



# IFSPs and IEPs: A Parent's Perspective

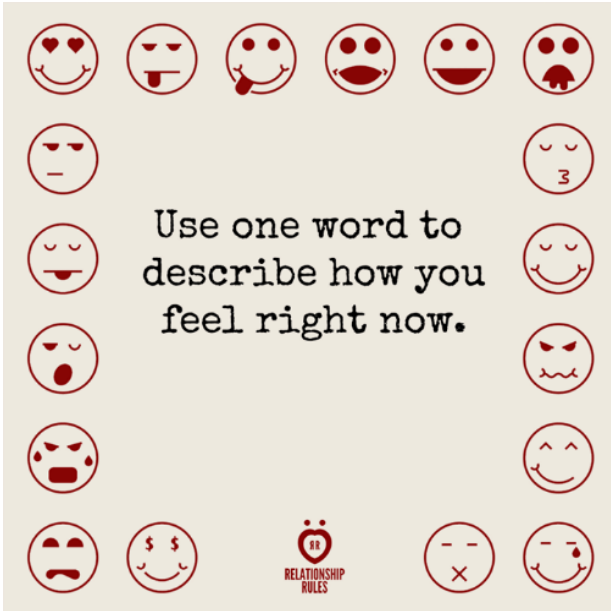
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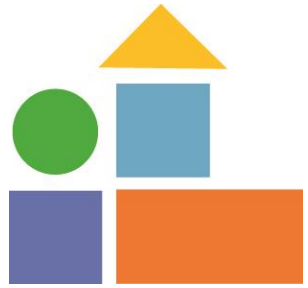
December 12, 2018



Before we begin, take a moment to think about how you are feeling about the IFSP and IEP process. How are you feeling about other aspects of your life?

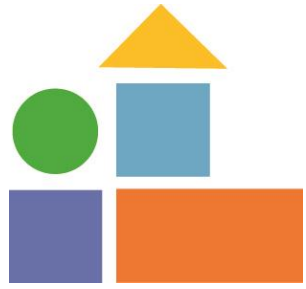


How are you feeling right now?



# Learning Objectives

- Recognize and identify a variety of common acronyms used in IEP and IFSP meetings.
- State five things that are beneficial to complete prior to an IEP meeting and why they are beneficial.
- State five things which are beneficial to complete prior to an IFSP meeting and why they are beneficial.



# Learning Objectives

- State what a vision statement is in an IEP and be comfortable writing one for your child.
- Understand the critical role of parents and state three tips for self-advocating.
- State three outside resources where you can turn to for help with your child's IEP or IFSP.

## **Alphabet Soup: What do all these acronyms mean?**

- IFSP-Individual Family Service Plan
- IEP- Individualized Education Plan
- PT- Physical Therapist
- SLP-Speech Language Pathologist
- OT-Occupational Therapist
- TOD- Teacher of the Deaf
- ESY- Extended School Year
- LEA- Local Education Agency
- LRE- Least Restrictive Environment



# IFSP vs. IEP: What's the Difference?

## IFSP- FAMILY BASED PLAN

- Early Intervention
- Ages 0-3
- Focuses on the needs of the child and the family
- Reviewed every 6 months
- Services in natural environment
- Meetings held in home
- TEAM members: Parents, service coordinator, individual(s) qualified to review evaluations

## IEP

- Public School
- Ages 3-21 (26 in Michigan)
- Focuses on the educational needs of the child
- Reviewed at least once a year
- Services in a school setting (LRE)
- Accommodations and modifications listed
- Meetings held at school
- TEAM members: General Education teacher, special education teacher, parents, representative from school district, individual(s) qualified to review evaluations

# Who's eligible for an IFSP or an IEP?



Students must meet at least one of the 13 disability categories and need special education services to make effective progress.

1. Hearing Impairment
2. Deafness
3. Visual Impairment
4. Deaf-Blind
5. Specific Learning Disability
6. Speech or Language Impairment
7. Intellectual Disability
8. Emotional Disturbance
9. Orthopedic Impairment
10. Autism Spectrum Disorder
11. Traumatic Brain Injury
12. Multiple Disabilities
13. Other Health Impairment

