

Family Engagement in Early Learning Settings: Strategies and Resources

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Since 1990, Family Connection has supported over 100,000 families and counting!

Session Objectives

Participants will:

1. Become familiar with SC' Parent Training and Information Center(PTI) and meet South Carolina's aRPy Ambassador.
2. Learn strategies to work together with families to promote positive child outcomes.
3. Become familiar with the DEC Recommended Practices (RPs) and ECTA Center Suite of Resources that support family engagement.
4. Discover initiatives offered by the PTI and how to access and use the resources to support families.

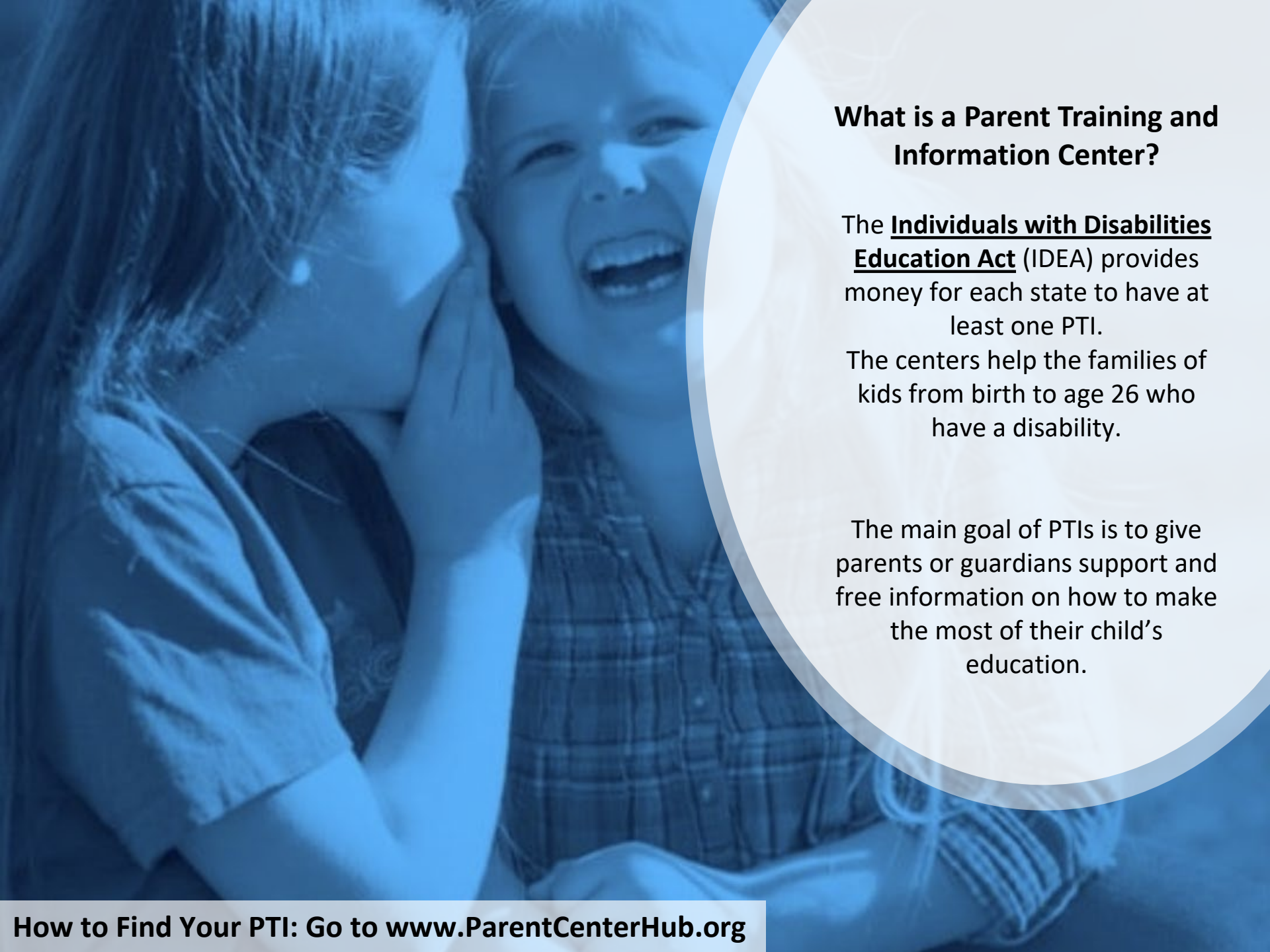


P2P USA
Parent to Parent USA

FAMILY VOICES[®]



MAKING CONNECTIONS, RAISING AWARENESS, PROMOTING INCLUSION...



