

Principles of Early Intervention

Adopted by the Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention (IICEI)

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1. The primary goal of Early Intervention (EI) is to build caregiver capacity by supporting their ability to promote their child's optimal development and to facilitate their child's participation in family and community activities.
2. The focus of EI is to facilitate the active participation of families in the EI process by engaging caregivers in the planning and implementation of services, including embedding intervention strategies into family life, such as routines, activities and interactions with their child. It is the family/caregivers who provide the real EI by creatively adapting their caregiving methods to facilitate the development of their child, while balancing the needs of the rest of their family.
3. EI requires a collaborative relationship between families and professionals, with equal participation by all those involved in the process. An on-going, equal family-professional partnership and dialogue is needed to develop, implement, monitor, and modify intervention strategies and services.
4. Intervention must be linked to specific, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) goals that are family-centered, culturally relevant, functional, and measurable using culturally and linguistically responsive and affirming practices. Services and intervention strategies should focus on supporting each family's IFSP outcomes, as well as promoting child and family outcomes that support communication access.
5. Services and interventions shall be integrated into a comprehensive IFSP that requires families and professionals work together to consistently exchange knowledge and information with each other. It also requires collaborating across disciplines within the broader early childhood system to increase the team's capacity to jointly solve problems and implement interventions. The plan shall be built around family strengths, priorities, resources, routines and activities and avoid unnecessary duplication of services. Services and strategies are based upon the best available research, recommended practices in the field and special education laws and regulations.
6. Services, interventions and progress should be monitored periodically through ongoing observations and discussions with all team members to ensure that the strategies implemented are successful in achieving outcomes.
7. Ongoing communication and collaboration with EI professionals, family members and professionals in partnering systems outside of EI, who are supporting each family is encouraged. Ongoing communication among all team members allows for coordinated, culturally-relevant and comprehensive services within and across systems to best support families' priorities, changing circumstances, and transitions.
8. Children and their families in the EI Program deserve to have services of the highest quality possible. High standards will be set for the training and credentialing of administrative and intervention staff. Training, supervision, and technology will be focused to achieve excellence.