

2200

TRANSITION

Transition planning ensures the smooth transition for infants and toddlers under the age of three and their families from SoonerStart services to preschool or other appropriate services for toddler with disabilities. Formal transition planning must occur for every child in the SoonerStart program who is between the ages of 27 and 36 months of age. Informal discussions regarding the transition process occur with the family throughout the time the child receives early intervention services.

The service coordinator is responsible for facilitating transition planning. This may occur in conjunction with a regularly scheduled IFSP meeting or a separate meeting with the family. IDEA requires that the three components of Transition Planning occur no later than 90 before the child's third birthday.

- Transition Steps and services on the IFSP
- Notification to the LEA
- Transition Planning Conference

Transition Steps and Services on the IFSP:

A formal discussion regarding the transition process should occur as soon as possible after the child is 27 months old but in all cases, no later than 33 months of age. The IFSP Transition Steps and Services is developed with the family and constitutes the Transition Plan which is included in the IFSP. Transition plans are individualized to the needs of the child and family. During transition planning, possible program options, the new environment and any activities to enable a successful transition are discussed. The Transition Plan should be completed at an IFSP meeting (Initial, annual or review). The required participants at the meeting to develop the Transition Plan are the same as the required participants for an IFSP meeting. The Transition Plan development meeting must also meet IFSP accessibility and notification requirements. Adding the Transition Steps and Services page to the IFSP is considered a modification if completed at any time other than the Initial or Annual IFSP meeting and a Modification page is required. All SoonerStart staff share responsibility to assist families in preparing for transitions to new settings and changes in service delivery.

The family is also informed of the IDEA requirement that SoonerStart provide child find information to the Local Education Agency (LEA) of all potentially eligible children served by the SoonerStart program.

In Oklahoma, an Individualized Educational Program must be developed for IDEA Part B eligible children by their third birthday, even when the third birthday occurs prior to the end of the school year. Oklahoma has not elected to offer IDEA, Part C services beyond age three under the IDEA; therefore a child will have no IDEA, Part C options from the third birthday through the

remainder of the school year. If a child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team convened by the school district will determine the date when services under the IEP will begin.

The IFSP Transition Steps and Services page is used to document all activities during the transition process. Transition activities should also be documented in the service coordinator and service provider progress notes. The date of this formal discussion is considered the initiation of Transition services and should be entered into the SoonerStart database on the IFSP screen in the field "Transition Start Date."

Notification to the LEA:

IDEA requires that SoonerStart must provide child find information to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) where a child resides at least 90 days (3 months) before the child's third birthday. Parental consent is not required to provide the following personally identifiable information for each child that is **potentially eligible** for Part B services:

- a. Child's name
- b. Child's date of birth
- c. Parent's contact information (including parents' name, addresses and telephone numbers)

Oklahoma defines a child as "**potentially eligible**" who is:

- a. Determined eligible for early intervention services by a multidisciplinary evaluation team and/or
- b. Enrolled in early intervention services who has not met all outcomes on his or her Individualized Family Service Plan; and/or,
- c. Enrolled in early intervention services who is demonstrating a delay in any developmental domain based on the expertise of a member of the Individualized Family service Plan team.

A child who is receiving SoonerStart services through an IFSP (SoonerStart Database status code 06) or has been determined eligible for SoonerStart services through a multidisciplinary evaluation or automatic qualifying condition (SoonerStart Database status code 3a) is potentially eligible for Part B services and should be included in a notification to the LEA.

The service coordinator will notify the LEA, no later than 33 months of age for the area in which the toddler, resides that he/she is potentially eligible for Part B services. The service coordinator should utilize the SoonerStart Transition Report to assist with monitoring the timeline for notification to the LEA for his/her caseload. The Notification to the LEA must be written and contain the demographic information as required by IDEA for child find (Appendix S). The notification may be mailed or sent electronically to the LEA with a copy of the correspondence placed in the child's record. The date of notification should be recorded on the

Transition Steps and Services on the IFSP and in the service coordinator's progress note. The date should also be entered on the IFSP screen of the SoonerStart database in the field 1st Assessment.

Notification to the SEA:

IDEA also requires that the State Educational Agency (SEA) is notified of all children potentially eligible for Part B services. Since the SEA – Oklahoma State Department of Education – is also the lead agency for SoonerStart – Part C services, the SEA is notified of all children potentially eligible for Part B services through the SoonerStart database. An intra-agency agreement between SoonerStart (Part C services) and OSDE 619 services (Part B services) ensures seamless transition services for infants and toddlers with disabilities served in the SoonerStart program.

Transition Planning Conference:

It is the responsibility of the service coordinator to arrange and facilitate the Transition Planning Conference (TPC). The TPC may be held in conjunction with an IFSP meeting if the family is in agreement. The meeting to develop the Transition Plan may be combined with the TPC. The required SoonerStart participants at the Transition Planning Conference are the same as the required participants for the IFSP meeting. The TPC must also meet IFSP accessibility and notification requirements. For the purpose of scheduling a transition conference, approval by the family is not required to be in writing and can be verbal consent that is documented in a progress note. However, parental written consent is required to share additional information such as the IFSP, evaluation or assessment results; or other pertinent records to be transmitted to the LEA or any community agency or program considered as a provider of appropriate services at age three.

