



## What Are My Family's Rights? A Quick Guide

### **Informed Consent**

Early ACCESS needs your written permission before evaluation can occur and before services can begin. You must be fully informed about any activity in the language or communication mode that you usually use. The consent describes the activity and list the records, if any, that will be released and to whom. Your consent is voluntary, and you can change your mind and revoke your consent at any time. You also have the right to decline some Early ACCESS services without preventing your child or family from receiving other agreed upon services.

### **Use of Parent's Native Language or Preferred Mode of Communication**

It is important that you understand all activities and records regarding your child and family. Information will be shared with you in your usual language or way of communicating. If you need help in understanding, an interpreter will be used if at all possible.

### **Confidentiality and Release of Information**

Information about your child and family is important in developing and achieving your goals. Early ACCESS may need to get information from other people but will only do so with your written permission. Early ACCESS information and records will only be shared with other people with your permission.

### **Examination of Records**

You have the right see, understand, and have copies of any records that are kept about your child and family. If you believe the information in the record is incorrect, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of your child, you may request that the information be changed.

### **Service Coordination**

There will be one person, a Service Coordinator, assigned to help you understand and use the Early ACCESS system. Your Service Coordinator is responsible for coordinating all services identified on the Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP), the written document of early intervention services for your child and family. Your Service Coordinator is the single point of contact in helping you get the services and assistance that you want.

### **Services in Natural Environments**

You are an important part of the IFSP team, deciding on appropriate services and where they should occur. Whenever possible, Early ACCESS services provided to your child will occur in your home or programs for typically developing children. Services may occur in other places only if you and your service providers feel that early intervention cannot be satisfactorily achieved in a setting natural for your child.

### **Timely Services**

The initial evaluation and IFSP must be completed within 45 days of when evaluation was requested, unless there are special family circumstances that make this impossible. Services will begin within 30 days after the IFSP is written. The IFSP should be reviewed by you and the IFSP team at least every six months.

### **Transition Planning**

Early ACCESS services are available to eligible children until their third birthday. Your Service Coordinator and the IFSP team will help you plan for a smooth transition into appropriate services at that time. This planning should begin from 90 days to nine months before your child's third birthday.

### **Written Prior Notice**

It is important that you understand any changes that may occur with your early intervention services and why the changes happen. You will receive written notice about any evaluations, services, or other action/changes that will affect your child's or family's services. The written prior notice makes sure that you get all the information before any activity or change in services occurs.

### **Options for Resolving Disagreements**

If you disagree about the Early ACCESS services being offered to you child or family or how they are being provided, there are procedures for resolving your concerns quickly. You have access to informal processes such as one-to-one problem solving and resolution facilitation. When these ways do not work, you may request mediation services or file a formal complaint. If you have a question, you may contact your Service Coordinator or call the Iowa Department of Education at 515-281-3176.