

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS



Executive Office of Health and Human Services

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Early Intervention in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places

The purpose of Early Intervention is to build upon what families and caregivers are already doing to support their child's development. Early Intervention provides caregivers with strategies and resources so that they can continue to enhance their children's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities. Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts. All families can enhance their children's learning and development with the necessary supports and resources.

Early Intervention services must be delivered in settings that are natural and within the everyday routines and activities in which children and their families participate. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 [Sec 303.12] states, "To the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child, early intervention services must be provided in natural environments, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate."

Only when the team cannot effectively provide services within the child's routines, is discussion to occur regarding the provision of service in another setting. Personal preferences or convenience for providers or family are not acceptable justification for services being delivered outside of the natural environment. For each service on the IFSP that will be provided outside of the natural environment, a "Plan for Providing Services in a Natural Environment" form must be completed and all questions on the form answered.

Considerations and steps in the decision making process:

- What outcome(s) cannot be achieved in a natural environment and why?
- What strategies have already been tried and what have been the barriers to success?
- Can the outcome be modified in a way that makes sense? Can additional supports be provided within the natural environment? Is there another natural environment that could be utilized?
- What is the specific plan for helping the child/family to be successful in the context of everyday routines, activities, and places?