

The editor of First Steps Families is a mom that had a child in the First Steps program. Hopefully the information shared will provide you with helpful resources for your family. To conserve resources and to make sure you don't miss out on helpful information, please send your e-mail address to Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu to receive the newsletter electronically.

Connie



FAMILY ROLE IN FIRST STEPS

The mission of the Kentucky First Steps System is to help Kentucky's families meet the developmental needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. First Steps does this by providing services that help children learn, talk and play. These services are called early intervention services.

The Kentucky First Steps System may look different from what you expect. First Steps services are provided in places where your child lives and plays. Early intervention providers will not work with your child while you watch or are in a nearby room. You are a very important part of your child's early intervention team. The professionals working with your child will be including you in every session. They will teach you activities to use with your child throughout the day. Research shows that very young children learn best this way.

We work closely with you to provide the kinds of supports that best meet your family's priorities and your child's needs. We will be talking about these supports throughout your time with First Steps. As your child grows and changes, the kinds of supports your family will need may change as well.

Things Every Parent Should Know About First Steps

All staff that work in First Steps are qualified professionals who must meet state personnel standards. They are all screened before they come to meet with you and your child.

The relationship you develop with your First Steps team is an important relationship for both you and your child. Communicate clearly to your team what you think is best for your child. Work with your team and advocate for your child. Don't be afraid to speak up if you think things are not going well.

You and your First Steps team create an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for your child. Every child's plan is individually designed to fit priorities and needs. The progress that a child makes is based on many factors: Your child's unique learning characteristics, the skills needed to learn and the number of opportunities to practice the skill. Research shows that more services do not result in better or faster progress. It's the practice throughout the day that makes the difference.

Your doctor or specialist may prescribe a certain amount of hours of therapy for your child. Early intervention providers will teach you activities to use with your child. This is called a consultative model of service delivery. The team, which includes you and the professionals working with you, will determine the number of hours of early intervention services needed for your child based on the needs of your child and the length of time needed to teach you the strategies.

As a parent you and your child have certain rights under federal law. Please check your Family Handbook to review your rights.

**PARENT
CONSULTANT**

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We are on the Web:
[http://chfs.ky.gov/
dph/firststeps.htm](http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm)

**Quotable
Quote**

*While we try
to teach our
children all
about life,*

*Our children
teach us
what life is
all about.*

*~Angela
Schwindt*



FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS



The 2011 Infant-Toddler Institute is designed to bring families, professionals, and paraprofessionals together to learn about quality services for infants and toddlers with and without special needs.

Scholarships are now available for families to attend this institute in Lexington, KY, August 9-11. The scholarships are available through the Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities, Consumer Involvement Fund. Families must pre-pay all fees and receive reimbursement up to \$350 after the institute. Deadline for application is August 1, 2011. Call (502) 564-7841 or (877) 367-5332 or email carol.tudor@ky.gov **Questions???** Please contact Connie at (859) 257-6427.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD ALONE IN A CAR

Several weekends ago, a 2-year-old left in a hot car died in Louisville. His was the third death in 2011. The first two occurred in Texas and Louisiana. This was the earliest in the year that we have ever had a child die. Two weeks before, we had a near miss in Kentucky as well. Please help us ensure that never again will a child die in a hot car in Kentucky! Never leave a child alone in a car. Even on a cool day (70s), heat inside a car can kill. Follow the tips below to prevent a tragedy:

- Dial 911 immediately if you see an unattended child in a car. EMS professionals are trained to determine if a child is in trouble.
- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, even with the window slightly open.
- Place a cell phone, PDA, purse, briefcase, gym bag or whatever is to be carried from the car, on the floor in front of a child in a backseat. This triggers adults to see children when they open the rear door and reach for their belongings.
- Set your cell phone or Blackberry reminder to be sure you dropped your child off at day care.
- Set your computer calendar program, such as Outlook, to ask, "Did you drop off at daycare today?"
- Have a plan that if your child is late for daycare that you will be called within a few minutes. Be especially careful if you change your routine for dropping off little kids at day care.
- Teach children not to play in any vehicle.
- Lock all vehicle doors and trunk after everyone has exited the vehicle – especially at home. Keep keys out of children's reach. Cars are not playgrounds or babysitters.
- Check vehicles and trunks FIRST if a child goes missing.



For more information, go to www.safekids.org/nlyca.