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## EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

# When a family asks you to participate

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Effective Sept. 1, 2016, the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program was transferred to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). All programs with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) have been transferred to either the Texas Workforce Commission or to HHSC.

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If a child in your program is about to be enrolled in Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services, it's possible the parent will ask you to participate on the team for the Individualized Family Service Plan. The following information may be useful.

All children enrolled in ECI programs have a plan for services called the Individualized Family Service Plan, or IFSP. This plan is developed by a team of both specialists and family members of the child being served. It includes outcomes or goals for the child and family as well as strategies or activities to help the child reach those goals.

As a teacher or caregiver, you may be a part of this planning effort as a team member. The child's parents are always part of the team, and they may invite family members, child care providers, or anyone else to be team members. The IFSP team will also include at least two other professionals such as Early Intervention Specialists (EIS), occupational or physical therapists, speech language pathologists, a social worker, or a nurse.

The IFSP team meets and develops the plan together. The plan builds on the strengths of the child and family and addresses their needs. The ECI services planned during the meeting are reviewed regularly to ensure the child and family's needs are being met. It identifies the types of services the child and family will receive as well as the frequency, intensity, and duration of those services.

When the plan is completed, it serves as a working tool for the team members. You will be able to refer to it for ideas to help the child.

### Why participate?

You know the children in your care. Your knowledge of a child can benefit both the child and the family. When you share this information about the child's development, daily routines, and activities, the ECI

staff can develop a more individualized, meaningful plan for the child and family.

As the child's teacher, you influence how and what the child learns, which gives you an important role in carrying out the plan. Working as a partner on the team, you also can get the help you need to support the child's success. The ECI staff can help you understand the child's developmental needs and offer strategies you can use in the child's everyday activities and routines.

In an IFSP team meeting, you can expect discussions that touch on the following issues:

- what the child is currently doing and learning across multiple daily routines and across various settings,
- areas in which the child may need extra help or support,
- areas of strength for the child, and
- ideas about how ECI can assist you and parents to help the child grow and learn.

After the discussion, the team identifies and sets goals for the child and the family. These may include specific activities to help the child build skills in a particular area including socialization, balance, or fine motor strength, for example. The IFSP identifies specific support services that assist families as they help a child grow and develop. Further, the formal plan indicates how often these specific services are provided and who will provide them.

During the time a child is enrolled in ECI, the plan is reviewed and updated whenever necessary, but at least every six months, to ensure the planned services and strategies are meeting the child's and family's needs. ■