

Knowledge and Skills for Service Coordinators

A common set of knowledge and skills of Part C, Early Intervention (EI) service coordinators to recognize their unique and specialized role.

Why Were They Developed?

To provide awareness of the foundational knowledge and skills that are necessary for quality service coordination in early intervention.

How Were They Developed?

Through a multi-year, multi-phase process, the National SC Leadership Institute Group, in partnership with the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA) collaborated to develop and approve clear guidance for the necessary knowledge and skills for EI service coordinators.

What Are The Knowledge and Skills for Service Coordinators (KSSC)?

1. Infant & Toddler Development



Knowledge in this area includes factors that contribute to development; such as family context, relationships, culture, socio-economic considerations, environment and experiences to guide learning within natural environments.

2. Family-Centered Practices



The ability to respect and support the distinctive qualities of each family, recognizing the family as the teacher, support, decision maker and advocate for their child.

3. Leadership/Teaming



The ability to be an effective leader by building professional, supportive partnerships with families; collaborating and teaming with IFSP team members and engaging with a variety of community partners.

4. Coordination of Services



The ability to coordinate and monitor the timely delivery of identified evidence-based early intervention services.

5. Transition



Implementing smooth and effective transition plans with the family that identify events, activities and processes associated with key changes between environments or programs during the early childhood years.

6. Professionalism



The ability to use personal and professional boundaries, flexibility, resiliency, time management, dependability and by engaging in ongoing professional development.

Who Can Use the KSSC?

Service coordinators, administrators/program directors, state level professional development providers, faculty, preservice students and families will all benefit from the KSSC.


How Can the KSSC Be Used?

The KSSC are intended to enhance and augment personnel preparation, preservice training, and inservice professional growth and development.

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A Closer Look at KSSC #1: Infant & Toddler Development

Knowledge and Skills for Service Coordinators (KSSC): A common set of knowledge and skills of Part C, Early Intervention (EI) service coordinators (SC) to recognize their unique and specialized role. Knowledge refers to overarching understanding or comprehension. Skills refers to the ability to demonstrate or apply that knowledge.

Knowledge #1: Infant and Toddler Development

Service Coordinators demonstrate knowledge of infant and toddler development, including factors that contribute to development, such as family context, relationships, culture, socio-economic considerations, environment, and experiences to inform intervention decisions, child development, and learning within natural environments.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Explain developmental delays and disabilities and their impact on children's development and learning to support intervention decisions.
- Apply knowledge of typical development, individual differences, and cultural and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning within natural environments.
- Support families in their understanding of child development, how each developmental domain contributes to the whole child, and how ongoing progress is monitored.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Kyra, SC, is completing an intake visit with Sammy, an 8-month old with Down syndrome. Kyra knows that children with Down syndrome often have low muscle tone and may have gross motor delays. She asks Sammy's grandmother questions about his ability to move around his environment, use his hands, and support his head and trunk. Kyra also observes that Sammy is not yet sitting independently. When Kyra provides information about her intake appointment with the evaluation team members, she shares details about Sammy's motor development, possible low muscle tone, and his grandmother's concern about how hard it is to bathe him because he cannot sit in the bathtub.

Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways that Kyra demonstrated her knowledge and skills in the area of Infant and Toddler Development?
2. How does foundational knowledge of child development affect all aspects of the EI process?
3. Are there areas of child development that you feel more confident in than others?
4. How do you strengthen your knowledge of child development across all developmental domains?





