



What is Service Coordination?

Young children ages birth to three who are eligible for early intervention services, and their families, may often need support and services to help the child develop and learn. These services may be in the areas of:

- Health, including public health nursing or nutrition education
- Human services, including financial assistance or respite care
- Education focusing on learning skills in any area of development

It is sometimes challenging to find supportive services in the early intervention process. The Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) addresses that concern by including Service Coordination as a mandated service in the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). Service Coordination means an active, ongoing process that involves assisting parents of infants and toddlers with disabilities in gaining access to and coordinating the provision of early intervention services and coordinating the other services identified in the IFSP. Service Coordination must be provided at no cost to families who are receiving early intervention services. The responsibilities of the Service Coordinator are to help the family by:

- Coordinating evaluations and assessments
- Facilitating and participating in the evaluation and assessment of the child and family and the development, review, and revision of the IFSP
- Coordinating and monitoring the delivery of the services, including medical and health services
- Informing families of their rights and procedural safeguards which includes providing the family with information about available advocacy services if there is a disagreement about eligibility or services
- Coordinating funding sources
- Working with the family and other the members of the IFSP team to create a plan for transitioning from early intervention services to early childhood special education preschool services if eligible, or to other community services available to the family

What this means for parents

With the support of the Service Coordinator, families can make informed decisions about the services, opportunities, and resources available for their child and family. By listening closely to the family's identified concerns, priorities and resources, the Service Coordinator can work with the family to create an IFSP that provides the family with the supports and services necessary to address the identified concerns and needs. This results in services that are more individualized and effective and can help the family feel confident and competent in meeting the needs of their child and family.