

## **2024 Early Intervention Annual Family Survey Frequently Asked Questions for Early Intervention Leaders**

### **When is the survey open?**

- The FY 2023 - 24 Early Intervention Family survey will open on February 1, 2024, and close on June 30, 2024.

### **Who should respond to the survey?**

- Families with a child who has an IFSP/IEP with Early Intervention services, on February 1, 2024, should be offered the opportunity to respond to the survey.
  - One survey should be returned from the family of every child receiving Early Intervention services on February 1, 2024. Families are encouraged to collaborate on the survey response.
- Infants and toddlers who are in the tracking program on February 1, 2024 should not participate in the survey.
- Children who are referred or evaluated after February 1, 2024 should not participate in the survey.
- Children who received Early Intervention services but are not longer receiving services on February 1, 2024, should not participate in the survey.

### **What languages are available?**

- The survey will be available in English, Spanish, Nepali, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, and French.
- Families can select the language they need on the first page of the survey.
- Anticipate the language needs of their families who are completing the survey. Early Intervention programs may consider using the interpreter who works with the family during service delivery and meetings.
- If a local option is not available, families can call CONNECT (1-800-692-7288) for language translation assistance.

### **Why does Pennsylvania's Early Intervention program send out an annual family survey?**

- OCDEL is committed to a continuous, quality improvement process across our Early Intervention Program. The voices and opinions of families are an integral part of any improvement process. The family survey has been a part of Early Intervention's improvement efforts for over a decade.
- The family survey is just one of the tools that we use to evaluate the quality of our Early Intervention programs. The survey results validate that the strengths we see in Early Intervention programs are also recognized by families.
- The family survey allows us to see where we have areas across our Early Intervention programs that we can work to strengthen.
- The family survey is a reporting requirement of the federal Office of Special Education programs.

### **How is the EI Family Survey designed?**

- The family survey is an online survey that families access through a weblink or QR code. Families can use their computers, smartphones, or other devices to access the survey.

- There is only 1 QR code and link to the family survey regardless of the language translation needed. Families will choose the language they need from a drop-down menu on the first page of the survey.
- OCDEL provides standardized materials for local Early Intervention programs to use for dissemination. Materials are available in English, Spanish, Nepali, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, and French.

### **What strategies can an Early Intervention program use to disseminate the survey?**

- Local Early Intervention programs, because they have close connections with the families in their programs, are responsible for disseminating the survey links.
- Develop a plan to encourage all families in the Early Intervention program, including those who are typically underrepresented, to respond to the family survey. This plan should include steps to reach families who need additional assistance to respond to a survey.
- Include steps in the dissemination plan to monitor return rates on an ongoing basis. Change dissemination strategies if they aren't effective in getting surveys returned.
- **Consider allowing families to use program technology to fill out the survey. For example, have a computer available at a family training event or at transition meetings that families can use to take the survey. While ensuring that devices do not contain any protected/confidential information that could accidentally be accessed. Programs should have a "clean" device for this purpose.**
- Develop talking points to describe the concrete ways that the Early Intervention program intends to use the data to enhance services for families and children in Early Intervention.
- Consider providing incentives for families to return surveys and for staff to disseminate surveys.

### **What do Early Intervention staff and providers need to know about the survey?**

- Early Intervention staff or providers should be trained in best practices for disseminating the survey to families.
  - Anticipate family needs to take the survey (ex., language or technology needs)
  - Share information about the survey often and in multiple ways.
  - Be familiar with the instructions for taking the survey and communicate them to families.
  - Don't pressure families to complete the survey or guide them to answer items in a certain way.
- Clarify for families that the services they are receiving are "Early Intervention". Describe the actual services that they receive to help make the connection. For example, say "The speech-therapy services that Ms. Jones provides are Early Intervention services."
- Let families know that the survey can be taken on a smart phone, computer, or other tablet. If technology isn't available in the home, encourage the family to use a local library's or other secure public computer to complete the survey.

### **How is the family survey data used by OCDEL?**

- The data collected in the family survey is used for reporting to the federal Office of Special Education Programs and in Pennsylvania's determination process for Early Intervention programs. It is also used in the Verification process.
- OCDEL provides results to local Early Intervention programs for use in their quality improvement efforts.

## Common Questions that Families Ask About the Survey

### *Are the my responses confidential?*

- ALL survey responses are confidential. Early Intervention program will not know which families responded to the survey. For both state and local reports, responses are compiled for any reports.
- Survey responses have NO impact on a child's services or eligibility for Early Intervention.

### *I tried to get the survey but the link is not working.*

- Confirm with your Service Coordinator, teacher, or therapist that you have entered the entire link correctly.
- Try to use the QR code through your phone, computer, or tablet.
- Ask your Service Coordinator, teacher, or therapist to text or email you the link directly.

### *What do you do with the survey responses? Why are you doing this survey?*

- Your child's local Early Intervention program and OCDEL are working together to improve Early Intervention services to families and children.
- Family survey results are grouped together and shared with local Early Intervention programs and at the state-level to assist in identifying areas of strength and areas that could be improved.
- Ask your Early Intervention program staff to describe the concrete ways that the program intends to use the data.

### *I don't know why I am getting this survey. My child is not in Early Intervention/has not received any Early Intervention services*

- If your child was receiving Early Intervention services on February 1, 2024, you are welcome to fill out the survey even if your child is no longer in Early Intervention. Your responses are welcome even if your child has transitioned out of the Early Intervention program.

### *Some of the questions don't apply to me.*

- You should skip or not answer any questions that you feel do not apply to your family's situation in Early Intervention.

### *I have had a variety of experiences, so I don't know how to respond.*

- You may interact with a variety of people during your child's time receiving Early Intervention Services. Consider all those experiences when responding to the questions.