

# EarlySteps Practice Manual

## Chapter 8: Early Transition, Transition at Age Three and Record Closure

Transition requirements which support child and family transitions both within and out of EarlySteps at age three are presented in this chapter.

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### EarlySteps State-Identified Measurable Result:

*The EarlySteps system will improve child outcomes through supports that are focused on family concerns, priorities and resources and provided through a team-based approach.*

**October 2023 Practice Manual Revisions:**

<b>Chapter 8: Transition and Case Closure</b>	<b>Change/Addition/Revision:</b>
	<b>Updated references to Part C Regulations</b>
	<b>Added references to DEC Recommended Practices, specifically the Transition Topic Area.</b>
	Added requirements for referral to Human service Districts/Authorities/LGEs, including changing referral age to 2 years, 6 months as part of transition to the OCDD service system.
	Clarified what is a “current” BDI2 that is used as an exit—that is, less than 6 months from previous administration.
	Added references to EarlySteps Online and reports to be shared and information to be entered into this system.
	Added requirement to check for transfer cases daily in EarlySteps Online.
	Clarified requirements for late referral to EarlySteps and requirements for notification and referral to the LEA.
	<b>Added reference for LDE Transition Guide and website for families</b>
	Emphasizing that a transition conference is held regardless of a child’s transition to Part B at age 3 (with family agreement)
	Added table with General Supervision performance expectations for transition.

**Transition**

- Transition Forms**
- **Early Intervention Services Transition Notification**
  - **Team Meeting Notice and Minutes**
  - **Change Form**
  - **Request for Authorization**
  - **Notice of Action**
- Also needed to support transition :**
- **LEA Contact Information**
  - **Part B Information to share with the Family-LDE Transition Booklet**
  - **Exit Evaluation Talking Points for Families**

**Introduction**

Transition is a process of movement from or changes to one environment to another. This movement or change in programs or services brings new opportunities and challenges to children, families and providers. (Rous and Hallam, 2006). Being sensitive to the challenges that transition brings, IDEA requires each State to have policies and procedures to ensure

- a smooth transition for toddlers receiving early intervention services to preschool or other appropriate services, including a description of how EarlySteps will notify the LEA that the child will shortly reach the

age of eligibility for preschool services under IDEA, Part B. The transition references for the law and regulations are: 20 U.S.C. §1437(a) (8) (A); 34 CFR §303.209 and CFR §303.344(h).

- Section 637(a) (8) (A) (ii) (II) of IDEA and 34 CFR 303.209 (c) also require the lead agency to convene a conference, with the approval of the parents, with EarlySteps, the family, and the LEA no fewer than 90 days and no more than 9 months before the child is eligible for preschool services under Part B (age 3 years), to discuss any such services that the child may be eligible to receive.

These policies also require the Louisiana Department of Education to ensure: that children served under Part C who will participate in Part B preschool programs experience a smooth and effective transition to those preschool programs such that:

- by the third birthday of a child eligible under IDEA, Part B, an individualized education program (IEP) with appropriate content has been developed and is being implemented for the child ;
- each LEA will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by EarlySteps

Young children and their families often experience transitions across multiple environments in the early childhood years. Many of these transitions are identified as stressful for children and families. To facilitate the smoothest transitions possible, both while within the EarlySteps service system and transition out of EarlySteps at age 3, the early intervention system addresses transition as follows:

- transition needs are addressed with families at every IFSP meeting to prepare families for transition,
- regional, interagency workgroups meet regularly to establish and maintain relationships and communication which support transition successes, including updating and sharing resource and contact information with families,
- regional agencies and stakeholders develop community-specific activities across agencies, such as transition learning opportunities for families, program visitation with families, IFSP steps and services outcomes development for children and families.

The practices outlined in this chapter are the early intervention system requirements developed by EarlySteps to support children and families in all transition events which generally involve many activities on the part of the early interventionist in collaboration with the family. (DEC Recommended Practices, Transition Topic Area [2014])



**Through the descriptions and requirements of the transition process, EarlySteps intends to reflect the following DEC Recommended Practices (DEC RPs) in its practice implementation regarding transition:**

- Practitioners in sending and receiving programs exchange information before, during, and after transition about practices most likely to support the child’s successful adjustment and positive outcomes (TR1)
- Practitioners use a variety of planned and timely strategies with the child and family before, during, and after the transition to support successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and family (TR2).

## **Early Transition**

For those children and families experiencing a transition into or within the EarlySteps system:

- The FSC **must** identify the specific nature of the transition with the family and then document the transition issues with the other team members.
- The IFSP team **must** discuss how transition steps and services will be provided (or what modifications are needed) to facilitate a smooth transition and to ensure that there will be no unnecessary disruption in services for the eligible child and family.
- Identify IFSP team members who are responsible to supporting the family with transition activities.