A Closer Look at KSSC #2: Family-Centered Practices

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Knowledge #2: Family-Centered Practices

Service Coordinators demonstrate the ability to respect and support the distinctive qualities of each family, recognizing the family as the teacher, support, decision-maker, and advocate for their child.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Recognize implicit biases and respect the unique qualities of each family (e.g., culture, dynamics, roles, values and practices, etc.) to identify their priorities and needs.
- Comprehensively explain family rights and procedural safeguards to families in understandable terms, including when and how they may be applied, to support them in advocating for their child and family.
- Promote engagement and family capacity-building to address their priorities and concerns, by supporting them to identify opportunities to achieve goals for their family and child's development and learning.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Jon, SC, knows that Samira's annual Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is due soon. Because Samira's mom has an intellectual disability herself, Jon knows that pre-planning is critical to making sure that she can fully participate. Jon plans to meet with Samira's mom and dad to decide who should be included in the review and what additional supports the family and invited guests need to engage in the process. Jon also makes sure that he brings information about participating in IFSP meetings, parent prior notice, and procedural safeguards. From meeting the family before, he knows that the materials need to be easy to read, videos are helpful, and it helps to allow time for Samira's mom and dad to talk about her strengths and ways that she has been growing.

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Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways that Jon demonstrated knowledge and skills in the area of Family-Centered Practices?
2. How do you acknowledge the unique characteristics and priorities and support the needs of every family to help them understand the early intervention process and advocate for their child?
3. What processes do you use to identify your own implicit biases while working with families?
4. What feedback mechanisms are needed to assure that family engagement and partnership are happening in your program?



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A Closer Look at KSSC #3: Leadership/Teaming

Knowledge and Skills for Service Coordinators (KSSC): A common set of knowledge and skills of Part C, Early Intervention (EI) service coordinators (SC) to recognize their unique and specialized role. Knowledge refers to overarching understanding or comprehension. Skills refers to the ability to demonstrate or apply that knowledge.

Knowledge #3: Leadership/Teaming

Service Coordinators demonstrate the ability to be an effective leader by building professional, supportive partnerships with families; collaborating and teaming with IFSP team members to include family members; and engaging/collaborating with a variety of community partners.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Use effective teaming and collaboration practices in order to support families and other professionals in carrying out the IFSP.
- Partner with families to identify, share, and access available community resources/services, parent groups, and state/local advocacy organizations.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Nadira, SC, receives a call from Isaiah's mother, Hailey, who is wondering about how to involve Isaiah's child care center in the EI services that he is receiving. Hailey is wondering if she can invite her child care director to the IFSP meeting and if staff at the child care center can receive some additional training on Isaiah's IFSP goals. Nadira and Hailey work together to come up with steps so that this can be achieved. Nadira agrees to support Hailey in a conversation with the child care director to figure out how this might happen. Nadira commits to including the child care director on the IFSP Prior Written Notice as a team member and putting the training on the agenda for the IFSP meeting. Nadira and Hailey agree to call a teaming meeting with the EI primary service provider to discuss these steps.

Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways that Nadira demonstrated knowledge and skills in the area of Leadership and Teaming?
2. What activities will help you develop your skills as a team leader to support effective collaboration among partners?
3. What strategies do you use to develop relationships with community partners to support families?
4. What is needed in your program to support teams during teaming meetings?



A Closer Look at KSSC #4: Coordination of Services

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Knowledge #4: Coordination of Services

Service Coordinators demonstrate the ability to coordinate and monitor the timely delivery of identified evidence-based early intervention services.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Comprehensively orient all families to the EI system and discuss formal and informal supports, and opportunities available to them.
- Explain to families how early intervention is funded and answer any questions related to systems of payments in understandable terms.
- Coordinate evaluations and assessments, identify and facilitate the multi-disciplinary eligibility determination process, and ensure family participation through this process.
- Facilitate IFSP development (initial, reviews, annuals) including functional outcomes addressed within family routines and natural environments.
- Monitor progress and timely delivery of services in accordance with the IFSP.
- Partner with families to coordinate educational, social, and medical services that the child needs or is being provided outside of EI.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Rose, SC, is visiting with Sophia's family during a visit with the physical therapist in preparation for Sophia's IFSP annual review which will take place in a month. Meeting with the family in their natural environment enables Rose to better understand Sophia's interactions with her family members and to see how the environment supports outcomes identified by the family. Rose asks Sophia's mother open-ended questions related to current family concerns and possible resources the family may need. Rose gathers information about the family's priorities, concerns, and needs. In addition, the collaboration with the physical therapist in reviewing progress will help the team to be prepared for a successful and timely IFSP annual review.

