

## Family Training

Family Training includes the design of learning environments and activities that promote the child's acquisition of skills in a variety of developmental areas including cognitive processes and social interaction; providing families with information, skills and support related to enhancing the skill development of the child; and curriculum planning, including the planned interaction of personnel, materials, and time and space, that lead to achieving the goals in the child's IFSP/FSP.

The focus of Early Intervention is Family Training. Documentation in the child's file must support that Family Training is the core component of Early Intervention Services. Once trained, the parent should be able to perform the skills taught by the Early Interventionist.

The caregiver *must* participate during scheduled visits. If three (3) consecutive Family Training visits are missed by the caregiver without notification the Early Interventionist will send a letter to the parent asking if they wish for the services to continue. If a reply is not received within ten (10) calendar days, the parent will be notified that services will end. The file would then be closed for a child over the age of three and for procedures for a BN child refer to the BabyNet manual.

### Who is eligible to receive Family Training?

A child is eligible for Family training with SCDDSN if he/she:

- Is three or four years of age, is eligible for SCDDSN services or has been determined by SCDDSN to be "At-Risk" and meets the following Family Training Indicators;
  - Child demonstrates cognitive delay  $\geq 25\%$ ; or
  - Child demonstrates social-emotional delay  $\geq 25\%$ ; or
  - Child demonstrate a delay in one domain  $\geq 40\%$ ; or
  - Child demonstrates  $\geq 20\%$  delay in *any* two domains;

A child is birth to three and BabyNet eligible;

**Child is eligible for DDSN but Family does not want Family Training**

For a child who is birth to three, DDSN eligible and eligible for Family Training, but the parent is not interested in receiving that service; these children must remain in Early Intervention. The Early Interventionist is responsible for coordinating DDSN services, (Respite, Family Support, etc) and ensuring that the BabyNet Policy and Procedure Manual is followed.

**Who is NOT eligible to receive Family Training?**

A child is not eligible for Family Training when any of the following apply:

- Parent requests services to cease;
- Child no longer needs the service;
- Child is over the age of three and is not eligible for DDSN services;
- Child is 3-4 and does not meet the Family Training Indicators unless justification is submitted and approved by DDSN Office of Children's Services Staff;
- Child turns five years old unless justification is submitted and approved by DDSN Office of Children's Services staff; or
- Child resides in an institutional setting (i.e., habilitation center (formerly ICF/MR), nursing facility, a hospital within the Department of Mental Health or any other psychiatric hospital);
- A child who has turned six years of age.

**Specific Roles and Responsibilities of Family Training Providers include:**

1. Coordinating all activities through the IFSP/FSP process and in conjunction with the goals established on the child's IFSP/FSP;
2. Providing Family Training as identified on the plan. For example, if the plan indicates a need for FT 4 times per month for sixty minutes, and the EI is forced to cancel a Family Training visit, the visit must be made up (if the family agrees to or has requested the visit be made up) prior to the end of that month. Make up visits cannot be made up in the following month unless the canceled visit was in the last week of the month. All make up visits must be documented as such in service notes, regardless of whether or not the visit was made up with an additional visit another week or if the visit was made up incrementally over several visits throughout that month;
3. Submitting a Service Justification Form (Attachment #2) when a team decides that a child needs less than 2 hours per month of Family Training. The form must be submitted to DDSN Children's Services staff for signature within 14 days of

- identification. A response should be provided by Children's Services staff within 14 days.
4. If, for any reason, the parent has requested a decrease in Family Training that will not last more than 3 months the Service Justification Form is not needed. This request should be documented in the service notes;
  5. Submitting the following to DDSN Children's Services staff when a team indicates the need for more than 4 hours of Family Training per month; IFSP/FSP, Service justification form that documents why increase is being requested, data sheets and service notes, and any other documentation that supports the need. This information must be sent to DDSN Children's Services staff within 14 days of completion of the plan for approval. A response should be given by DDSN Children's Services staff within 14 days;
  6. Offering an alternate EI to family if the EI is going to be out of the office for an extended period of time (more than a month). If the EI's leave of absence will be less than one month the EI should offer to make the visits up during that month. If family chooses to wait for their EI's return they must be explained that they will continue to receive Service Coordination and they must be made aware of whom the Service Coordinator will be in their EI's absence. ( If the family chooses to the decline Family Training in the absence of the EI, a Service Justification Form must be completed and signed by the parent). The form must then be given to the Early Intervention Supervisor for review/approval.
  7. Being available for all family members/caregivers including siblings and grandparents and:
    - Providing services according to the frequency outlined in the IFSP/FSP as determined by the team.
    - Scheduling home visits at times acceptable to the family and at locations within the child's Natural Environment.
  8. Teaching the parent developmental skills to enhance their child's development. Documentation in the child's file must support that caregiver training is a core component of this service;
  9. Documenting all Family Training visits with the family/caregiver. The Family Training Summary sheets must be in duplicate form. When Family Training is provided with someone other than a parent the Family Training summary sheet should be left with the caregiver and they are responsible for sharing with the family. (See Attachment #1 for sample Family Training Summary Sheet.