In addition to the actual transition that all newly referred and eligible children and families experience into EarlySteps, some other examples of early transitions include:

- Significant family/child changes:
  - Impending birth of a new child
  - Family relocation or job change

- Unemployment
  - Divorce or marriage, etc.
  - Long term illness of a child
- When children are no longer eligible, no longer going to receive services or experience other changes, special consideration is given to transition planning. An example includes changing one or more services and the child is continuing in EarlySteps. There should be sufficient time for the provider and family to disengage with their provider in a positive and supportive manner. At each team meeting, team members discuss and document transition issues using IFSP Section 5 as a discussion guide to address any needed steps and services.

### **A. Early Transition Process**

For the IFSP team meeting discussion, if the family is facing early transition, prior to age three, **IFSP Section 5 – Transition Planning, Subsection B. Early Transition Event and Issue** must be completed. Check the appropriate box that represents the appropriate early transition event and issue. Additional, relevant events can be added. Event options include:

- Child is coming home from hospital; need to ensure no disruption of necessary services;
- Family will be experiencing a change that may affect the delivery of an IFSP service (birth or adoption of sibling, medical needs of other family members, employment or loss of employment);
- Child will be experiencing a change that may affect the delivery of an IFSP service (i.e., hospitalization, placement in child care setting, medication changes, etc);
- Changes in IFSP services (i.e., termination/addition of service, change in location of service); and,
- Child is exiting early before age three.
- Document a plan for disposition of any Assistive Technology supports if applicable.

Transition steps and services to support the identified needs resulting from transition events are reviewed, checked, and/or added to **Early Transition Steps** (column 2). Once complete, attach Section 5 to any revised IFSP. Disseminate copies to appropriate parties and file/upload in the child's record. These become activities which the team should support in addressing outcomes. The FSC monitors their completion as part of IFSP management. The IFSP Section 5 Transition Planning page is not considered complete unless transition steps and services are identified that support the family through transition.

### **B. Early Exit - Record Closure**

Children may exit EarlySteps prior to age three. Sample reasons for a child exiting prior to age three may include:

- Moving out of state
  - Meeting all IFSP outcomes and no longer being eligible
  - Parent declines services
  - Child is deceased
- With the exception of a child who is deceased, if the child experiences early transition from EarlySteps, an exit BDI-2 **must** be completed prior to the child's exit and case closure by the SPOE. The exit BDI-2 is administered if the child has been receiving services at least six months. The FSC should request the authorization, contact the evaluator and send the most recent BDI-2, if a new evaluator is used. A previously administered BDI-2 can be used as an exit evaluation if the previous administration date is less than 6 months from the exit date. The FSC discusses the exit evaluation with the family and requests the exit BDI-2 authorization from the SPOE.
  - The evaluator schedules and conducts the exit BDI2, writes the summary, and submits the information to the family and the FSC. The evaluator/IFSP team member prints and shares with the family, the BDI-2 Results and Outcome Scores pages from EarlySteps Online.
  - Transition Steps and Services are reviewed, checked, and/or added in IFSP Section 5, column 2,
  - The FSC continues to provide support and refer the family to appropriate community agencies as needed. Referrals to a social worker, psychologist, or support group may be needed for the family according to the transition plan.

- The FSC should monitor the completion of the activities developed by the team and document FSC activities in the contact log.
- If the child is between 2 years, 3 months and 3 years of age and the family agrees, the LEA is invited to the team meeting. The **Transition Notice** will be sent to the LEA early enough to ensure participation.
- If the child is 2 years, 6 months of age, the regional Human Services District/Authority office (also called the Local Governing Entity [LGE]) is notified. If the child is younger than 2 year, 6 months at exit, the family is provided with contact information for the LGE for system eligibility determination at the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- The FSC **must** complete appropriate sections of the **Change Form**. The case **must** not be closed until after all service authorizations have ended or a drop date is determined by the team and shared with all team members.
- The FSC **must** send the completed form to the SPOE with the appropriate closure date.
- The SPOE enters the inactivation date and reason and other data elements into the child's electronic record. It is particularly important to confirm the family's address and phone number for future reference.
- The SPOE files the hard copy in the child's early intervention record, the FSC uploads to EarlySteps Online.

If a child exits EarlySteps before age three for any reason and does not have an active IFSP, the LEA will schedule the evaluation as a new referral to them. The LEA, then, is not obligated to have an evaluation and IEP in place by the child's third birthday. Once the child is referred, the 60 day timeline, which includes the evaluation and IEP, will begin.

Part of the discussion at each IFSP Transition meeting, is the importance of referrals to the OCDD developmental disability service system. Prompt referral to the LGE ensures maintenance of the EarlySteps protected date for the Developmental Disability service system, including Medicaid waiver services, as well as other state services. If a child exits EarlySteps before age three for any reason and does not have an active IFSP, the family is responsible for contacting the LGE prior to the child's third birthday to maintain their protected date. They may contact the LGE at any time for other services. After case closure, the family is responsible for keeping contact information with the LGE updated if they plan to continue/apply for services at age 3.

### **C. Transferring a Record from One SPOE Region to another SPOE Region**

When a family moves from one SPOE region to another SPOE region, the transfer of records and services occurs with collaboration across the FSC, providers, and the sending and receiving SPOEs.

