

# Individual Development Support Strategies Procedure - Infants and Toddlers

## Purpose

This provides guidance for completing the Individual Development Support Strategies form with families during quarterly home visits/conferences.

## Guidance

The *Individual Development Support Strategies (IDSS)* form is used by teachers to engage families in their child's learning and development, discuss and share assessment data, and identify strategies to support their child's growth. The IDSS form documents the conversation between teacher and family during conferences and home visits. This time is an opportunity to enhance the knowledge and understanding of **both staff and family** of the child's developmental progress and activities in the program. The teacher can share what he/she has learned about the child and should also **hear from families** about how they are supporting their child as they grow and develop.

The valuable information that families share is documented on the IDSS form and becomes part of the data used to support individualized learning and guide teaching practices. The procedure below outlines the steps for engaging families in this process during quarterly assessment conferences and home visits.

## Procedure

### In Preparation for the quarterly conference/home visit

1. Review the most recent assessment results for the child. Review all observations collected since the last conference/home visit to share with families.
2. Review the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) and connect the observations and assessment (Checkpoints in TS GOLD) to the ELOF domains.
3. Gather needed items for the conference/home visit.
  - a. your copy of the ELOF
  - b. the child's most recent assessment results (*Development and Learning Report* in TS GOLD)
  - c. a *Learning Games* booklet for the appropriate age of the child (for those teachers using *Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.* only)
  - d. an IDSS form
  - e. any other relevant observations, screenings or data you would like to discuss

### During the quarterly conference/home visit

#### 1. Discuss assessment results:

If a new assessment has been made since the last time you met with the family, share those results with the family. Observations from the assessment tool should be used to highlight the child's current strengths and abilities. Briefly explain the ELOF to the family and how the ongoing assessment tool shows the child's growth and development within the 5 domains of the Framework. Make sure to check the box showing assessment results were shared with the family.

#### 2. Develop strategies for supporting the child's development:

Use the *Prompts for Facilitating IDSS Conversations with Families* handout to guide your conversation with the family. The prompts are suggestions to assist you in facilitating a conversation with the family and are not intended as "interview questions". A summary of your conversation with the family is recorded on the IDSS form:

- **Box 1: What Have You Observed About Your Child's Development?**

Ask the family to share observations they have about their child's developmental progress, their strengths and any concerns they have about their child's development. Discuss available resources if appropriate and assist the family in accessing these resources as needed. Help the family connect their observations to the 5 ELOF domains (refer to the chart at the bottom of the IDSS form). Record a summary of the points discussed, noting ELOF domains addressed in the far-right column.

- **Box 2: What Strategies Are You Using and/or Would Like to Use, to Support Your Child's Development?**

Discussion with families can look different depending on the child's age, and how long the family has been in the program.

- For infants, and newer families, conversation may focus on daily care routines. Infants and toddlers learn best through interactions with their primary adults. Daily care routines offer an opportunity for these rich interactions throughout each day. The family might choose to focus on a daily care routine they do and discuss strategies they use that can also be used in the classroom.
- For families who have been in your program, and for older toddlers who may be looking toward preschool soon, conversation might focus more on the child's next steps in development and the strategies that can support them as they grow. Some families may want to focus on specific goals they have for their child. Teacher and family can work together to discuss strategies that best support the child as they move toward those goals.
- If you are a teacher using *Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*, share the *Learning Games* booklet with the family and use this to generate possible strategies, allowing them to choose activities that interest them.
- **If the child is currently on an IFSP**, discuss current IFSP goals with the family and identify ways these strategies can support the IFSP goals. Identify these with an asterisk\*.

Record a summary of this discussion. Show the connection between the routines, strategies, and goals the family chooses and the ELOF domains, using the codes at the bottom of the page. More than one developmental domain can apply to a strategy. **Note: Each developmental domain should be addressed at least once. (Hint: You might want to check off the domains in the Key as you identify them to ensure that you have covered all areas of development)**

### 3. Sign and have the parent sign the completed form:

Provide a copy for the family as soon as possible for them to refer to at home. Provide the family with a copy of the *Development and Learning Report* and any *Learning Games* they have chosen.

### Connecting the IDSS to program curriculum after the conference

The strategies developed with the family in the IDSS process should be acknowledged in individual child planning in center-based classrooms. Observations from families, shared during the IDSS conference should be considered when documenting observations in TS GOLD and in determining final Checkpoint ratings.