Documentation must include:

- Objectives for each visit, which address the child's needs across environments and are obtainable by the family.
- Summary of activities.
- The level of participation of parent in the family training process. To state that the parent was present or that the family participated is not sufficient. The summary should include what instructions and/or strategies the EI gave the parent during the session to achieve a certain activity: For example, Mom gave Jane support at the base of her trunk while EI presented objects to encourage her to reach for and grasp the rattle.
- Follow-up activities for the family to work on until the next Family Training session.
- Reminders for upcoming appointments, if applicable.
- Date/time of next family training visit.
- Early Interventionist and family member/caregiver signatures on Family Training summary sheets.
- Time the Family Training session begins and the time it ends.

10. If a child's plan calls for 4 times per month of family training, EI's should not provide services during the fifth week in months when this occurs.

11. Delivering services identified as needs on the plan as written. For example, if the plan indicates 60 minutes of Family Training, this must be provided apart from Service Coordination. It is not permissible to provide 45 minutes of family training and 15 minutes of Service Coordination to meet the required 60 minutes.

### **Children Turning Five who need services**

The transition process for children turning 5 should begin at 4 ½ years but no later than 30 days prior to the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the EI and family feel that the child should continue to receive Family Training, the EI must submit the Service Justification Form (See Attachment #7 for Service Justification Form) no later than 14 days prior to the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. For this exception to be granted the child's circumstances must fall into one of the following major categories:

- Medically Fragile/homebound
- DSS Involvement with Child Protective Services
- Recent Major Life Change or Event (within 6 months)
- Late referral (child referred after the age of four)
- Other-Please describe current circumstances

A child meeting the Family Training Indicators is not enough to justify a five year old remaining in Early Intervention. The child and family should continue to receive Family Training until a determination is made by the Office of Children's Services staff. A response should be given by DDSN Children's Services staff within 14 days.

For children who enter the system through the USC Screening Process and are in need of Family Training an Early Interventionist must submit a Service Justification Form to the Office of Children's Services for approval of this exception.

### **Children Transitioning Out of Early Intervention:**

For children over the age of three who are permanently eligible for DDSN services or eligible under "ID" or "Autism" Time Limited, the EI should discuss the transition to Service Coordination if the family no longer needs family training. If the child is eligible in an at-risk category and permanent eligibility cannot be established, the child's case must close. **EXCEPTIONS:** If the child is on the PDD Waiver waiting list **OR** the ID/RD waiver waiting list and they have a diagnosis that has a high probability of making them a lifelong consumer of DDSN services they should transfer to Level II Service Coordination.

A child meeting the Family Training Indicators is not enough to justify a five year old remaining in Early Intervention. The child and family should continue to receive Family Training until a determination is made by the Office of Children's Services staff. A response should be given by DDSN Children's Services staff within 14 days.

Early Intervention services can and should be provided in a variety of locations and settings that provide maximum benefit to the child and family. There are however situations in which it is not appropriate to provide Family Training services consistently or with certain professionals because of their own background or professional training.

- An Early Interventionist should not be routinely attending doctor's or therapy appointments on a consistent basis. For example, an occasional visit to the physical therapist with the child to discuss and observe positioning techniques for use during Family Training is acceptable. It is not acceptable to attend doctor's appointments or therapy appointments on a weekly-basis, even if the parent requested that the EI attend. These visits should be justified in service notes and should include the reason for attending the visit and how the Early Interventionist participated in the visit while they were there. Because active participation is required, there are certain specialties in which it would never be appropriate for EI's to participate. Those specialties include; but are not limited to:
  - i. Cardiologist
  - ii. Chiropractor
  - iii. Opthomologist
  - iv. Audiologist
  - v. Neurosurgeon
  - vi. Endocrinologist
  - vii. Nephrologist
  - viii. Optomotrist
  - ix. Oncologist

If you have a question about whether or not it is permissible to attend a certain appointment, please contact DDSN Children's Services staff.

- An Early Interventionist should not provide Family Training in a public preschool setting as Special Education teachers are trained to work with children with disabilities and their special needs. Visits to the preschool class for observational purposes (for plan and/or Assessment completion) on an occasional basis, but not more than quarterly, is allowed. This does not apply to children in a typical childcare setting.

## Service Justification Form

Child's Name:	Child's Age:
Early Interventionist's Name:	Case Open Date:
Board/Agency:	Date:
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Family Training Frequency- The child will receive less than 2 hours per month of FT as determined by the TEAM (3-6 years).  <input type="checkbox"/> Child did not meet Family Training Indicators (3 or 4 year old)  <input type="checkbox"/> Child is 5 or is turning 5 years of age  <input type="checkbox"/> Declining of Services- The family does not wish to receive FT for an extended time frame (more than 3 months) for a specific reason OR the Family Training provider is unable to provider FT (for more than a month) and the family does not wish to have an alternate (0-6 years).         </p> <p>           I do not wish to have an alternate Early Interventionist during my Early Interventionist's absence. Our family will continue to work on the outcomes identified on my child's IFSP/FSP during this time frame. I understand my family will continue to receive service coordination and I have been made aware of whom the service coordinator will be.         </p>	

Parent's Signature (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Early Interventionist's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied More Information Needed \_\_\_\_\_

Early Intervention Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Early Intervention Program Coordinator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's signature is only required in a declining of services situation**

