

Module 1: Early Identification: Newborn Infant Hearing Screening and Evaluation; The Importance of Ensuring Early Access to Language

Section: The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)



Activity 1.6: Guiding Families in Understanding the IFSP Process

- A. Discuss the usefulness of an IFSP document. Include the importance of looking at the whole child and how this document provides the opportunity to think about the needs of both their child and their family. Brainstorm areas of support that might be helpful to a family. This is an informal way of starting to consider what may be included in the formal IFSP for their child and family.
- B. Explore possible services available to families in the community. There is often a variety of specialized services, including sign language classes, parent-child playgroups, and support groups, that can be incorporated into the child's IFSP:
- It is particularly important to talk about options for meeting other families and emphasizing that this can be included in the plan for services.
 - Review some of the parent interviews included in this module to provide parents with an idea of how a parent group might support their family:
 - English time marker—4:15-4:33, 5:25-5:53, 6:35-7:21
 - ASL time marker—4:15-4:32, 6:37-7:21, 5:18-5:52

C. Discuss the following IFSP considerations for families of a child with identified disabilities:

- How to use the IFSP as an opportunity to review assessments and determine what type of therapies may be helpful. This is a time to discuss the roles and different possible members of the team (e.g., physical therapist, occupational therapist, teacher of the deaf, speech-language therapist) and to determine what combination of services makes the most sense for the child and family.
- How every family has needs that vary depending on a variety of factors. It is important for families to know that the IFSP is a fluid document that belongs to them. As such, they can make any changes that best fit their family at any time.

Additional Resources:

- [Special Education Guide, The Who, What, Why of an Individualized Family Service Plan \(IFSP\)](#)
- [Writing the IFSP for Your Child](#) (Center for Parent Information and Resources)

Developed with [Meg Osgood](#)