

# PARENT GUIDE

## ACCA Infant Learning Program

*Your provider's contact information:*

Alaska Center for Children and Adults, Inc. (ACCA)  
Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (ILP)  
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[www.alaskacenter.org](http://www.alaskacenter.org)

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**Family Service Coordination**  
Your family service coordinator will be your guide throughout ILP services

**Intake**

- Learn about ILP services
- Get to know each other
- Talk about your concerns
- Review needed paperwork

**Eligibility Determination**

- Looking at your child's development
- Children can be eligible based on:
  - 50% delay in development
  - Diagnosed disability
  - Clinical Opinion of the team

**Family Needs Assessment**

- Discuss and prioritize your concerns
- Discuss your resources and identify needs
- Explore your family's activities to support learning

**IFSP**

- Outline child/family strengths and needs
- Develop child/family goals
- Select service providers
- Decide on frequency and location of services

**Services**

- Try activities together at home or in community
- Explore ways to support learning in activities
- Answer questions about development
- Invite other team members as needed
- Coordinate services with other community providers

**Periodic Reviews – 6 month, annual, exit**

- Keep track of your child's progress
- Make changes to goals and services as needed
- Explore options for when your child turns 3

## **Overview of Infant Learning Program**

Infant Learning Program (ILP) services are available to families whose child experiences a developmental concern or disability. Visits with a Developmental Specialist will help your family work toward the goals you have for your child. ILP operates under the State and Federal guidelines of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), with funding from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. Services can be provided for children up to age 3 years old.

### ***Early Intervention Mission***

Part C early intervention builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance children's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.

### ***Key Service Delivery Principles***

1. Infants and toddlers learn BEST through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts.
2. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children's learning and development.
3. The primary role of a service provider in early intervention is to work with and support family members and caregivers in children's lives.
4. The early intervention process, from initial contacts through transition, must be dynamic and individualized to reflect the child's and family members' preferences, learning styles and cultural beliefs.
5. IFSP outcomes must be functional and based on children's and families' needs and family-identified priorities.
6. The family's priorities, needs and interests are addressed most appropriately by a primary provider who represents and receives team and community support.
7. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research, and relevant laws and regulations.

## Getting Started

### ***Intake Process***

During your first few visits with your ILP home visitor, we will be asking you lots of questions about your child and family. You should feel free to share only information you are comfortable sharing. We will be gathering information about your child's development, medical history and interests. We will also be gathering information about your family and things your family likes to do. This will help us plan our services so that they will be the most helpful.

### ***Eligibility Determination (ED)***

One of the first steps in the ILP program is to decide whether your child is eligible for services. During an eligibility determination, ILP staff will use developmental tests, observation, and reports from you to look at your child's strengths and needs in the developmental areas outlined below. Based on this information, medical reports and with input from you, we will discuss whether your child qualifies for the program.

- **Social-emotional** - interactions with others, development of independence, and ability to regulate feelings, actions, and behaviors
- **Gross motor** - ability to move and explore the world through skills like playing on the tummy, crawling, walking, and climbing.
- **Fine motor** - control of the upper body, shoulders, arms, hands, and fingers to reach out for and play with objects like toys and food.
- **Self-help (adaptive)** - working toward independence in areas like sleeping, eating, dressing, grooming, toileting and regulating sensory systems.
- **Expressive communication** - use of sounds, gestures and words to communicate wants and needs with others.
- **Receptive communication** - understanding sounds, gestures and words to understand another person's communication.
- **Cognitive Development (problem solving)** - understanding new concepts, solving problems and mastering new skills.

### ***Eligibility for services***

There are three possible outcomes from your Eligibility Determination Visit:

1. **Eligible** – Children may qualify for ILP services based on:
  - 50% or greater delay in an area of development
  - Diagnosed disability or condition
  - Clinical Opinion – the team decides your child is eligible based on available information

After the assessment, we will talk about your child's eligibility and developmental needs. We may check back with the whole ILP team in order to get help deciding whether your child is eligible. ILP will write a report to summarize the eligibility determination. Recommendations will be made for

ways to support your child's development. If your child is eligible for services and you want to enroll, the next step is to write an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

2. *Non Part C Waitlist* – Some children have developmental concerns which are not large enough to make them eligible for services. This is called Non Part C eligibility. This means your child won't receive services at this time. You can call ILP back at any time if your child is not making progress or you have new concerns you would like to discuss. We will try to refer you to other community programs and supports.
3. *Not Eligible* – Some children are found to be not eligible for services. However, you can call ILP back at any time if you have new concerns you would like to discuss.

