

The Kentucky Early Intervention System

(KEIS)

Family Newsletter – Autumn 2022



How to access your child's electronic record. As parents, when we first realize our child might be in need of early intervention services and we might need some education to go along with it, it can be overwhelming. As we navigate our way through the evaluations and referrals, answering question after question about our child, we sometimes skip over some fine details we wish we hadn't. It's not that we want things to go in one ear and out the other. No. We want to be diligent and strong through the process. But at times we feel like pulling our hair out. How many of us wish we had a memory that would photograph every form, every face,



every name and phone number of every therapist, educator and doctor our child sees? Yet most of us just don't have that ability. As helpful as it might be, we don't have the ability to recall every detail of all appointments. (Cont'd on page 2)

What is the Kentucky Early Intervention Services (KEIS)?

KEIS (formerly known as First Steps) is a statewide early intervention system that provides services to children with developmental disabilities from birth to age 3 and their families. KEIS is Kentucky's response to the federal Infant-Toddler Program. KEIS offers comprehensive services through a variety of community agencies and is administered by the Department for Public Health (DPH) in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS).

Providers for KEIS deliver services that actively involve parents/caregivers in visits usually conducted where the child spends time (home, childcare, playground) and may differ from services provided in a therapy clinic or medical center. Additionally, KEIS providers use a coaching approach to help families and other caregivers support your child's learning and development.

Unsure what a coaching approach is or what that might look like for you and your child? Please view this short but important video put together by the Coaching in Early Intervention Training and Mentorship Program (CEITMP). The CEITMP works to train all KEIS providers in the best practices and proven principles of coaching in early intervention. In this video a Kentucky parent and a provider share their experiences with coaching and the impact it's had on the child. [KEIS/CEITMP Video](#).

Insurance Reminder: Open enrollment for many health insurance programs across the state begins in October each year. Please be sure to notify your service coordinator and providers of any changes to your insurance plan or type of coverage that might happen. Keeping all your billing information as well as any address or phone number changes up to date with KEIS is essential for continuity in your child's care. Be sure to contact your service coordinator to make these changes in your record, not the State Lead Agency (SLA) office.

Wise parents take simple actions early on so they can avoid having to take very painful ones later. – *Jim Fay*

My child is not a statistic, not a number, not a diagnosis, but a person with different abilities, taking on a difficult world. He proves every day that he is a miracle and that he will never, ever give up. I am his voice and he is my heart.- *SLAP (Strong Loving Autism Parents support group.)*

I don't think the worst thing that could happen to me is me raising a child with special needs. I think the worst thing is to raise a child who is cruel to those with special needs. - *Anonymous*

2022 dates to be aware of: October

Down Syndrome Awareness Month

Head Start Month

3-National Child Health Day

19-National Kentucky Day

22-National Color Day

26-National Knock-Knock Joke Day

November

National Adoption Month

Epilepsy Awareness Month

1-National Family Literacy Day

11-Veteran's Day

20-National Child's Day

28-National French Toast Day

29-National Day of Giving

Using the First Steps parent portal cont'd - While we know from observation in our day-to-day lives with our children, that they've made progress through all the wonderful early intervention help we've received, we don't typically remember every detail, suggestion, tool or bit of advice we get during provider visits. Accessing your child's record may be able to assist you in keeping track of goals, milestones reached and additional information.

How do you access the TOTS parent portal to view your child's electronic records?

- You must first read the parent agreement for TOTS access and sign it. This agreement is available from your POE office.
- Your child must already have a TOTS Identification number for you to access his or her electronic records.
- Parent logons are child specific so if you have more than one child receiving KEIS services, they'll have their own ID #.
- Each POE office will have a step-by-step guide for parents on how to use the portal, which includes how to log on, change your password, and what is safe and acceptable use of the TOTS parent portal.

Did you already sign up for the TOTS parent portal but need further assistance?

1-Forgot your user name or password? There are buttons on the log-in page of the parent portal to click if you've forgotten the username or password. These will allow you to reset them yourself.

2-Using a computer with TOTS is best. Accessing it or resetting a password on a smartphone doesn't always work.

3-The KEIS State Lead Agency (SLA) office isn't able to reset a password for you but they are able to reset your security questions, which would assist you in accessing the portal if you're having difficulties.

4-After 3 failed attempts to enter your logon ID and password incorrectly, you'll be locked out of the TOTS system and need to contact the POE to regain access.

Again, if you're interested in accessing your child's electronic records for First Steps, please contact your local POE for additional information and to get set up in the TOTS parent portal. You can access a list of the Point of Entry offices to find the contact info you need by clicking here: [KEIS POE offices](#)

Helpful Early Intervention Definitions

- ***Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)***: The written plan, based on your priorities and concerns, that families and those who provide KEIS services to a child develop to show what services the child will receive under Part C of IDEA and how those services will help the child's developmental needs.
- ***Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)***: A law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (ages birth to 3) and their families receive early intervention services under Part C of IDEA. Children and youth (ages 3 to 21) receive special education and related services under Part B of IDEA.
- ***Point Of Entry (POE)***: The office that accepts referrals and will assist with a child's eligibility determination for KEIS.



Self-Care Tips for Parents & Caregivers

Community support: Find others in your community with whom you feel accepted, celebrated, and safe. Join a class, strengthening your commitment to your faith community, or try joining a book club or other activity.

Peer mentoring/group support: Look for support groups, in person or online, where you connect with others who you have things in common with.

Be good to yourself! You're the only you you've got!₂

Definitions Cont'd:

- ***Service Coordinator (SC)***: The person who will assist a family through the intake, evaluation and eligibility determination process and facilitate the IFSP development. Service Coordinators can also provide information about and make referrals to other community resources and coordinate and ensure the delivery of all services
- ***State Lead Agency (SLA)***: The state office for the KEIS program.