

Philadelphia Intellectual disAbility Services

Infant Toddler Early Intervention

Natural Environments Policy

In accordance with IDEA, Part C (§303.26; §303.126) Philadelphia Infant Toddler Early Intervention (IT EI) will ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, services will be provided in natural environments. Natural environments are settings that are natural or typical for a same-aged infant or toddler without a disability and may include the home or community settings. If the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team, including the parent, determines that services will be provided in settings other than the natural environment that are most appropriate, this determination is made only when Early Intervention services cannot be achieved satisfactorily in a natural environment.

For the IFSP, the team determines the appropriate setting for providing EI services for an infant or toddler, including the justification for not providing EI services in a natural environment shall be based on the child's measurable outcomes. (EI Announcement 12=#02)

Procedure

1. If the IFSP team recommends IT EI services that are not provided in the natural environment, the Service Coordinator will facilitate the team's written justification for services not provided in natural environments.
2. In addition to the team's written justification, the team must also identify a plan to move such services to the child's natural environment in the future. This plan will include steps and a time frame (date) for moving the service back to the natural environment (not to exceed the next quarterly period).
3. There must be adequate justification that includes best practice recommendations for children who receive segregated center based services. This justification must be supported by evidence based practices that these services are most effective.
4. For every child receiving segregated center based services (when justified) , the service will be delivered in tandem with services delivered in the home and community.
5. All children in the Philadelphia Infant Toddler Early Intervention program will receive services in the home and community.