#### **FSC Responsibilities:**

- Complete **Change form**
  - Complete "Current Enrollment Information" section
  - Complete "Transfer to SPOE" section with the effective date
  - In the "Add – Change" section, complete the child's new address, parish, and phone number. Ideally the new address/contact information is changed in EarlySteps Online prior to the transfer completion by the SPOE administrator. It is important to maintain the most current address and contact information at all times, especially prior to the transfer so that the new SPOE can access the updated information.
- Notify all current providers that the family is moving and the effective date of changes to supports and services. Provide the current IFSP team members with potential or actual service cancellation dates. In some cases, the same providers and authorizations may continue depending on where the families relocate and/or their preference for virtual services and may not need to be cancelled. Document these contacts in the FSC case record.
- Fax or mail the **Change Form** to the Regional LGE offices (region the child is leaving and region the child is entering). Provide updated contact information to the receiving office. Give the parents' most recent contact information for the receiving office.
- Fax completed form to the current (sending/previous) SPOE.

The FSC will share the Service Matrix listing of FSC agencies and early intervention providers in the new area with the family before the move. This may eliminate lag time in the child receiving services, although some services might continue as is.

- Depending on the child's age, contact information for the LEA and LGE can be provided to support age 3 transition.

#### **Sending (current or previous) SPOE Responsibilities:**

- Enter the information provided on the Change form into EarlySteps Online and file original form in child's hard copy record. Ideally, the new address/contact information changes are made in EarlySteps online prior to the transfer completion so that the receiving SPOE will be able to make contact with the family.
  - Notify, copy record, and mail copy to the "new" or receiving SPOE.
  - Close electronic record according to effective date on form.
  - Keep original hard copy of record at "old" SPOE and store in closed files.

#### **Receiving or "New" SPOE Responsibilities:**

- Check for transfer records status in EarlySteps Online daily.
- Upon receipt of child's case file, schedule meeting with family and open both the hard copy and electronic files. Referral, intake, eligibility, and IFSP dates will be the original dates listed in the files.
- At initial meeting with family, bring a list of available providers (including FSC agencies) in the area so that the parent can choose a new FSC agency and complete a revision to add the new provider(s) and FSC. The same agencies and providers may still be available to continue with the family depending on the areas and the family's preference for virtual services with the same early interventionists. The receiving SPOE cancels the original authorizations if necessary.
- "Old" FSC discusses changes with IFSP team and ensures that end-dates of authorizations are agreed upon by the family and team members.
- The new FSC schedules a follow-up IFSP meeting and invites the new providers. The team reviews the IFSP and makes any needed changes.
- The new FSC completes the necessary paperwork and sends it to the SPOE.
- The new SPOE inputs the new authorizations and files/uploads paperwork.

### **Transition at Age Three**

The 2004 Reauthorization of Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, PL 108-446) and the September 2011 Part C Regulations require that certain steps are taken when a child transitions out of Part C services at age three. As with all transition planning in early intervention, the transition process begins at the initial IFSP and is addressed throughout the EarlySteps process and at each IFSP team meeting.

IDEA Part C regulations require that the Part C lead agency ... "notify the local educational agency for the area in which the child resides that the child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services under Part B of the act..."

To support this process, EarlySteps notifies the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) of all active children ages 2 years, 3 months of age through age 3 years. The LDE disaggregates the list and sends it to the appropriate LEA. Even though EarlySteps sends a list to the LDE, the FSC is still responsible for notifying the LEA of each child's impending 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, inviting the LEA to the transition conference early enough to ensure participation, and sending the appropriate documentation that supports the transition plan to the LEA. It is important that all options, including a referral to the local school system for Part B special education services, be discussed with the family. The transition plan is developed at a transition conference that identifies other appropriate options, steps and services for the child and family including private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, OCDD developmental disability services, child care, or other community early childhood programs. Community providers of other appropriate services are also invited if the family approves. The transition conference date is documented in IFSP Section 5 (C) and must occur no earlier than 2 years, 3 months and no later than 2 years, 9 months of age. Late referrals to EarlySteps are the only allowable reason for transition conferences later than 2 years, 9 months. To be considered complete, the Transition Plan in section 5C must include:

- the transition conference date,
- the steps and service to support transition (regardless whether the child is transitioning to Part B and with the agreement of the family) to discuss appropriate services that the toddler may receive,
- Dates of notification letter to LEA
- Request for exit BDI-2
- Status of referral for Developmental Disability service system eligibility.