### ***Family Assessment Process***

In order to work with your family so that you can support your child's development, we need to learn about your family. This includes gathering information about your family's concerns, resources and supports, daily routines, activities and places you like to go, and your child's strengths and interests. We will gather information by asking you questions and may use some forms or tools as well. You only need to share the information you are comfortable sharing.

You can give input into how we gather this information. If there is any part of this process that you are not comfortable with, you can decline to participate.

### ***Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)***

Your family and ILP provider(s) will work together to write the IFSP. Sections of the IFSP include:

- Background and medical evaluation
- A summary of the eligibility determination
- Family assessment - information about your concerns, priorities and resources
- Summary of your child's abilities, strengths and needs
- Ratings of your child development in the areas of *positive social-emotional skills, acquiring and using knowledge and skills, and taking appropriate actions to meet needs* which are used to help us measure whether our program is helping children's development
- Goals for your child and family
- Summary of services (who, what, where, how often, how long)
- Transition plan
- Signatures

The IFSP provides a guide for our work together to support your child's development. Your signature on the IFSP is your agreement to enroll in ILP. You may decide not to participate in some parts of the IFSP. The IFSP is reviewed and rewritten at least every six months by the team. Goals which have been mastered will be deleted and new goals will be developed.

## Services

### ***Family Service Coordination***

Every family enrolled in ILP will be assigned a Family Service Coordinator. Family Service Coordination includes help with enrollment paperwork, identifying resources and supports, accessing services from community partners, learning to advocate for your child's needs, and assisting you when it is time to exit our program.

### ***Home and community visits***

During visits your family and your ILP provider will work together toward the goals written on your IFSP. You and your provider will decide together what to work on during each visit. As you participate in activities with your child and provider you can discover what is working to support your child's learning goals, problem solve things that are not going well, try new strategies, and make plans for what to work on throughout your week. Home visits are intended to be a partnership between your family and the teacher.

A typical visit might look like the following:

1. Check in on what has been happening since last visit
2. Trying new strategies together during an activity your family likes
3. Making a plan for what to work on until the next visit
4. Schedule next visit.

Parents are actively involved in discovering what strategies work best for your child and family. We use a partnering process called coaching, in which we combine your ideas and our ideas about how to help your child meet his/her goals.

### ***Partnership Agreement***

In order to be successful parents and providers must work together. It is helpful if we both agree:

- To cancel visits in advance whenever possible, at least one day ahead of time.
- To cancel visits if child, family member or provider is sick.
- To communicate clearly and openly when we have concerns
- That caregivers should actively participate in activities on the visit
- To work together to make the visit atmosphere appropriate for learning:
  - Plan visits around activities that your family likes to do.
  - Refrain from smoking during the visit
  - Limit use of perfumes, air fresheners and strong cleaning products
  - Consider turning off the TV, radio, music and phone during the visit
  - Discuss the presence of pets during visits.
- To be available for appointments as outlined on the IFSP. If three appointments in a row are missed or cancelled or fewer than half of scheduled visits are completed in three months, we will discuss why the schedule is not working.

## Team Model

The ACCA ILP staff is made up of professionals who are experienced with young children and their families, and are skilled in addressing all areas of development. One person will be assigned to be your Family Service Coordinator and Primary Provider. She may come from any of the disciplines listed below. If there are questions you and your Primary Provider need help with, she can talk to other members of the team or have them come out to provide support on your visits.

The types of providers may include those listed below. Other providers from other disciplines may also be considered depending on your child's specific needs.

