



Assessment Tip Sheet

FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT

Watch Now!



WHAT IS FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT?

The ongoing process by which the parent and service providers work together in partnership to identify and understand the family's strengths, resources, concerns and priorities including relevant cultural factors, beliefs and values, in order to provide support and services to increase the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the child.



WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C §303.321(c)(2) states that: A family-directed assessment must be conducted by qualified personnel in order to identify the family's resources, priorities and concerns and the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the family's infant or toddler with a disability. The family-directed assessment must **(i)** Be voluntary on the part of each family member participating in the assessment; **(ii)** Be based on information obtained through an assessment tool and also through an interview with those family members who elect to participate in the assessment; and **(iii)** Include the family's description of its resources, priorities and concerns related to enhancing the child's development.

Wisconsin Administrative Code - Dept. of Health Services, Chapter 90.09(2) states that:

- (a)** Any assessment of the child's family shall be with the family's permission. The assessment shall be directed by the family and shall focus on the family's strengths, resources, concerns and priorities related to enhancing development of the child.
- (b)** An assessment of the family shall:
- 1.** Be completed by the family alone with a choice of assessment tools offered to the family, or be completed by the family in collaboration with other personnel trained to make use of appropriate formal or informal methods and procedures;
 - 2.** Be based on information provided by family members through personal interviews; and
 - 3.** Incorporate the family members' description of the family's strengths, resources, concerns and priorities as these are related to enhancing the child's development.

Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program Operations Guide
See Ch.7 on Assessments



WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- The family-directed assessment is an important part of the overall assessment process as it encourages the family's participation in the development of the IFSP, including creating meaningful child and family outcomes.
- The family-directed assessment is voluntary - family members may share details about themselves or share nothing at all. Building trust with a family is an important part of implementing the family assessment.
- Intentional, guided conversations during the family-directed assessment are critical for understanding family routines, resources, and culture and for assessing how the child is participating within the context of his/her everyday experiences.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT FOR PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- Helps to establish rapport and create a climate of respect for family members and caregivers as equal members of the early intervention team.
- Gathers information in a supportive manner about the child and family's everyday routines, activities, formal and informal supports, and the strengths and needs of the child and family.
- Establishes intervention as a system of support and services that assists families and caregivers in helping their children develop and learn.
- Assists early intervention teams to collaboratively identify functional outcomes and outline strategies, services and supports for meeting the IFSP goals of the child and family.

WHAT ARE CONSIDERATIONS FOR FAMILY-DIRECTED ASSESSMENT IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- Timing: When might the family-directed assessment fit best in the early intervention process?
- Method: What procedure(s) would help to gather family assessment information - at initial evaluation and throughout the early intervention process?
- Data: How will the family-directed assessment gather family concerns, priorities and interests as well as information regarding how the child's development impacts these factors?
- Reporting: How will information be documented and shared with the family and their team of early intervention practitioners to inform IFSP development and intervention?
- Training: What kind of training is needed for early intervention practitioners to complete a family-directed assessment?
- Family: How might the family be supported in fully participating in a family-directed assessment?



All evaluations and assessments of the child and family must be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner, in the native language of the child or family, by a multidisciplinary team.