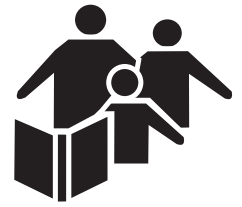


Developing Family-Centered Outcomes with Your EI Team

Families are an important part of the early intervention (EI) team. That's because warm family relationships set the stage for children's later growth. Your service providers are there to support you in ways that really work, or *function*, for you and your child. The words *functional outcomes* or *family-centered outcomes* describe the ways that EI services can benefit families and children. The EI team chooses outcomes that relate to your family's main concerns, or *priorities*.



👉 What Are Family-Centered Outcomes?

Family-centered outcomes are statements describing changes and benefits that you and your family want to see for your child or yourselves. Your team can measure progress toward meeting these outcomes to see if the changes and benefits have occurred. Keep in mind that your priorities and outcomes may change over time as your child grows and learns.

👉 Why Are Family-Centered Outcomes Important?

Identifying priorities for your family as well as your child helps you know what you want and need out of EI. Before you and the other members of your child's team prepare or revise an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), ask yourself two things: "What benefits do I want my child to receive from EI?" and "What will be different or better for my child and family when these changes occur?" You and your IFSP team may want to review these questions every few months.

👉 What Do Family-Centered Outcomes Look Like?

Here's an example. The Tyler family is concerned that Sasha, who has a diagnosis of autism, is unable to express her needs in ways they can understand. She has frequent tantrums, especially during meals, snacks, and play. A family priority is to help Sasha express her needs and to reduce her tears and crying. To achieve this family-centered outcome, the EI provider and family will teach and support her in signing to communicate her needs. The team identified several strategies to do this—some for Sasha and some for other family members. They wrote: "We want Sasha to use gestures, signs, or words during her daily routines to communicate her needs and reduce the number of tantrums."

The provider and family can measure several things to see if they are making progress in meeting their outcomes. For example:

- Is Sasha using the signs she has learned during daily routines? (Does she sign for "more" milk or to say "done" at mealtimes?)
- Do family members respond to her signs or gestures (by providing help)?
- Does the number of Sasha's tantrums decrease during routines when she signs?

👉 For more information on developing family-centered outcomes with EI service providers, see the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse Web site at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.

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