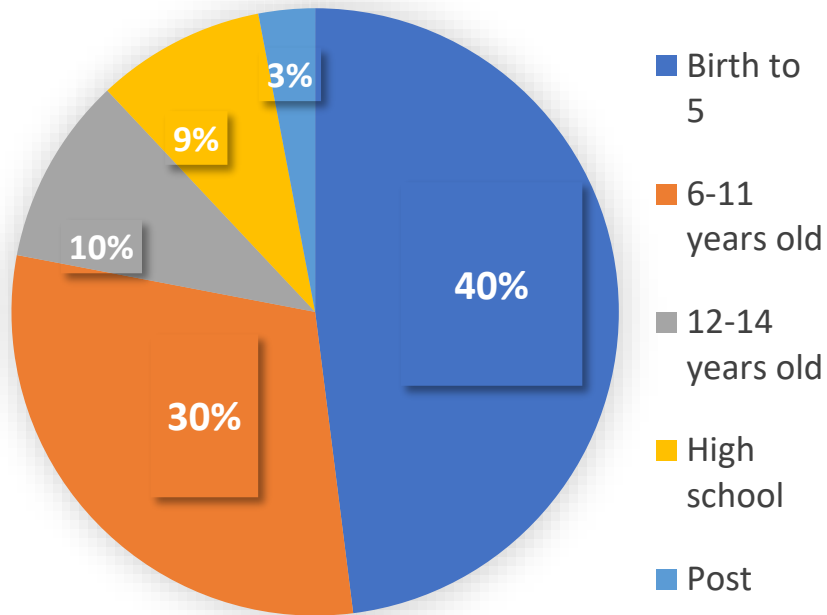
What is a Parent Training and Information Center?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides money for each state to have at least one PTI.

The centers help the families of kids from birth to age 26 who have a disability.

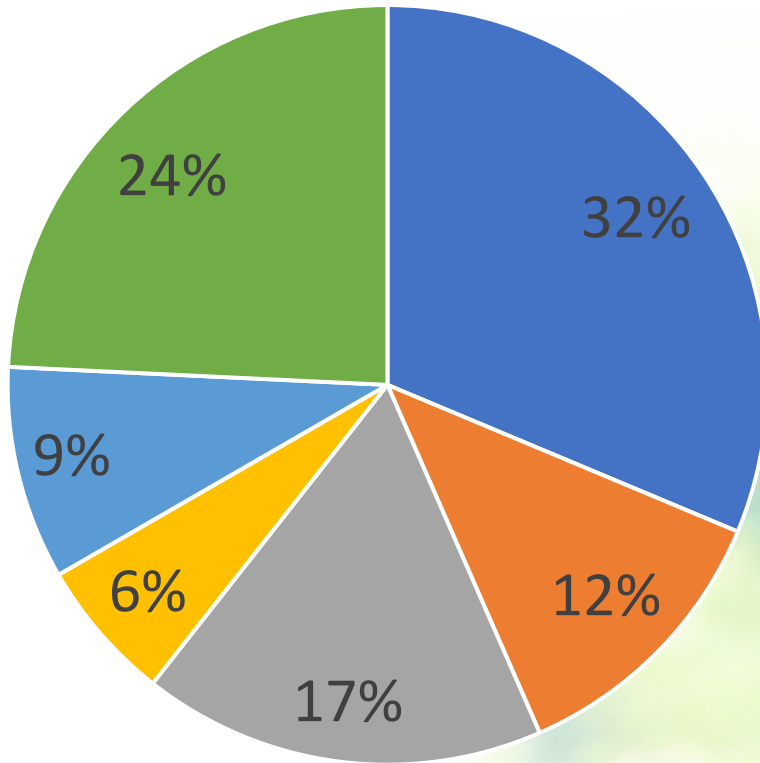
The main goal of PTIs is to give parents or guardians support and free information on how to make the most of their child's education.

