

Family Tip Sheet

Understanding Early Childhood Outcomes

As a parent of a child who receives early intervention services in Pennsylvania, you want to be sure these supports and services help your child to learn and grow, as well as support your family to help your child.

What are the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO)?

Early Childhood Outcomes, developed by the U.S. Department of Education, are used by all states for children receiving early intervention. While the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) contain outcomes that are written specifically for you and your child, these three child outcomes are the same for everyone. Early Childhood Outcomes focus on skills and abilities that children use to be successful in activities, routines and future school settings.



The three Early Childhood Outcomes are:

1. **Gaining positive social emotional skills, including social relationships.** This outcome measures how children interact and play with family, other adults, and other children.
2. **Learning and using new knowledge and skills.** This outcome measures how children learn and use basic language and communication skills such as counting and problem-solving that will prepare them to be successful learners.
3. **Using appropriate behaviors to meet needs.** This outcome measures how children gradually become more independent by learning how to move from place to place, feed themselves, and take care of basic needs.

Why do we measure Early Childhood Outcomes?

Families and professionals want to know that early intervention services are helping children. Early Childhood Outcomes are one way that Pennsylvania uses to look at the effectiveness of these services. Information about the amount and type of progress that children are making on these Outcomes helps us improve Pennsylvania's early intervention program.

How are Early Childhood Outcomes measured?

Child outcomes are measured when your child begins to receive early intervention services (entry) and when your child is finished receiving early intervention services (exit).

One person from your child's team will use a tool called an authentic assessment to learn about your child's skills, abilities and development. The authentic assessment is completed by observing how your child participates in typical routines and activities. The authentic assessment is completed as part of your child's regular early intervention services. No additional visits or sessions are needed. Together, you and your child's early intervention team, will share information and develop a picture of your child in each of the Early Childhood Outcomes.

How can you participate?

You are the expert on your child and know your child's strengths and needs. As an equal partner on your child's team, you provide important information about your child's skills. You can share what you see your child doing at home and in the community. You can talk to your child's team and learn more about what is expected for a child at different ages.

Who should I talk to about measuring Early Childhood Outcomes for my child?

_____ (name), your child's _____ (role) will be responsible for collecting Early Childhood Outcome information for your child. You can share information about your child with him/her. This team member can also answer any question you may have about Early Childhood Outcomes.



INFORMATION YOU CAN SHARE

Here are some questions to consider as you prepare for a conversation about your child and the Early Childhood Outcomes.

1. How does your child interact with you and familiar adults?
2. How does your child interact with people who are not familiar?
3. How does your child show you what she is feeling?
4. How does your child respond to changes in activities or places?
5. How does your child use his words in everyday activities?
6. How does your child show that she notices differences? For example, does she notice the difference between two toys or between a dog and a cat?
7. How does your child interact with books and pictures?
8. How does your child tell you what he likes?
9. What does your child do when she needs help?
10. How does your child use objects to get what he wants? For example, does he use a switch to turn on a toy or use a spoon to eat?

To learn more about Early Childhood Outcomes in Pennsylvania go to:
<http://www.eita-pa.org/early-childhood-outcomes/>