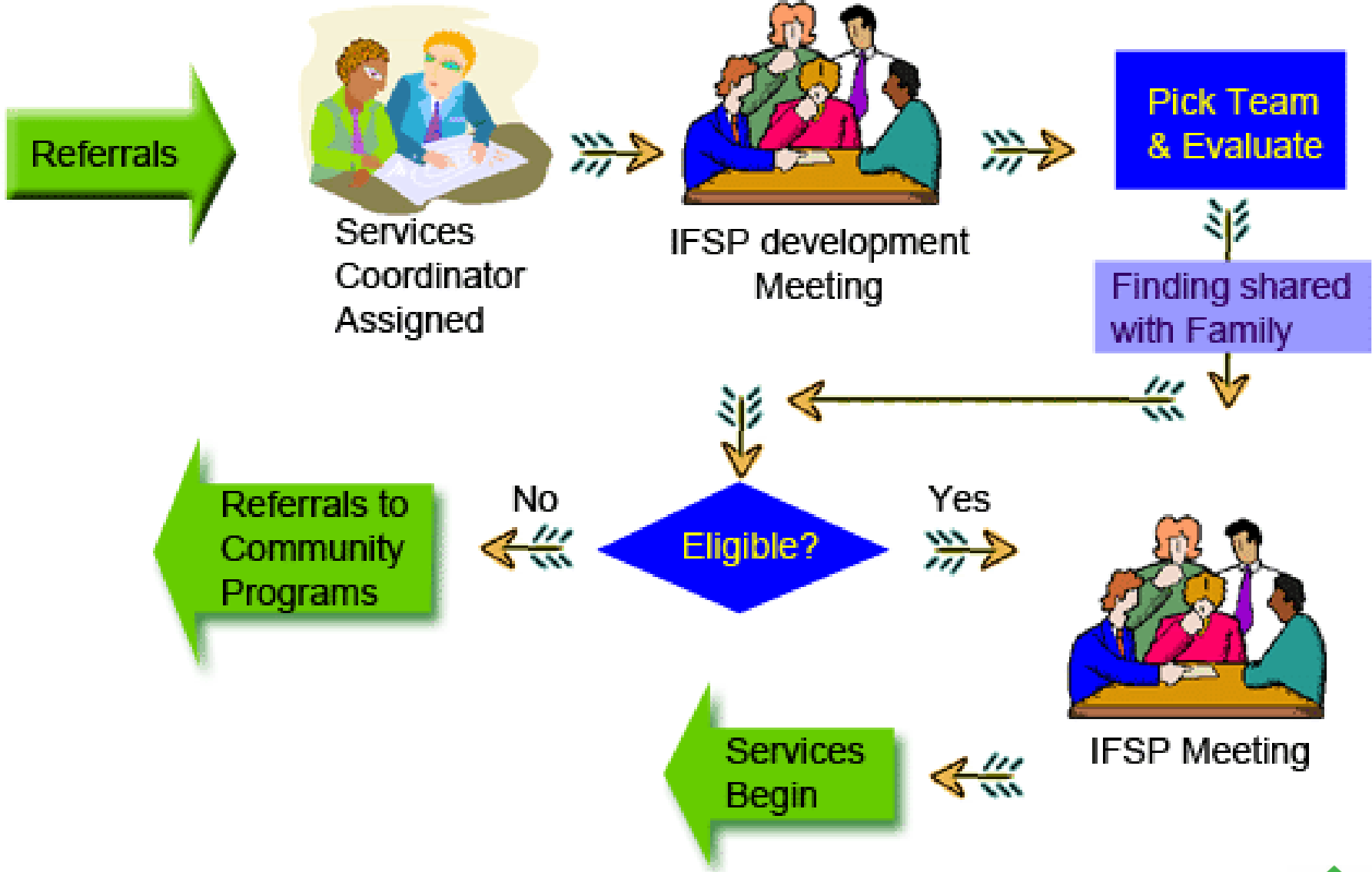
# Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- 1975 law that was an extension of national civil rights issues
- IFSP services are required to be provided in the child's "natural environment"
- Requires a free and appropriate education (FAPE) for children with disabilities
- Children are to be educated in least restrictive environment (LRE)
- Schools must find and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities at no cost to parents
- Parents have a say in their child's education
- Birth to 21 years
- Part B (IEP) and Part C (IFSP)





# IFSP PROCESS



# Navigating the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process

## Pre-Referral

During the pre-referral phase, parents work together with teachers and staff to try and resolve problems informally within the classroom.



## Referral

If informal measures are not solving the problem, you can request an evaluation for special services. Referrals can be made by parents, teachers, or other staff.

## Informed Consent

After receiving a referral, the school district has 15 days to provide you with a plan for evaluating your child's needs. After reviewing it, you have 15 days to sign the consent before testing can begin.