Ages of Children Served



Service & Training Numbers	Most Common Diagnoses
Over 3,200 individual families	Autism
Over 10,000 calls	Intellectual/ Developmental Delay
299 Workshops	Genetic Disorders
7,500 trained	Asthma

Primary Concerns of Parents



- School Concerns
- Child's diagnosis/emotional support
- Community Resources
- Behavioral Concerns
- Developmental Concerns
- Healthcare/Financial Concerns



✓ **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

✓ **NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY**

✓ **NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE**

✓ **TRUST & RESPECT**

“Family Engagement needs to move beyond the ‘checkbox’”

In 2016 US Department of Health and Human Services and US Department of Education published a joint policy statement on “Family Engagement From the Early Years to the Early Grades”



Family Engagement Promotes:



Supports academic achievement in elementary school and beyond.

Prepares children for school

Promotes healthy intellectual, physical, and social-emotional development

Strong Family Engagement

Challenges to Family Engagement?



1. Family Engagement practices may be seen as supplemental, **rather than necessary.**
2. Insufficient resources appropriately allocated to support systemic approaches.
3. Not enough diverse staff to be culturally and linguistically responsive.
4. Programs may not adequately invest in partnerships with diverse family leaders and family organizations.
5. Lack of workforce preparation to support effective family engagement practices.



- The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) has developed a suite of resources available free to support practitioners, families, and professional development providers in the use of the DEC Recommended Practices.



- Key TA products include:
 - Performance Checklists for practitioners
 - Practice Guides for practitioners
 - Practice Guides for families

What Does DEC do for Families?



- DEC promotes policies and practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children (0-8) who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.
- DEC provides guidance on EI/ECSE practices related to better outcomes for young children with disabilities and/or delays, their families, and the professionals who serve them.

What are the DEC Recommended Practices (RPs)?



- The primary goal of the Recommended Practices (RPs) is to inform and improve the quality of services provided to young children with or at risk of disabilities or delays and their families.
- Practices represent the “essential”, “biggest bang” or highest leverage/impact practices
- Practices should be viewed holistically
- Practices are observable
- Practices are written in active voice
- Practices are not disability specific
- Practices can be delivered in all settings including natural/inclusive environments

There are 66 Recommended Practices organized in eight topic areas.

- Leadership (14)
- Assessment (11)
- Environment (6)
- **Family (10)**
- Instruction (13)
- Interaction (5)
- Teaming and Collaboration (5)
- Transition (2)

Why are the RPs Important for Families?



Practice Improvement Tools: Using the DEC Recommended Practices

The **Practice Improvement Tools** help practitioners implement evidence-based practices. They are based on the **Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices**. These tools and resources guide practitioners and families in supporting young children who have, or are at-risk for, developmental delays or disabilities across a variety of early childhood settings. They include **performance checklists**, **practice guides**, and **professional development** guidance materials.

The performance checklists help practitioners improve their skills, plan interventions, and self-evaluate their use of evidence-based practices. Practice guides for practitioners and families explain the practices and how to do them using videos and vignettes. They describe how practitioners will know if practices are working. The tools also include an interactive product selection tool and professional development modules.



Performance Checklists

for promoting the use of the RPs and for practitioner self-evaluation



Listas de verificación

Performance Checklists in Spanish



Practice Guides for Practitioners

in print and mobile formats



Practice Guides for Families

in print and mobile formats



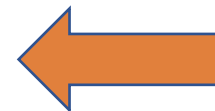
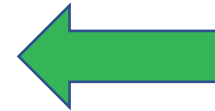
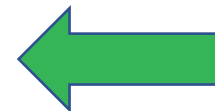
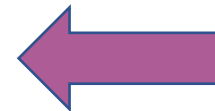
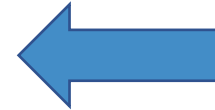
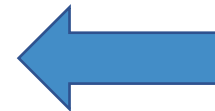
Guías de práctica para las familias

Practice Guides for Families in Spanish



aRPy Ambassadors

find one near you!



Recommended Practices

What are the [DEC Recommended Practices](#)?

Find out in this [quick overview](#)!

The DEC RPs are also [available in Spanish](#)!

