

IFSP DEVELOPMENT

Considerations for Developing IFSP Outcomes

During the IFSP meeting, the team will begin writing outcomes for the child. These outcomes are driven by the family's priorities, hopes and dreams for their child. Writing good outcomes requires practice and skill!



There are key considerations to ensure good outcome development:

- Outcomes should focus on strengths and dreams for the child and family.
- Outcomes should be functional and meaningful, to include activities and routines that the family does on a regular basis.
- Outcomes should be measurable and individualized to the child's growth, development, activities, and interests.
- Outcomes should be written in the family's language as much as possible, without technical jargon, and should be based on the family's input as reflected on page 2 of the IFSP.

Listed below are some questions that can be used by service coordinators and providers to reflect on how well a given outcome meets these specifications:

- Is the wording jargon-free and understandable by all team members, including the family?
- Is the outcome/goal discipline-free (meaning that it is not identified as a goal that only a particular therapist must address, i.e., "a speech goal")?
- Does the outcome/goal meet the "third word rule" where the third word is a verb reflecting what the child will do (ex., David will crawl...)?
- Is the outcome/goal based on functional activities rather than specific skills? Does the outcome/goal support the child's participation and learning in activities specific to the child and family?
- Does the wording emphasize the positive?
- Are the outcomes/goals specific enough to measure change? Will the family know when the outcome/goal is met?
- Does the outcome/goal reflect the family's role and incorporate the family's routines and activities?

Having the opportunity to review and revise an outcome that learners personally developed with a family at an IFSP meeting assists service coordinators and providers with practicing new skills on an outcome for which they hold some "ownership." Using peer review to provide constructive suggestions and modifications enhances the practice and learning for both the outcome writer and the reviewer.