Send a Letter

15 Days

Provide Consent

## IEP Meeting

After the evaluation is done, you will meet with involved school personnel to review results and discuss your child's needs. If your child qualifies, you will discuss what services your child will receive and establish goals for the next year.

## Evaluation

Qualified school district personnel will assess your child to determine whether he/she needs special education services. Evaluations may be conducted by the school psychologist, speech/language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, and others as needed.

Attend IEP Meeting

30 Days

Be Evaluated

60 Days

## Revisions

The IEP is reviewed annually or whenever you request a review meeting. Every 3 years, your child will be re-assessed to make sure the services are the best fit for your needs.

NOTE: Timelines are based on standards for families in California. Your state may vary.

Implement Plan

Attend Annual Review Meetings

## Implementation

Once you have signed the IEP, it will be implemented as soon as possible. If you disagree with the plan, you can request mediation to resolve the dispute.

Prepared by Nicole Connolly, Ph.D.  
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School Success!

# YOUR CHILD'S TEAM

## Who are the players?



# Prior to IFSP or IEP Meeting

- Buy and create a binder to store all essential documents.
- Get a new notebook and pen specifically for your thoughts, questions, and concerns.
- Invite someone to attend the meeting with you for support and to take notes.
- Request, in writing, all assessment reports 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Request, in writing, a draft copy of IEP.
- Review assessment reports and draft copy of IEP with someone.
- Make notes in your notebook with any questions, thoughts, and concerns about the assessment reports and draft IEP.



# Prior to IFSP or IEP Meeting

- Write your concerns about your child. What do you want to see addressed in this IEP to enhance your child's education?
- Write a vision statement. Think of the next 1-5 years. What do you see as your vision for the next year? The next three years? The next five years?
- Think about what services you believe are critical for your child's success. What are "must haves" in your opinion? Record your thoughts in your notebook.
- Think about what goals and objectives you believe are essential and why you believe they are necessary. Record your thoughts in your notebook.



# Prior to IFSP or IEP Meeting



- Obtain a copy of your child's most recent audiogram and any speech perception testing. Share this with your school district as soon as possible.
- Review audiological information and be sure that you completely understand your child's hearing loss and their testing.
- Obtain, understand, and provide any outside evaluations (i.e. medical, speech, developmental) to your school district.
- Review your child's current IFSP or IEP. Look at their progress notes. How effective is progress? Look at their services? Look at the goals/objectives.
- Learn about the TEAM members who will be present and what is their role? How well do they know your child and their needs?

# Self-Advocacy-Tips

- Believe in yourself! You as the parent are the most knowledgeable player on the team.
- Sleep, eat, exercise, and take time for you
- Know your rights
- Have support that you trust
- Be prepared
- Know what you want for your child and why
- Ask questions
- Ask for a break if you need one