Performance Checklist: Practitioner Self Assessments



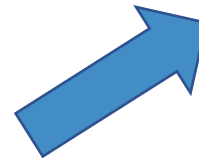
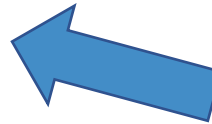
Family Checklists

Family-Centered Practices Checklist +

Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist +

Family Engagement Practices Checklist +

Family Capacity-Building Practices Checklist +



FAMILY Checklist 3 of 4

ecta Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

Family Engagement Practices Checklist

This checklist includes the kinds of practitioner helping practices that can be used to actively engage parents and other family members in obtaining family-identified resources and supports or actively engaging parents and other family members in the use of other types of intervention practices. The focus of family engagement practices is to support and strengthen parents' active participation in intervention activities in ways that have competency-enhancing outcomes.

The checklist indicators can be used by a practitioner to plan intervention sessions with parents and other family members. The checklist rating scale can be used to do a self-evaluation to determine if parents and other family members were actively involved in implementing child or family intervention plans.

Practitioner: _____ Child: _____ Date: _____

Please indicate which practice characteristics you were able to use as part of parent and family member involvement in intervention:	Seldom or never (0 - 25%)	Some of the time (25 - 50%)	As often as I can (50 - 75%)	Most of the time (75 - 100%)	Notes
1. Use the Informed Family Decision-Making Practices checklist to identify family member concerns and priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Engage family members in identifying and evaluating the pros and cons of different options for addressing family-identified concerns and priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Together with family members, develop a plan to obtain identified resources and supports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Engage family members in identifying the steps or actions to implement the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Engage family members in identifying which steps or actions will be done independently by the family and which steps or actions will be done in collaboration with a practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Implement the steps or actions and together with the family review and revise the courses-of-action as necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Practice Guides for Practitioners or Families

Description of the Practice

Participating on Your Child's Team

Early childhood staff that work with your family work as a team. YOU are an important member of this team. You are the most knowledgeable person about your child, your family, and what you want to see happen to help your child learn and grow. As a team member, it is important to share information about your child during your child's evaluation and assessment and to identify what you want to work on with your child. Helping to develop your child's intervention plan— Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)—is also important. Your interactions with other team members provide opportunities to try out ideas, make suggestions, and provide feedback about what is or is not working. This practice guide includes different things that can help you be involved actively and meaningfully with other team members.

Video example of the Practice

Watch a video of this guide

Performing the Practice

Families Becoming Active Team Members

- At first, you might not know the other members of your child/family early intervention team, and it might feel awkward to participate in meetings. It takes time to build trusting relationships, and, over time, everyone on the team will become more comfortable with one another.
- Always feel free to ask team members about their roles, professional training, and what they like about working with young children. Besides getting to know them better, you'll learn how team members may be most helpful to you and your child.
- Avoid information overload! You will be getting lots of verbal and written information. Feel free to ask other team members about words or terms you may not understand. This is a new journey for your family.
- It is important that you understand your child and family's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other documents and information you receive from the team. If you need more information to understand what other team members are saying, do not hesitate to ask them to explain it to you.
- Whenever possible, suggest times to meet with other team members that work best for you and your child. Ask about the purpose of the meeting or visit so you can be prepared to provide input or ask questions. If you are requesting a meeting or visit, share your reasons so others will be prepared as well.
- Your family is the final decision maker on what goals and activities are the focus of your child's intervention. Other team members are available to assist you as you learn new strategies and build confidence in helping your child successfully participate in everyday activities and learn and grow.

Resources are available for Practitioners to print and use as handouts for families too!

Illustrative vignette



A Quick Peek

Karen, an early intervention provider, arrives at a home visit and begins to address the IFSP goal on assisting two-year-old Amelia to use single words. Marcy, her mom, says it's nice to have a "conversation" with Amelia, but she just wishes Amelia wouldn't shriek at mealtime and would eat more varied foods. Marcy tells Karen the screaming at mealtimes is a serious problem, and she's worrying whether Amelia is even getting enough food as she only wants pureed baby food. Together they talk about what may be happening. Marcy says it's close to lunch time and asks Karen to stay and observe her trying to feed Amelia. After several minutes, Karen suggests they ask the team's speech and occupational therapists to come assess Amelia to see if there are any physical reasons for her strong reaction to some foods. And they could also advise Marcy how she might help Amelia try new foods. Marcy says that is a good idea. Karen thanks Marcy for speaking up about these new concerns saying this is why Marcy is the most important member of Amelia's team!