**Steps to ensure Accuracy with the Age 3 Transition Process follow:**

**A. Notification of a Child Turning Three**

**IC/FSC Responsibilities:**

- Notify the LEA: **The IC/FSC must notify the LEA of a child turning three beginning when the child is 2 years, 3 months old. Schedule and convene a transition conference between the child's age of 2 year, 3 months and 2 year, 9 months** in order to meet the timelines for Part B eligibility determination and IEP development. If the LEA does not participate in the conference, the FSC/IC must still hold a transition conference according to IDEA section 637(a) (9) (A) (ii) (II) and 303.209 and 303.344(h) at least 90 days (and at the discretion of all parties, no earlier than nine months) prior to the child's third birthday and must have invited the LEA representative to the conference with sufficient prior notice to facilitate attendance at the meeting. If the LEA does not attend the transition conference, the FSC must provide parents at the conference with information about Part B preschool services including:
  - a description of the Part B eligibility definitions,
  - LEA timelines and processes for consenting to an evaluation,
  - conducting eligibility determination under Part B, and
  - the availability of special education and related services.

Each region has developed materials specific to the region which can be used to give parents information about Part B and other services—such as names and contact information for LEA/Head Start contacts. Contact the Regional Coordinator for these resources if not available at the SPOE or FSC agency. The **Early Intervention Services Transition Notification must** be completed with the necessary child information and sent to the child's parent and the LEA. Parental consent is not required to send a copy of this letter to the LEA; however, other early intervention records provided to the LEA must have parental consent for release. A copy **must** be sent to the LEA and the Regional OCDD/HSA/D (LGE) office. The FSC **must** keep a copy in the child's record.

- Notify the LGE of the family's interest in eligibility redetermination for the DD service system at 2 years, 6 months of age: The FSC must notify the OCDD/HSA/D/LGE of those families who have checked "yes" the LDH Application or in EarlySteps Online and make sure that the referral packet has updated, complete information.
- Send out a **Team Meeting Notification**: FSCs **must** provide a **Team Meeting Notification** to all Transition team members as early as possible and at least 10 calendar days prior to the meeting. This advance notification assists with scheduling for the LEA and the completion of necessary activities within the established timelines. The FSC must maintain a copy of the team meeting notification in the child's record.
- If the LEA is not present, Part B information will be discussed and the Part B transition booklet given to the family by the IC/FSC.

## LEA Responsibilities:

- IDEA, Part B states “By the third birthday of such a child, an individualized education program (IEP) ...has been developed and is being implemented for the child (CFR 300.124 (b)).” Due to the requirements for a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), LEAs **must** have the evaluation completed and IEP implemented by the child’s third birthday.
- LEAs **must** conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for Part B services. Required components include: Screening in the developmental domains of **vision, hearing**, sensory processing, motor, health, education, speech and language, social/emotional/behavior and assistive technology.
- Social history intake
- Educational assessment
- Individual domain assessments, as needed
- Provide the team with all available service delivery options for that child

## LGE Responsibilities:

If appropriate, invite the LGE representative for the region to the transition conference. This applies when the child is receiving any services through the developmental disabilities service system and in cases where the child is potentially eligible for LGE services at age 3.

- LGE receives the referral by age 2 years, 6months from the FSC or the SPOE. The referral will advise the family that they are to contact the LGE prior to the child’s third birthday to continue or request supports and services. When the referral to LGE is made before the third birthdate and the child has been determined eligible for EarlySteps, there is a request for eligibility redetermination; and it is established by LGE that the child has a developmental disability, the **date the parent signed the requesting Medicaid Waiver Registry** on the “**Louisiana Department of Health Application for Services Children 0-3 with Special Needs**” is the **PROTECTED DATE** for the Medicaid Waiver Registry.
- If the parent is interested in the determination process for system entry and the child is not receiving services from the LGE, a referral packet of information from EarlySteps is sent to LGE. Parental consent is required for release of any EarlySteps information to the LGE in this case.
- The referral packet to the LGE includes copies of the following documents from the child’s early intervention record:
  - the IFSP (most recent)
  - the Annual Eligibility Documentation including the most recent BDI2 report(s)
  - the most recent FSC Quarterly Report
  - reciprocal releases of Information

The child’s 1508 evaluation and/or IEP that is effective when the child turns three must also be included in this referral packet if available to EarlySteps.

**Note:** The EarlySteps protected date remains in effect until the child’s fifth birthday in the event that a family does not request entry at age three. This means that the parent has two years beyond the child’s third birthday to initiate the OCDD Entry process and retain the original EarlySteps protected date. The only exception to this policy is when a referral is not made in a timely manner through no fault of the family.



## Family Responsibilities

- Sign consents in order to send the information to LEA and LGE.
- Attend the Transition Meeting.
- Participate in the Exit BDI-2 evaluation.
- Participate in the LEA evaluation and IEP meeting(s).
- Contact the LGE prior to the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday in response to calls/letter in order to participate in eligibility re-determination and maintain the protected date for the Medicaid Waiver Registry.
- Be responsible for correspondence with the LGE in regard to Flexible Family Fund and family support.

