



**Beyond Bubbles and Blocks**

Information for EI Home Visitors

**Do you know about service coordination in Part C early intervention (EI)?**

Service coordination is a foundational component of Part C Early Intervention (EI), designed to help families of infants and toddlers with developmental delays access the services and supports they need. Under the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/) (IDEA) Part C, service coordinators play a vital role in guiding families through the EI process—from referral and evaluation, through Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) development, to service delivery and transition. The goal is to ensure that families receive timely, appropriate, and family-centered supports that reflect their unique values and circumstances.

**How do you explain service coordination to EI service (EIS) providers?**
To EIS providers, service coordination can be described as both a role and a relationship. It involves serving as a consistent point of contact for families, facilitating communication across disciplines and agencies, and ensuring that services are aligned with the family’s priorities and culture. Service coordinators manage essential timelines, organize team meetings, and support families in making informed decisions. As a service coordinator, you are responsible for carrying out specific activities including:

* Assisting and enabling eligible child/family to receive IFSP services in a timely manner
* Coordinating all EI services including evaluations and assessments
* Facilitating and participating in the development, reviews, and evaluation of the IFSP
* Facilitating the development of a transition plan
* Ensuring families are aware of all rights and procedural safeguards available within the EI system
* Providing information on available resources
* Supporting families as needed to access resources

In practice, this means being a knowledgeable guide, a steady advocate, and a trusted collaborator throughout the family’s EI journey.

**How do you explain service coordination to families?**
When talking to families, service coordination can be explained as having a dedicated partner to help them navigate EI. The service coordinator is there to support the family in understanding their child’s development, connecting with the right services, and coordinating team efforts. They help schedule evaluations, explain options, ensure that services match the family's routines and goals, and provide information about transitions—like moving to preschool special education. In short, service coordinators help families feel supported, heard, and empowered.

****

**How are you incorporating service coordination in your work with families?**

Incorporating service coordination into your daily work means being proactive, responsive, and relational. This includes regularly checking in with families, ensuring they understand the EI process, helping them access resources, and staying informed about their changing needs. It also means collaborating closely with other team members, maintaining thorough documentation, and being thoughtful about transitions. Whether you are officially designated as a service coordinator or not, you contribute to coordinated care every time you help a family move forward with clarity and confidence.

**How is service coordination evaluated in Part C, nationally and in Massachusetts (MA)?**
Service coordination is evaluated through both compliance indicators and family-centered outcome measures. Programs monitor timelines to ensure services outlined in the IFSP are initiated promptly, and that transition planning is completed within the required timeframe. Family surveys also provide important data, capturing whether families feel they know their rights, can effectively help their child develop and learn, and are able to access the services they need. These data points are used to assess and improve the quality and effectiveness of service coordination efforts across the state.

**How is service coordination supported in EI?**
EIS programs in Massachusetts support service coordination in a variety of ways. This includes offering ongoing training and reflective supervision, monitoring caseloads to promote manageable workloads, and using data systems to track compliance and service timelines. Additionally, team-based models encourage shared responsibility, ensuring that providers have the resources they need to support families effectively. Policies and best practices emphasize a family-centered approach, reinforcing the critical role service coordination plays in high-quality EI services.

**Reflecting on Your Practice:**
As you consider your work with families, take a moment to reflect on the following questions:

* How do I build trust with families and support them without overwhelming them?
* Am I staying organized and responsive in managing timelines and communication?
* How well am I helping families understand their options and feel confident in their choices?
* What strategies do I use to collaborate with colleagues and create seamless service delivery?

**Resources:**

* [Division for Early Childhood (DEC)](https://www.dec-sped.org/servicecoordination)
* [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA)](https://ectacenter.org/)
* [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/)
* [Massachusetts Early Intervention Operational Standards (2022)](https://www.mass.gov/lists/early-intervention-policies)