

# **SERVICE PROVISION GUIDELINE FOR FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS**

## ***WHAT IS FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS?***

All families who participate in the First Connections Program should receive the information needed to appropriately meet the needs of their child and family concerns related to enhancing the development of their child. The purpose of the provision of information to the parent/family members is to assist the family of a child eligible under Part C of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in understanding the special needs of the child and enhancing the child's development. This service may be provided in the home or community. Information is provided to the parent/family on various topics through a variety of learning modes and methods. These may include but are not limited to the information specified below:

- General information, which may be provided through generic resources within the community, and will assist the family in maximizing their child's development.
  - ❑ the child's specific disability,
  - ❑ typical developmental milestones,
  - ❑ positive reinforcement techniques
  - ❑ medical diagnosis
  - ❑ procedural safeguards which are guaranteed to all participants
  - ❑ appropriate parent/child interaction
  
- Family Training needs which require direct instruction to the parent/family on the implementation of specific goals and objectives developed, should be included as a part of the instructional area of service provided ( ex.. Speech therapy services should include instruction to the family on implementation of the specific goals and objectives worked on in the therapy session).
  
- Family Training/Counseling in areas other than instructional services such as speech, physical, occupational, or developmental (special instruction)therapies may be accessed through Consultation with the appropriately certified/licensed professional in the area of expertise needed ( ex. Nutritional, Behavioral, Vision, or Audiological Consultations).

## ***WHO MAY PROVIDE FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING & HOME VISITS?***

Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits must be provided by a fully qualified professional, who meets the "highest qualified provider" requirements as specified in Part C of IDEA for the area of expertise needed by the family.

## ***BY WHAT METHODS, MAY FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS BE PROVIDED?***

Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits may be provided by various methods, in a variety of settings. These sources may include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of printed materials, videos, tapes, etc.
- Assistance in locating and attending Workshops or Support Groups
- Interaction on a one to one basis through phone conversation or personal visit
- Identification of and assistance to access Internet based web-sites
- Referral to the appropriately qualified professional in the area of expertise needed

## ***HOW MAY FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING & HOME VISITS BE ACCESSED?***

Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits may be accessed using generic resources within the community, funding sources available within the state, or through the First Connections Program as the “payor of last resort”.

- General information, which may be provided through generic resources within the community, will assist the family in maximizing their child’s development. Resources include but are not limited to:
  - Parent Training and Information Centers (ex. Focus, Inc., Arkansas Support Network, Arkansas Disability Coalition)
  - Parent Support Groups (ex. Arkansas Autism Society)
  - The Delta Project
  - Arkansas Children’s Hospital
  - Primary Care Physicians
  - Arkansas Special Education Resource Center
  - First Connections Service Coordinator
- Family Training needs, which require direct instruction to the parent/family as based upon the IFSP, on the implementation of specific goals and objectives, should be included as a part of the instructional area of service provided.
  - Speech Therapy
  - Physical Therapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Developmental Therapy (special instruction)
- Family Training/Counseling in areas other than instructional services such as speech, physical, occupational, or developmental (special instruction)therapies may be accessed through Consultation with the appropriately certified/licensed professional in the area of expertise needed
  - Nutritional Services
  - Psychological/Behavioral Services
  - Vision Services
  - Audiological Services
  - Social Work Services.

- Family Training needs which require the purchase of materials, or assistance with costs associated with attendance at and participation in specific early intervention functions or workshops will be met through Individual/Family Support services.

*Note: Part C funds may not be used to duplicate a service already available within the state. It is the responsibility of the Service Coordinator to pursue all available resources prior to accessing Part C dollars to fund the service. If generic resources cannot be accessed to meet a family information need, funding will be provided through the specific instructional service, Consultation, or Individual/Family Support procedure codes within the Part C Program.*

## ***HOW SHOULD THE INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SERVICE (IFSP) TEAM DETERMINE THE NEED FOR FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS?***

It is the responsibility of the IFSP team, facilitated by the service coordinator, to make an informed decision based on the input of the family, regarding the type of family training needed. The team should:

- Look at the child's needs;
- Identify the needs for which the family training will ensure appropriate IFSP implementation;
- Identify family resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the development of their child, for which family training is needed;
- Identify the level of family training needed; and
- Identify the most appropriate generic resource(s) to meet the family's needs.

Factors to consider when determining the level of service needed include, but are not limited to:

- The severity of the child's disability-* The parent of a child with a mild language delay may need information on developmental milestones, while a parent of a child with Autism may need more extensive information as well as parent training provided during occupational and speech therapies.
- The developmental level of the parent-* If the parent of a child is also disabled, a high level of service may be needed.
- The age of the parent-* A teen-aged parent may need more information initially than a parent who has had parental experiences.

## ***WHAT IS A BILLABLE UNIT FOR FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS?***

Effective April 01, 2002, there will not be a separate procedure code for Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits for newly referred children. Effective June 30, 2002, there will not be a separate procedure code for Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits for children whose IFSP is updated prior to that time. Family Training is provided to eligible infants & toddlers and their families as a part of the total program and is accessed through a variety of resources. Information is provided through generic resources available in the community, instructional services provided, or through Counseling and Family Support.

***HOW IS THE NEED FOR FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS DOCUMENTED ON THE IFSP?***

The need for Family Training, Counseling, & Home Visits is documented on page 3 of the IFSP and must be based on family input regarding priorities, resources, concerns, and supports needed by the family to enhance the child's development. Family training needs must be recorded as family outcomes.

***HOW IS THE SUCCESS OF FAMILY TRAINING, COUNSELING, & HOME VISITS DOCUMENTED ON THE IFSP?***

The family rating of the training/information received will be documented, when the IFSP is updated, through completion of a family rating scale. Additionally, the initial/ongoing service coordinator will contact the family to determine if the needed information has been provided.

(March 13, 2002)