**It is the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to communicate with LGE prior to the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday in order to maintain their protected date for the Medicaid Waiver Registry and if wanting to continue or to request supports and services. If the parent/legal guardian does not reply to the correspondence from the LGE the case will be closed resulting in the child potentially losing the protected date for the Medicaid Waiver Registry. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the LGE of address changes after they exit EarlySteps. It is EarlySteps responsibility to support families with the referral process as much as possible so that transition to the Developmental Disability Service System is as smooth as possible.**

## **B. The Transition Meeting**

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and develop a plan for the upcoming transition of the child from Part C. IDEA requires that, with the family's approval, an IFSP meeting to discuss the upcoming transition be held between 2 years, 3 months and 2 years, 9 months.

The transition discussion **must** include:

- a review of the child's options from the child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year; and,
- a transition conference and plan that includes the steps and services to exit from Part C.
- notification to the SEA and the LEA that the child will reach the age of eligibility for services under Part B.
- If a toddler is referred to EarlySteps fewer than 45 days before the toddler's third birthday, with parental consent, EarlySteps will refer a child who is potentially eligible Part B to the LEA. If a child is not potentially eligible for Part B, EarlySteps, with the approval of the family, makes reasonable efforts to convene a conference with the IFSP team and providers of other services to discuss appropriate services that the toddler may receive.

If the child is referred during the transition age timeline, the initial IFSP conference facilitated by the SPOE will serve as the transition conference.

- If the child is found eligible for EarlySteps more than 45 days but less than 90 days prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, the SPOE notifies the LEA to participate in the Initial IFSP meeting and include the transition conference.

For referrals fewer than 45 days before the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, the SPOE is not required (but may) conduct eligibility determination and hold an initial IFSP for the child.

## **FSC Responsibilities:**

- Send **Team Meeting Notice** to IFSP team members and LEA and LGE (if appropriate);
- Request Authorizations

- Facilitate the transition meeting;
- Complete the team meeting minutes; The FSC **must** record the discussion at the transition meeting using the **Team Meeting Notice and Minutes**.
- If the LEA is not present, Part B information will be discussed, including the LDE Transition Booklet (or link) and given to the family by the IC/FSC.
- Send all documentation/upload to the SPOE and IFSP team members
- Send required documentation to the LEA..
- Monitor the implementation of the transition plan.

#### **LEA Responsibilities:**

- IDEA Part B states “...The local educational agency will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the designated lead agency under section [1437 \(a\)\(8\)](#) of this title.” The LEA representative **must** attend the EarlySteps IFSP/Transition meeting.
- Provide the team with any needed information or requirements for the LEA’s eligibility determination process.
- Provide the team with all available service delivery options for that child.

#### **OCDD service system LGE Responsibilities**

- LGE representative participates in transition conference and discusses family responsibilities for participation in the Developmental Disability service system at age 3, including redetermination of eligibility beginning at 2 years, 6 months of age.
- OCDD entry unit receives the LDH application and transition packet from EarlySteps and sends out notice to family prior to child’s third birthday.
- OCDD conducts eligibility determination and processes the request for services application.

#### **Other Transition Meeting Attendees:**

- Other Community Partners such as community preschool agency representatives, Head Start, community/private childcare agencies, etc. may be invited to the Transition Meeting.

### **C. Document and Implement the Transition Plan**

Part C requires that a transition plan for each child contain the steps to exit EarlySteps and access needed supports and services identified by the family. These steps may include the steps necessary to refer the child for future services from the LEA or LGE.

Documenting the Transition Plan includes the following activities:

- Complete Section 5 of the IFSP: Transition Planning: Early Transition and Transition at Age Three
- Complete Section A: *Plan for Transition*. Document that necessary discussions have taken place with the family regarding transition from EarlySteps. This section **must** be completed at all IFSP meetings including initial, annual and IFSP revisions for the appropriate transition content. Complete the following:
  - Procedures that will be used to prepare the child for the upcoming transition
    - Discussions about procedures to prepare the child for changes in service delivery;
    - Discussions with parents regarding future placements and other matters related to the child’s transition; and,
    - Discussions with parents regarding community programs available following transition from Part C.

- Program options identified by the team – choose any of the following:
  - Part B
  - Head Start/Early Head Start
  - Child Care
  - Other community resources
  - LGE
  - Medicaid EPSDT services, including EPSDT support coordination/case management beginning at age 3
  - Others based on family/child priorities and needs.

Complete the section by signing or initialing that a plan for transition at age three has been discussed. The form **must** be signed/initialed by the FSC and the Parent. Document the date of the discussion.

- Complete Section 5 C *Transition at Age Three*. This section must be completed at a team meeting within the transition age range designated as the child’s *Transition Conference*. This section of the IFSP contains information reflecting that necessary Transition discussion has occurred. Document the following:
  - LEA was notified of child’s upcoming transition,
  - Child specific records were sent to the LEA,
  - Parent did not consent to releasing information to the LEA,
  - Record the date that the BDI-2/exit evaluation was requested;
  - Record the date that the notification letter was mailed to the LEA;
  - Record the date consent to send records obtained;
  - Record the date that the transition meeting was held; and,
  - Document that Part B information was discussed and given to the family.
  - Document if the child requires a referral for OCDD eligibility determination, and, if yes, record the date that the referral packet was sent.
  - Review the **Age three transition steps and services** section with family to determine their interests and check the steps that will support the child/family’s successful transition or add other steps as identified.