Recognizing success

You'll know the practice is working when...

- You feel your questions and concerns are answered to your satisfaction
- You are comfortable making suggestions and providing your input
- You feel supported in the decisions you make

This practice guide is based upon the following DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming & Collaboration 1, 2, 3, 5
The DEC Recommended Practices are available at <http://dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>

Access this practice guide and other products at <http://ectacenter.org/decrp>
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Other Recommended Practice Materials



<https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>

Resources Available from Your PTI



Training: Parents, Professionals, Youth



Family Support Programs



Outreach and Advocacy



Community Engagement

One-on-one support for parents/caregivers of a child with a disability by a trained Support Parent or Family Engagement Manager.

Specialty Programs

- Support Parent
- Project Breathe Easy
- Latinos Making Connections
- Parents As Teachers
- **Education Partner Program**
- Level 2 and Level 3 Triple P
- Autism Parent Navigator



Service

Education Partners provide 1:1 assistance to help families navigate the school system.

- **Will attend IEP/504 and other school meetings as support.**
- **Explore options for resolving disputes with the LEAST invasive approach.**

Who is eligible: 0-26 y/o

What: Consultation, information, and support

Where: In person, virtual or on phone

When: M-F- 8:30-5:00pm

How: Call Family Information Center or make an online referral

1-800-578-8750

Español: 1-888-808-7462

Goals

1. Increasing parents' knowledge of the special education process
2. Increasing parents' skills in how to communicate effectively with school
3. Increase parents' confidence in attending and advocating for their child's education, so they become active participants in their child's education

Let Us Help You Understand Your Health Insurance Benefits:

*Medicaid, Waivers,
TEFRA,
Appeals,
Private Insurance
SSI/SSDI
and
Managed Care Information.*

- Who is eligible: 0-26 y/o
- **What:** Free consultation and assistance
- **Where:** In person or on phone
- **When:** M-F- 8:30-5:00pm
- **How:** Call Family Information Center

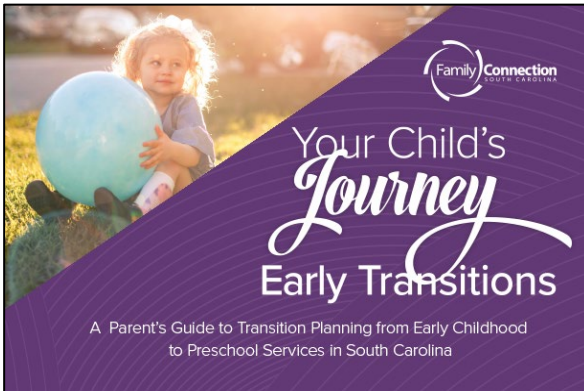
1-800-578-8750

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- ❖ Developmental Screenings
- ❖ Medical Home
- ❖ Oral Health