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Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways that Rose demonstrated her knowledge and skills in the area of Coordination of Services?
2. How do you coordinate and ensure family participation in the IFSP process?
3. What strategies do you use to follow policies and procedures while maintaining timelines to support children and families?
4. How do you partner with families to coordinate educational, social and medical services the child needs or are being provided outside of EI?



A Closer Look at KSSC #5: Transition

Knowledge and Skills for Service Coordinators (KSSC): A common set of knowledge and skills of Part C, Early Intervention (EI) service coordinators (SC) to recognize their unique and specialized role. Knowledge refers to overarching understanding or comprehension. Skills refers to the ability to demonstrate or apply that knowledge.

Knowledge #5: Transition

Service Coordinators implement smooth and effective transition plans with the family that identify the events, activities, and processes associated with key changes between environments or programs during the early childhood years.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Partner with families to plan and implement appropriate and individualized events, activities, and processes that support transitions across settings, agencies, and throughout the early intervention process.
- Manage required timelines, processes, and documentation to support successful transitions.
- Support a variety of planned and timely strategies for successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and family as they exit early intervention.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Anna has a diagnosis of Spina Bifida. She is turning 3 years old in 6 months. Her parents want Anna to attend preschool. Anna usually sleeps until 10am. Anna will need to wake up several hours earlier to be at school on time. Anna's parents agreed that Jayden, SC, should refer Anna for a Part B evaluation. When Anna was 31 months old, Jayden held a transition planning conference. With parent permission, Jayden invited the public early childhood special education preschool representative, and, at the parents' request, Anna's aunt. Jayden documented the following transition activities in Anna's IFSP Transition Plan: Anna's parents will start waking her up 30 minutes earlier each day until she is waking up at 7am every morning. Anna's aunt will bring Anna to the morning nursery program at her church on Sundays. Jayden will change Anna's afternoon toddler group to a morning group. The occupational therapist (OT) will move home visits to a morning time to support the family with preparing Anna to leave for her EI toddler group. The preschool representative will inquire about whether Anna can eat breakfast at school if she is eligible for Part B services.

Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways Jayden demonstrates knowledge and skills in the area of Transition?
2. How do you learn about what the child and family will need as they prepare to transition out of EI services?
3. What strategies do you use to collaborate and maintain effective relationships with community partners, including local school districts, to ensure successful transitions?
4. What skills or strategies would you like to develop or grow to support families during transition?



A Closer Look at KSSC #6: Professionalism

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Knowledge #6: Professionalism

Service Coordinators demonstrate professionalism by using personal and professional boundaries, flexibility, resiliency, time management, dependability, and by engaging in ongoing professional development.

Demonstrated Skills:

- Apply organizational skills to meet and manage required timelines and documentation.
- Reflect and evaluate current practices to determine strengths and areas of growth to access professional development to improve practices.
- Set personal and professional boundaries and use leadership skills, applying ethical practices, policies and procedures in relationships and interactions.



What Does This Look Like In Practice?

Tom, SC, was often late with his IFSP 6-month reviews. Yuna, Tom's supervisor, asked Tom why it was hard for him to complete the 6-month reviews on time. Tom shared he thought 6 months did not give the family enough time to make progress towards the IFSP outcomes. Upon reviewing several of Tom's IFSPs, Yuna noticed that many outcomes on IFSPs for which Tom is the SC stated that the children had not met their developmental milestones. As part of his professional development plan, Tom and another colleague collaborated to review and revise old IFSP outcomes to ensure that they were high quality, functional and measurable. With this practice, Tom soon looked forward to 6-month IFSP reviews. He learned how to support families and other team members to reflect on children's progress and success which resulted in meaningful IFSP outcomes.

Reflect. . .

1. What are some ways Tom demonstrates knowledge and skills in the area of Professionalism?
2. What are your strengths or challenges with organizational skills related to managing timelines and documentation?
3. How do you learn about and access professional development to improve your practices?
4. What is one skill you could improve that would make a significant difference in how you demonstrate professionalism?

