

The editor of First Steps Families is a mom that had a child in the First Steps program. Hopefully the information shared will provide you with helpful resources for your family. To conserve resources and to make sure you don't miss out on helpful information, please send your e-mail address to Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu to receive the newsletter electronically.

Connie



FAMILY ROLE IN FIRST STEPS

The mission of the Kentucky First Steps System is to help Kentucky's families meet the developmental needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. First Steps does this by providing services that help children learn, talk and play. These services are called early intervention services.

The Kentucky First Steps System may look different from what you expect. First Steps services are provided in places where your child lives and plays. Early intervention providers will not work with your child while you watch or are in a nearby room. You are a very important part of your child's early intervention team. The professionals working with your child will be including you in every session. They will teach you activities to use with your child throughout the day. Research shows that very young children learn best this way.

We work closely with you to provide the kinds of supports that best meet your family's priorities and your child's needs. We will be talking about these supports throughout your time with First Steps. As your child grows and changes, the kinds of supports your family will need may change as well.

Things Every Parent Should Know About First Steps

All staff that work in First Steps are qualified professionals who must meet state personnel standards. They are all screened before they come to meet with you and your child.

The relationship you develop with your First Steps team is an important relationship for both you and your child. Communicate clearly to your team what you think is best for your child. Work with your team and advocate for your child. Don't be afraid to speak up if you think things are not going well.

You and your First Steps team create an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for your child. Every child's plan is individually designed to fit priorities and needs. The progress that a child makes is based on many factors: Your child's unique learning characteristics, the skills needed to learn and the number of opportunities to practice the skill. Research shows that more services do not result in better or faster progress. It's the practice throughout the day that makes the difference.

Your doctor or specialist may prescribe a certain amount of hours of therapy for your child. Early intervention providers will teach you activities to use with your child. This is called a consultative model of service delivery. The team, which includes you and the professionals working with you, will determine the number of hours of early intervention services needed for your child based on the needs of your child and the length of time needed to teach you the strategies.

As a parent you and your child have certain rights under federal law. Please check your Family Handbook to review your rights.

PARENT CONSULTANT

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We are on the Web:
<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm>
Or
kyfirststeps.org

Quotable Quote

Children are unpredictable. You never know what inconsistency they're going to catch you in next.

~ Franklin P. Jones



FIRST STEPS FAMILY SURVEY

We need your help! As the parent or guardian of a child who has received First Steps services, you know how important it is that the services be provided in a professional, timely and family friendly manner. Every year we ask families to complete a survey to let us know how we are doing and how they believe their child has progressed. The results of this survey are reported yearly to the U.S. Department of Education as part of Kentucky's Annual Performance Report.

The survey has already been sent out electronically to First Steps Families that have provided us their email address. If you have received it and filled it out and sent it back in, Thank You!

The "snail mail" surveys will be sent in early September. Please keep an eye out for it, fill it in and return it. It will only take a few minutes of your time and the information will be used to improve the quality of the services we provide.

Please feel free to send any additional comments you may wish to share to chfs.firststeps@ky.gov. You are welcome to contact the state lead agency at 1-877-417-8377 should you have any questions.

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY CONFERENCE

We are excited to announce that registration is now open for the 3rd Annual Early Childhood Family Conference on October 12, 13 and 14th at the Clarion Hotel in Lexington KY. This conference is free to families. Registration is on a first come first serve basis with limited spots available.

Activities and sessions will be available to children birth to five and their siblings.

A full conference list of detailed presentations will be included in registration packets.

Interested? Contact Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu or 859-257-6427



KENTUCKY SPECIAL PARENT NETWORK

KY SPIN – Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network, Inc.

KY-SPIN is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting programs which will enable persons with disabilities and their families to enhance their quality of life. SPIN (Special Parent Involvement Network) is a statewide project of KY-SPIN, Inc. SPIN-PTI (Parent Training & Information Project) is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education. SPIN provides training, information and support to people with disabilities, their parents and families; and information on all types of disabilities and topics for all age groups. All services of the SPIN-PTI are free to all participants.

We can help you understand the transition from First Steps to Public school system. We have a wide variety of information available to you including the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, your child's rights, building partnership, etc. You can reach us by phone at (800) 525-7746 / (502) 937-6894 or by email at spininc@kyspin.com. Our Website is www.kyspin.com and join us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Kentucky-Special-Parent-Involvement-Network-KY-SPIN-Inc/136683742892>