The SoonerStart Notification of Meeting (Appendix R) should be completed for the TPC and sent to the family and LEA (and other relevant parties) as notification of the scheduled TPC. Prior Written Notice (PWN) (Appendix D) is also required following the TPC meeting.

Transition Planning Conference - Part B services:

If a toddler in the SoonerStart program may be eligible for Part B services, SoonerStart, with the approval of the family, will convene a Transition Planning Conference (TPC) among the required SoonerStart staff, the family and the LEA not fewer than 90 days or more than 9 months before the child's third birthday. If the family requests a delay in scheduling the TPC, or declines to meet with the LEA to consider Part B services, this is documented on the Transition Steps and Services page on the IFSP and in the service coordinator's progress notes. If the family declines to consider Part B services a Prior Written Notice is required.

If the child's birthday is in the summer, the TPC should occur in the spring to allow for availability of local school district staff and time for the plan to be in place before the school

year begins. With written consent of the family, information that will be helpful to the local school district may be shared in advance of the TPC.

In the event that the local school district representative is unable to participate in the transition planning conference due to unforeseen circumstances, the TPC can be postponed and re-scheduled if acceptable to SoonerStart and the family and if the rescheduling will not jeopardize compliance with the required timelines. However, if rescheduling is not acceptable to SoonerStart and the family or if rescheduling will jeopardize compliance, then the TPC should proceed without local school district participation. The exception to this would be that if the family requests that the conference be postponed until the school district representative is available.

If the LEA does not participate in the TPC, SoonerStart must conduct the transition conference and use that meeting to develop or revise the transition plan in the IFSP (including identifying appropriate transition steps and services). In addition, SoonerStart must provide parents at the conference with information about Part B preschool services. This information includes a description of the Part B eligibility definitions, state timelines and process for consenting to an evaluation and conducting eligibility determinations under Part B, and the availability of special education and related services. However, services available from the local school district, how and when the evaluation(s) and eligibility determination will occur must be provided by the LEA representative at a later date.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) for a child transitioning from SoonerStart and eligible for Part B services must be developed and implemented by the child's third birthday. The IEP team must consider the IFSP including its natural environment statement when developing the initial IEP. (CFR 300.323(b)). At the request of the parent, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting must be sent to the SoonerStart service coordinator, or other SoonerStart representative, if the child previously received SoonerStart services (CFR 300.321(f)).

Transition Planning Conference - Other Community Services:

If the family of a toddler in the SoonerStart program has declined to participate in a TPC with the LEA then reasonable efforts must be made to hold a transition planning conference to discuss other appropriate services the toddler may receive. All activities and/or attempts to arrange the TPC should be documented in the service coordinator's progress notes. The TPC should include the service coordinator, SoonerStart service provider(s), the family, and providers of other appropriate services. The 90 day timeline requirement is not applicable for children not referred for Part B services. Prior Written Notice should be provided if the family declines a TPC with the LEA regardless of whether a TPC is conducted.

Transition - Late Referrals

A child is considered a late referral to SoonerStart if he/she is determined eligible for SoonerStart services after 33 months of age (or less than 90 days from the third birthday).

Referred Less Than 45 Day Prior To Third Birthday:

If a child is referred to SoonerStart fewer than 45 days prior to the child's third birthday SoonerStart is not required to, conduct an initial evaluation, assessment and initial IFSP meeting for the child. With parental consent, SoonerStart will refer the child to the LEA or other appropriate community services. The service coordinator will contact the family and explain to them that SoonerStart does not have adequate time to evaluate the child before his/her third birthday. The service coordinator will assist the family, with their consent, in contacting the LEA or appropriate community services.

Referred More Than 45 Days But Less Than 90 Days Prior To Third Birthday:

If a child is referred to SoonerStart between 45 and 90 days prior to the child's third birthday, SoonerStart is required to conduct an initial evaluation, and if eligible, an assessment and initial IFSP meeting for the child. If the child is determined eligible, SoonerStart must develop a transition plan on the IFSP. A transition planning conference (TPC) may take place but is not required. If the child is potentially eligible for IDEA Part B services, SoonerStart will provide Notification to the LEA as soon as possible for the area in which the child resides. The service coordinator will complete the IFSP Transition Steps and Services during the initial IFSP meeting. The service coordinator will refer the child, with parental consent, as soon as possible to the LEA or community services as appropriate. Information pertaining to the child, initial evaluation, assessment and IFSP, will be shared with receiving LEA or community services with written consent. At the discretion of the family, a TPC may be combined with the initial IFSP meeting and the LEA or other community agencies invited to attend.

Referred More Than 90 Days Prior To Third Birthday

If a child is referred to SoonerStart more than 90 days before the child's third birthday, all requirements as stated under Transition Planning Conference are applicable. However, IDEA section 637(a)(9)(A)(ii)(II) requires that the TPC be convened with the LEA only for children potentially eligible for preschool services under Part B of the act. (See Oklahoma's definition of "potentially eligible"). If a child is referred more than 90 days but determined potentially eligible less than 90 days before his/her third birthday, the child is considered a late referral.