlers enrolled in the Ohio early intervention, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities has established parents' rights and procedural safeguards that protect the rights of parents and their eligible children. The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities will adhere to the

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requirements of procedural safeguards as found in OAC 5123-10-01.

The Board will ensure that parents of all children ages three and older are annually informed of the Board's complaint resolution policy and procedure.