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Mark D. Birdwhistell
Secretary

TO: First Steps Service Providers

FROM: Ruth Ann Shepherd M.D., FAAP, CPHQ
Director, Division of Adult and Child Health Improvement

DATE: March 26, 2007

RE: Documentation of Child Progress

In order to meet the federal Office of Special Education Programs' mandate to document the progress of children participating in Kentucky's First Steps program, the Department for Public Health has partnered with local Point of Entry (POE) offices to collect and enter assessment information on all eligible children into a centralized data system.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has mandated that First Steps must compile data on assessments. In order to comply with the OSEP mandates, we must obtain a **copy** of all assessment protocols completed on eligible First Steps participants. Please submit to the POE office responsible for ongoing maintenance of the child's First Steps record, copies of all assessment protocols for eligible children completed after **July 1, 2006**. These should be sent to the appropriate POE office no later than **May 31, 2007**. For all **new assessments** completed, providers will continue to submit copies of the assessments to the POE within 14 days, but will include copies of newly completed test protocols for all eligible children.

Assessment protocols are the paper forms obtained from the test publisher that are used by providers to document assessment findings. Providers should **NOT** submit the original test protocol to the POE. Rather, providers **SHOULD** submit a copy of the original test protocol to the POE for data entry purposes. Existing consents for the release and/or obtaining of information between the POE and the provider will be sufficient to cover the submission of this confidential information. Each protocol must contain: 1) the child's CBIS number, 2) the provider # (individual or agency), and 3) the provider's National Provider Identifier (NPI) if the provider has obtained one. At this time we are requesting that providers submit protocols for all formal assessments completed on eligible First Steps participants for program planning purposes. This may include standardized and criterion-referenced instruments. As analysis is completed on the assessment protocols submitted, the submission criteria for data-entry purposes will adjust accordingly.

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has established requirements for states to document child progress. Kentucky is collecting and analyzing assessment information on all eligible children in order to better assess the efficacy of the state's First Steps program and appropriately document child progress for federal reporting purposes.

We thank you for your assistance and for helping the program comply with federal standards. Your continued participation in and dedication to the First Steps program is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Dr. Jackie Sampers at jackie.sampers@ky.gov or the Early Childhood Development Branch Manager, Joyce Robl at joyce.robl@ky.gov . Dr. Sampers and Ms. Robl may also be reached by phone at 502/564-3756.