

## **1704: SOONERSTART SERVICES IN CHILDCARE SETTINGS**

SoonerStart is required to provide services for children served through Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the child's natural environment. Per IDEA this can include a childcare/ early head start setting. SoonerStart's philosophy is one of parent education, therefore providing services in a childcare setting requires a "primary learner" to be an active participant in the early intervention services. A primary learner is defined by SoonerStart as an adult who is available to interact with the child and service provider on a consistent basis during visits in the home, at a childcare or in any community setting. The primary learner may be the parent or another person who will provide ongoing intervention to the child between these visits. The primary learner cannot be the child.

### **Providing SoonerStart Services in a Childcare Setting:**

When a family requests that SoonerStart services be provided in a childcare setting, the Resource Coordinator guides the family through the IFSP process with input from the childcare providers. The IFSP team will gather information from the family and the childcare provider through the Oklahoma Family Interview (OFI) process. The **Oklahoma Family Interview Tool (OFIT) (Appendix BB)** is a resource for the IFSP team to help acquire information for IFSP outcome development. The RC may also utilize the **Parent Childcare Letter (Appendix V)** to help the family navigate all the steps necessary to set up SoonerStart services in the childcare/early head start setting.

### **Role/Responsibilities of the Resource Coordinator:**

- Start the discussion regarding services being provided in a childcare setting – This conversation should start at intake upon the RC identifying that the child attends a childcare/early head start.
- Inform the parent of their roles/responsibilities in the process of setting up SoonerStart services at the childcare/early head start.
- Obtain parental consent on the Release of Confidential Information for SoonerStart to contact and provide services at the childcare/early head start.
- Coordinate the IFSP meeting and ensure that the childcare/early head start including the primary learner is invited.
- Conduct the OFI with the family and childcare/early head start (RC will need to make other arrangement to gather information from childcare/early head start if they are unable to attend the IFSP meeting).

### **Role/Responsibilities of the Service Provider:**

- Provide intervention strategies to the primary learner.
- Communicate with the Parent/Guardian regarding service delivery and progress.
- Notify the RC and/or the family if the Primary Learner is not an active participant during intervention visits.

### **Role/Responsibilities of the Family:**

- Inform SoonerStart of their request for SoonerStart services to be provided in childcare/early head start setting.
- Contact the childcare/early head start center and discuss their request for SoonerStart services to be provided at the childcare/early head start site
- Obtain verbal consent from the childcare/early head start for SoonerStart to provide services in the center.
- Designate a primary learner and provide the name/contact information for that person to the RC prior to the IFSP meeting .
- Sign a **Consent for the Release of Confidential Information** for SoonerStart to be able to communicate with the childcare/early head start (A consent form may also be needed for the primary learner if that person is not an employee of the childcare/early head start.) Note – Childcare/early head start may also require the parent/guardian to sign a release of information in order for them to work with SoonerStart in their center.
- Be present and participate in all IFSP meetings including subsequent reviews and modifications.

Childcare/Early Head Start and the primary learner will be invited to the initial IFSP if the parent/guardian has provided consent for SoonerStart to discuss services with them. Even though the childcare/early head start is an active participant during the IFSP, the parent/guardian will make the final decision on which outcomes will be included on their IFSP. If the childcare/early head start or primary learner is unavailable for the initial or annual IFSP review meeting, the RC will attempt to obtain needed child information from them, either by phone or in-person interview, prior to the IFSP meeting. In instances when this is not possible, the RC will obtain the information following the IFSP meeting and then review the information with the family (may be reviewed by phone) to determine if any changes to the IFSP are necessary (additional outcomes, etc.). If it is determined that changes are needed, an IFSP modification appointment will be scheduled with the IFSP team including the childcare/early head start and primary learner.

If after providing services in a family's home, the family requests to "move" services or add additional services at the childcare/early head start location, the above steps will be necessary. The RC will need to talk with the family to inform them of the steps necessary to facilitate a "move" to or addition of childcare/early head start services.

*Note... If a child is "new" to a childcare/early head start center, the staff may need some time to get to know the child before they are able to provide appropriate information regarding the child's development and/or needs within the childcare/early head start setting. In these instances, it may be necessary to set up SoonerStart services to occur at the childcare/early head start center and then gather additional information from them after a reasonable amount of time. This information can then be reviewed with the family to determine if there are changes necessary to the IFSP (additional outcomes, etc.).*

If at any time intervention services are not in line with SoonerStart’s mission statement and procedures, the IFSP team will arrange for a review of the IFSP and discuss possible solutions with the family.