# Questions to Ponder

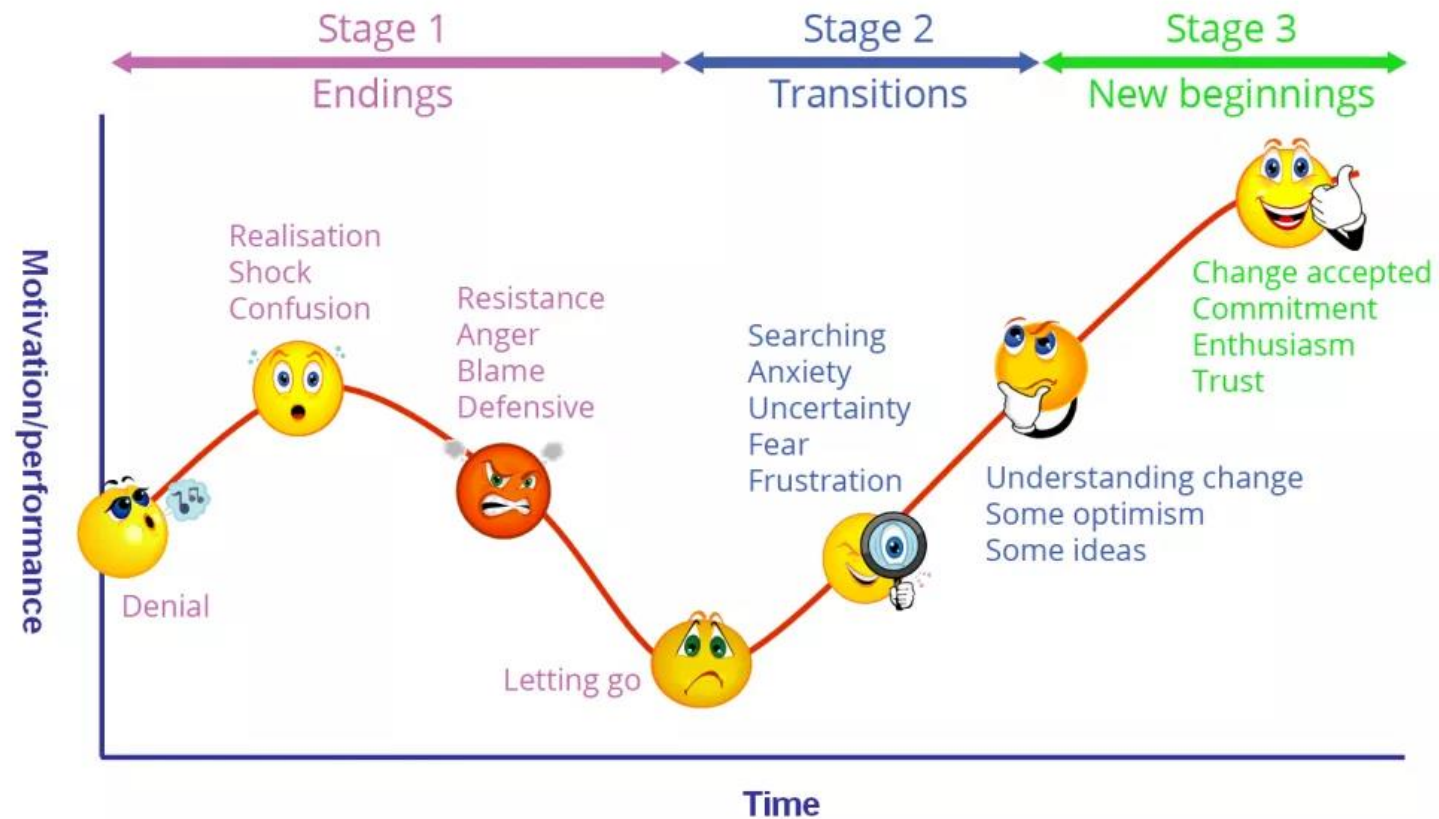
A red speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text "Speak Up" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

- In the IEP meeting, a professional says something about your child that you believe is untrue. How do you address their statement?
- You are in an IFSP or IEP meeting and disagree with services being offered. What do you do?
- You are being told by professionals that your child must use sign language, but your family does not want to sign. What do you do?
- The school system wants to place your child in a special education classroom, but you want your child to be mainstreamed. What do you do?

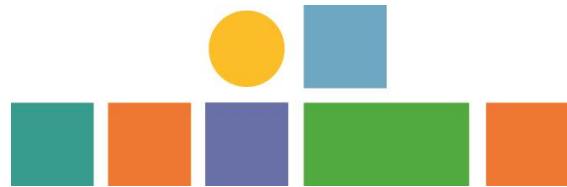




Now that the webinar is over, take a moment to think about how you are now feeling about the IFSP and IEP process.  
Has this feeling changed at all? How are you feeling about other aspects of your life?



# QUESTIONS?



# For questions or to request materials, please visit our website



Building Success  
One Step at a Time  
Hearing-Language-Literacy



En Español



Communities

Tutorials

Materials

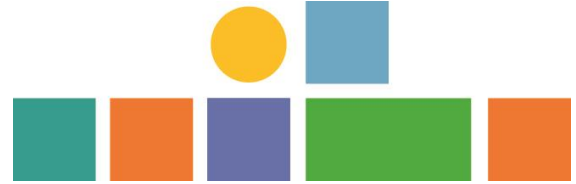
Research



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[Questions and Comments](#)



# Resources



- Utah Parent Center

<https://utahparentcenter.org/iep-101-getting-started/>

- IEP tips for parents

[https://utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/IEP\\_Tips\\_For\\_Parents\\_2.pdf](https://utahparentcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/IEP_Tips_For_Parents_2.pdf)

- Wrightslaw <http://www.wrightslaw.com/>

- A.G. Bell <https://www.agbell.org/Advocacy>

- Center for Parent Information and Resources

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/ifsp/>

- National Education Association

<http://www.nea.org/tools/special-education-IDEA-resources.html>

- Hands and Voices

<http://www.handsandvoices.org/>