After completing the section, attach a completed copy of the IFSP cover page with the Transition meeting date and forward to the SPOE for data entry. Copy, distribute to the necessary parties and IFSP team members, and upload in the EarlySteps Online Child Library. The SPOE enters the transition meeting date in EarlySteps Online.

- The FSC is responsible for documenting all discussions during the transition meeting using the **Team Meeting Notice and Minutes**.
- The FSC is responsible for disseminating Team **Meeting Notice and Minutes** to the appropriate parties including uploads to EarlySteps Online.

Implementing the Transition Plan includes the following activities:

- The FSC is responsible for ensuring that all elements identified through the transition meeting(s) are properly implemented according to a transition plan.
- The FSC is responsible for referring the child to the appropriate LGE Office. The FSC will facilitate the transfer of a copy of the 1508 evaluation from the LEA and IEP to LGE, if available to EarlySteps. This referral requires parental consent. The parent will receive a copy of these documents from the LEA and can also send them to EarlySteps.
- The FSC is responsible for assisting the family in scheduling updated vision and hearing screening for the LEA eligibility evaluation.
- The FSC is responsible for discussing the referrals to EPSDT services, including case management if needed and the child is Medicaid eligible.

## IEP Participation by FSC

- The service coordinator must make every effort to participate in the initial IEP meeting if invited by the LEA at the request of the parent.
- Document attendance or inability to attend in FSC case notes.

## **D. Outcomes Measurement**

An exit BDI-2 and Autism Screening **must** be scheduled and a BDI-2 Evaluation Report completed prior to the child's exit at age 3. This **must** be completed between the ages of 2 years, 9 months and 3 years of age and **must** be completed prior to case closure by the SPOE. If an annual eligibility determination is completed between 2 years, 6 months and 3 years of age the annual BDI-2 may be used for exit data (the BDI2 cannot be older than 6 months). A child with less than 6 months of services is not required to have an exit BDI-2 but it may be of interest to the parent to show progress.

The following steps **must** be followed:

- When the child turns 2 years, 9 months, schedule the exit BDI-2. When scheduling the exit BDI-2, the FSC should send the provider the initial or most recent BDI-2 if a new evaluator is chosen. The FSC notifies the evaluator and sends the authorization request to the SPOE. Parents generally choose the same evaluator but may choose another evaluator.
- The evaluator is responsible for sending/uploading the exit BDI-2 Evaluation Report and original test booklet to the FSC.
- The FSC must immediately send/upload the exit BDI-2 Evaluation Report to the SPOE (and notify them that they have done so) for data entry of exit scores.
- The FSC must immediately send the exit BDI-2 Evaluation Report to the LEA if parent consent was obtained.

**Note:** The time limit of authorization for an exit BDI-2 at Transition is 15 days; therefore, it is essential that all of the required components are completed as soon as possible following the date of request. At Exit (transition), providers **must** submit/upload the BDI-2 Evaluation Report to the FSC within 15 calendar days of receipt of the Request for Authorization. Evaluators are responsible for sending the information, uploading reports in EarlySteps Online, and sharing the BDI2 results and outcomes reports with the family and notifying the SPOE that the results are uploaded.

## **E. Record Closure**

On the third birthday, the child's eligibility for EarlySteps terminates. These are the steps that the FSC **must** follow in order to close the child record.

- The FSC **must** complete appropriate sections of the **Change Form**. **The case must not be closed prior to the end date of all authorizations so that services continue. If an earlier date is requested by the family, each service provider must be notified of the end date before submitting to the SPOE. The FSC must verify that a service has not been provided after the end date prior to submitting the authorization closure date to the SPOE.**
- The FSC **must** send the completed Change form to the SPOE. Include any address, phone, email, other changes by the family
- The SPOE enters the inactivation date and other data elements into the child's electronic record, including updated address/contact information
- The SPOE files the hard copy in the child's early intervention record.

If the child has completed their transition meeting and exits from EarlySteps prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> birth date the FSC/IC will notify the LEA and the SPOE by sending a copy of the closure form. The IC/FSC will also assist the family with any LGE referrals, especially by providing the status with EarlySteps and updated demographic information.

## **Transition Process for Late Referrals-SPOE Responsibilities**

### **SPOE Responsibilities: Children Referred to EarlySteps after Age 2 Years, 2 Months**

Notification to the LEA must occur for any child referred to EarlySteps at age 2 years, 3 months and older using the Transition Notice Form. Notification does not require parent consent as long as the only information provided is “directory information,” such as name, address, phone number. Referral to the LEA requires parent consent.

The Intake Coordinator should complete all initial intake activities. Attempts should be made to ensure that any assessment conducted for EarlySteps eligibility purposes can be used by the LEA for Part B eligibility determination. This will minimize duplicate test administration. Many LEAs coordinate eligibility determination with EarlySteps.