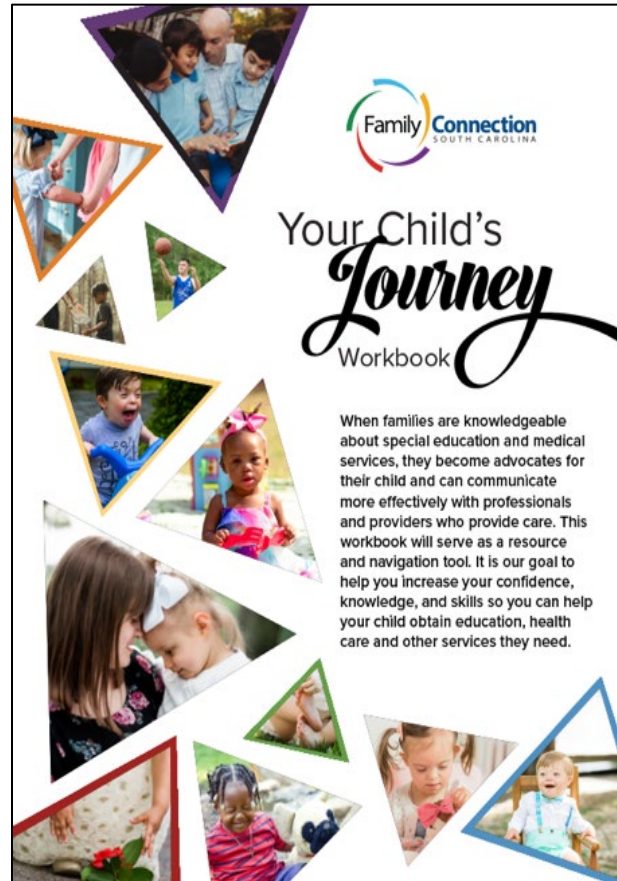
New Materials for your Families



Parent Guide to Transitioning to Preschool from Early Intervention



Parent Guide to Babynet



Parent Workbook

Easy to order:

www.FamilyConnectionSC.org/order/



Variety of Tip Sheets

At NO Cost!

TEXT TO READ: TEXT T2R TO 734-526-6552 TO RECEIVE FREE LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES.

Text 2 Read offers activities to foster literacy development in pre-school age children. These practical tips and easy activities promote reading readiness. Parents and caregivers can use Text 2 Read to support and improve their child's literacy development, language skills, and comprehension.



Free mobile information service

- Offers parents no/low-cost language and literacy activities
- Age-appropriate texts
- Develop language and literacy skills
- Inform about developmental milestones
- Child Find connection



Benefits of Text2Read



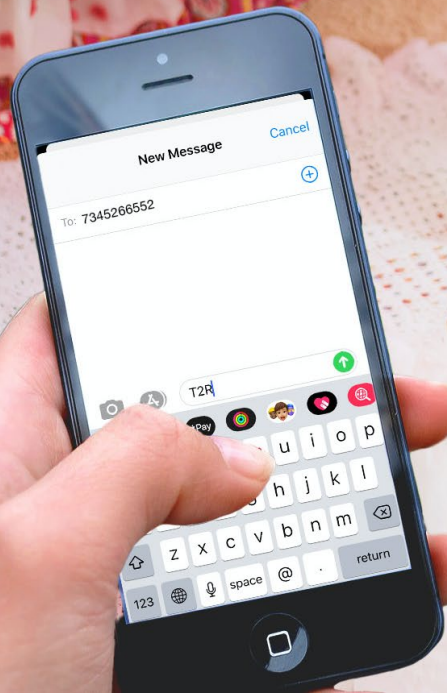
- ✓ It's for ALL children birth to 5y/o.
- ✓ Text Messages Align with SC Early Learning Standards
- ✓ Text Messages are built from essential Kindergarten skills and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- ✓ 85% of Parents have a cell phone
- ✓ Free or low-cost activities includes information on developmental milestones
- ✓ Child Find Component



TO RECEIVE FREE, WEEKLY
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY UPDATES

**TEXT T2R
TO 734-5BOOK52**

(TEXT T2R TO 734-526-6552 TO RECEIVE UPDATES)



How do Parents Enroll?

Text "T2R" to 734-5BOOK52
(734-526-6552)

- ✓ Enter Zip Code
- ✓ Child's Date of Birth

Family Connection provides a variety of conferences, workshops and webinars to ensure parents have the knowledge needed to be the best advocate possible for their child.

Trainings Available in English and Spanish:

- Support Parent / Parent Leadership Trainings
- Special Education Learning Series
- Transition Workshops
- Medicaid and Waiver Workshops
- Level 2 and Level 3 Triple P Seminars
- Literacy Development Workshops
- Journey Toolkit / Military PCSing
- Positive Solutions for the Young Child

To Schedule:

**Contact Suzanne Wingard, Director of Training
803-995-9758**

Swingard@FamilyConnectionSC.org



Who Can Make a Referral?

Families, Professionals, and Self Advocates.

Cost?

All services, materials, trainings are at **no cost**.

How to Make a Referral?

- Call our Family Information Center , Centralized Referral and Intake Services

1-800-578-8750

Espanol: 1-888-808-7462

M-F, 8:30am-5:00pm

- Online referrals: www.FamilyConnectionSC.org/Referral
- Order materials: www.FamilyConnectionSC.org/order/

Connect With Us!

Call our Family Information Center
1-800-578-8750 Para Español: 1-888-808-7462

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