If the child proceeds to an IFSP, the LEA should participate at the initial IFSP meeting; this should be considered the Transition Conference. If for any reason the LEA is unable to attend this initial IFSP meeting the FSC will invite the LEA to any future IFSP team meetings to discuss age three transition. The IC/FSC will provide the family with the appropriate Part B information if the LEA is not in attendance.

### **SPOE Responsibilities: Procedures for Children Referred at age 2 years, months or older**

If the child is fewer than 45 calendar days from turning age three the child should be referred to the LEA with parent consent. The intake coordinator will assist the family with the referral. The intake coordinator and LEA will also assist the family with any LGE referrals. If no parental written consent is obtained, the Intake Coordinator will provide the contact information for the LEA and LGE to the family so they may self-refer. If the child is 45-90 calendar days from turning age three the child will continue with the EarlySteps referral process jointly with the LEA with consent from the family. The intake coordinator and LEA will also assist the family with any LGE referrals and referrals for EPSDT services and case management, if appropriate, and with the family’s consent.

#### **A. Notification of a Child Turning Three**

EarlySteps Intake Coordinator **must** notify the LEA for transition and if appropriate, refer the child to the LGE at the time of referral. IFSP Section 5 C-Transition-should focus on future services through the LEA, LGE or other community services as appropriate. EarlySteps intake procedures should be coordinated with the LEA so that unnecessary or duplicative testing does not occur.

EarlySteps **must** implement the intake procedures for any referral, regardless of age of child at referral. Parents **must** be informed that if the child is eligible for EarlySteps, the focus of IFSP development will be transition to future services.

#### **B. The Transition Meeting**

For this group of children who are “late referrals,” the EarlySteps **eligibility/IFSP team meeting is also a transition conference**. Since the child’s enrollment in EarlySteps is very short, the focus for transition steps and services needs to be on facilitating future services. If the child is potentially eligible for services through the LEA, the LEA representative **must** be invited to this meeting. The LGE **must** also be invited if a potential service provider or if the family requests a determination process for system entry for LGE/Waiver and other services.

### **C. Document and Implement the Transition Plan**

The Eligibility/Transition team discusses future service options for the child and identifies the steps necessary for the completion of the transition to future services.

If the child is eligible for EarlySteps, an IFSP **must** be developed within the 45-day timeline and focus on the steps and services needed for transition.

If the child is found to be ineligible for EarlySteps, parents are informed of their right to challenge this decision through exercising the dispute resolution process. The Intake Coordinator moves to the next step, Closure.

A child may not receive both Part C services and Part B services at the same time. If the child begins receiving services from the local school board before age 3, then the EarlySteps services are terminated. This should be discussed at the transition meeting so that the service closure date is known to all team members.

### **D. Record Closure**

On the third birthday, the child is no longer eligible for EarlySteps services. The FSC **must** complete the Case Closure/Transfer/Transition Form and send completed form to the SPOE. The SPOE enters the inactivation date and other data elements to the child's electronic record and files the hard copy in the child's early intervention record.

#### **Closure if family cannot be contacted:**

1. If the phone number has been disconnected, call each ongoing service provider and ask if they have a different number, if they have suggestions on how to contact the family, and/or participate in the next service session with the provider.
2. If there is no answer, leave a message if an answering machine or voice mail is available.
3. Document all attempts to contact the family.
4. Send the family a letter via certified mail stating that the child's record will be closed if contact is not made with the family within seven calendar days from the date of the letter. The FSC solicits input from the other IFSP team members about their ability to contact the family. The letter must provide the family with the steps to take to contact the FSC should they desire to continue services with EarlySteps. The letter must also include information concerning the procedural safeguards for families relevant to referral.
5. If family has not responded within timeline stated in certified letter, proceed with closure procedures.
6. The FSC must notify other team members that the case is going to be closed and provide the closure date to ensure that all team members are aware when service authorizations will end. Ensure that no services have been provided after the proposed closure date before notifying the SPOE. All team members must agree to the closure date to avoid situations where services are provided after a closure date and affect the ability to bill for services.

**Under no circumstances is a case to be closed if any services are being provided by an early interventionist within allowable service authorization limits.**

#### **OSEP Reporting**

As a part of Louisiana's Part C State Performance Plan, EarlySteps is required to report data regarding performance related to meeting transition requirements. Data will be reported on an annual basis as part of the Annual Performance Report to OSEP.

The performance indicator related to Transition measures the percentage of all children exiting Part C who received timely transition planning to support the child's transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday including:

- A. IFSPs with transition steps and services (IFSP Section 5 is completely filled out)
- B. Notification to LEA, if child potentially eligible for Part B: and
- C. Transition conference is held, if child potentially eligible for Part B within the required age range.

Data is collected through various means, including the EIDS and on-site monitoring as specified in the table which follows. SPOEs and FSCs must implement procedures to ensure that all children exiting EarlySteps have an IFSP that includes transition steps and services; that notification to the LEA occurs for all children exiting Part C that are identified as potentially eligible for Part B; and, that a transition meeting occurs for all children exiting Part C who are identified as potentially eligible for Part B. For children not potentially eligible for Part B, other community resources that the child and family may access are discussed. Complete documentation on the IFSP and contact log that verifies that the activities occurred as required.

**Indicator 8: Percent of all children exiting Part C who received timely transition planning to support the child’s transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday including:**

- A. IFSPs with transition steps and services;**
- B. Notification to LEA, if child potentially eligible for Part B; and**
- C. Transition conference, if child potentially eligible for Part B.**

**Measurable and Rigorous Target**

- A. 100% of all children exiting EarlySteps will have an IFSP that includes transition steps and services.
- B. 100% of children exiting EarlySteps and were identified as potentially eligible for Part B, will have notification sent to local school systems.
- C. 100% of children exiting EarlySteps identified as potentially eligible for Part B a will have a timely transition conference.

**Resources**

Division of Early Childhood Recommended Practices (2014).

Early Childhood Transition Process: A guide for helping families of children with special needs prepare for smooth and effective transitions, 2015. Downloaded from: [http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/brochure---early-childhood-transition-process---english-version.pdf?sfvrsn=e45a5e21\\_7](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/brochure---early-childhood-transition-process---english-version.pdf?sfvrsn=e45a5e21_7)

Rous, Beth S. and Hallam, Rena A., *Tools for Transition in Early Childhood*, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co, Baltimore, 2006.

Rous, B, et al, “Strategies for Supporting Transitions of Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families”, *Journal of Early Intervention*, 2007 Vol 30, No 1, pp 1-18.

## General Supervision Components for IDEA, Part C Transition Requirements

The following performance expectations are monitored according to:

- IDEA, Part C Transition requirements reviewed annually for the Annual Performance Report
- OCDD AP Monitoring of referrals to LGEs
- SPOE/FSC Agency monitoring
- Complaints from families/others

Results of monitoring with performance at less than 100% or less than established targets will result in findings of noncompliance, possible Corrective Action, and/or sanctions.

Performance Expectation	Monitoring/Data Source	Responsibility
IFSP Transition discussions held at each IFSP meeting as determined by transition reason and child's age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial/Review/Annual IFSP when child is:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ within transition age range and/or</li> <li>○ experiencing other transitions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• IFSP Section 5 completed accurately, thoroughly, addressing the appropriate transition activity.</li> </ul>	IC/FSC
Monthly notification to the LDE of children in transition age range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Age 3 Transition Report</i> in LAEIKIDS</li> <li>• Verified by monthly email sent to LDE contacts and central office staff.</li> <li>• LDE disaggregates and uploads list in eSER to appropriate LEA</li> <li>• IC/FSC sends transition notice to LDE.</li> </ul>	--EarlySteps Central Office/Statewide Parent Liaison --LDE contacts acknowledge receipt of email --LDE staff upload list to LDE eSER system
Notification to the LEA of children in the transition age range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation that Notice of transition conference sent according to required timeline</li> </ul>	--IC/FSC
Notification to the LGE of children at age 2 years, 6 months when families selected "yes" for OCDD referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OCDD data staff update list of children 2 years, 6 months whose family indicates "yes" for OCDD referral and eligibility determination and upload to Participant Services Database</li> <li>• Transition packets sent/updated LGE uploads report and reviews transition packets and requests updates from FSC/Regional Coordinator</li> </ul>	--OCDD IT Data Managers  --LGE staff, EarlySteps IC/FSC/Regional Coordinator
IFSP Transition Conference: --Held within required timeline and date documented on IFSP and sent to SPOE to add to EarlySteps Online --Includes transition steps and services	Team Meeting Notice and Notes IFSP Section 5: --Steps and Services detailed --Transition conference date documented --SPOE enters transition conference date in EarlySteps Online	--IC/FSC --Meeting participants sign Team Meeting Notice and document meeting time.  --SPOE staff
Transition information sent to LEA/LGE is complete and timely	Transition packet(s) with all required information timely and accurately	--IC/FSC



<b>Performance Expectation</b>	<b>Monitoring/Data Source</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	without prompting by the LEA, LGE, regional coordinator	
IFSP which includes Section 5: Transition is uploaded to EarlySteps Online	-IC/FSC assists family in achieving plan activities from Steps and Services section(s) such that referrals are complete and timely -All IFSPs complete and uploaded	--IC/FSC
Exit Evaluation Authorization is discussed with family, scheduled, and authorization requested from SPOE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exit evaluation authorizations issued prior to exit (includes annual evaluations if current within 6 months of exit)</li> <li>• Evaluations sent to SPOE/uploaded to EarlySteps Online</li> <li>• Evaluation outcomes report provided to family</li> </ul>	--IC/FSC  --Eligibility Evaluator  --IC/FSC/Eligibility Evaluator
Case closed according to chapter requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacts with IFSP team agreeing on closure date</li> <li>• Updating service authorizations if necessary prior to exit date</li> <li>• Closure notice sent timely to SPOE with accurate date and closure reason documented</li> </ul>	IC/FSC