	<b>Discipline Name</b>	<b>Special Areas of Interest</b>
<b>OT</b>	Occupational Therapist	Fine motor skills, concerns with muscle tone, sensory regulation, feeding, adaptive self-help skills, play skills, vision concerns
<b>PT</b>	Physical Therapist	Motor skills, concerns with muscle tone
<b>SLP</b>	Speech and Language Pathologist	Expressive and receptive language, feeding, social communication, hearing concerns
<b>SW</b>	Social Worker	Family and child relationships, social emotional development, behavior concerns
<b>SPED</b>	Special Educator	Play skills, cognitive development, understanding the whole child, family supports, vision concerns, family and child relationships, communication development



## Overview of Procedural Safeguards (Parent Rights)

*Within the Alaska EI/ILP, you, as a parent, have the following rights:*

- The right to a multidisciplinary **evaluation and assessment** followed by the development of an **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)** at the initial IFSP meeting, within 45 calendar days from referral.
- The right to receive evaluation, assessment, IFSP development, family service coordination, and procedural safeguards at no cost to families.
- The right to receive an evaluation, if you request and provide consent for it, at any time.
- If eligible under Part C, the right to receive appropriate early intervention services for your child and family as addressed in an IFSP.
- The **right to refuse** evaluations, assessments, and services.
- The **right to be invited to and participate in all meetings** in which a decision is expected to be made regarding a proposal to change the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child, or the provision of appropriate early intervention services to your child or family.
- The **right to receive timely written notice** before a change is proposed or refused in the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child, or in the provision of appropriate early intervention services to your child or family.
- The right to receive each early intervention service in **natural environments** to the extent appropriate to meet your child's developmental needs.
- The right to maintenance of the **confidentiality** of personally identifiable information.
- The right to obtain an initial copy of your child's **early intervention record** at no cost.
- The right to a copy of each evaluation, assessment, and IFSP which must be provided to you as soon as possible after each IFSP meeting.
- The right to inspect and review and, if appropriate, amend your child's records.
- The right to request **mediation** and/or an impartial **due process hearing** to resolve parent/provider disagreements.
- The right to file an administrative complaint.

*In addition to the rights noted above, you are entitled to be notified of specific procedural safeguards under Part C.*

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is assured within the Infant Learning Program. Please refer to the ACCA Privacy Notice for more information.

**Mandated reporter**

All staff employed by the Infant Learning Program are mandatory reporters of suspected or documented child abuse and/or neglect. If conditions or situations in the home may be putting a child at risk a report of harm must be filed with the Office of Children’s Services Child Protective Services.

**ACCA Grievance Procedure**

Your family has specific legal rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, as outlined in the Child and Family Rights booklet from the State of Alaska:

[http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/InfantLearning/pdf/ilp\\_cfrbrochure.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/InfantLearning/pdf/ilp_cfrbrochure.pdf)

In general terms, you should take the following actions in the order outlined below if you are not satisfied with the services you are receiving from ACCA ILP.

**I. Talk to your ILP Provider**

We find that many problems can be solved just by talking about them. Please feel free to bring up any concerns you have with your provider. We hope that by communicating your concerns, we can resolve the situation at this informal level.

**II. Call ILP Coordinator**

We understand that not all families are comfortable addressing concerns with their assigned providers and that not all issues can be resolved in this way. The Infant Learning Program Coordinator is always available to discuss any concerns you have about the level or quality of services you are receiving. Please feel free to contact us with any concerns or questions you have about our program services.

**Susan Kessler**  
**Executive Director**  
**456-4003x105**  
[susan.kessler@alaskacenter.org](mailto:susan.kessler@alaskacenter.org)

**III. Follow Procedures outlined in the Child and Family Rights booklet.**

### Transition out of ILP

Children with special needs may receive services from an Early Intervention/Infant Learning program (ILP) until age 3. At age 3, children may become eligible for special education services. Before your child's third birthday, ILP service providers help your family plan the next steps to transition to the local school district, Head Start, childcare or other early learning programs. Moving from one program to another is referred to as transition. Transition is different for every family. Your child's Family Service Coordinator will assist with developing a transition plan to meet the unique needs of your child and family.

#### As early as your child's 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday...

- Your family service coordinator, you and members of your IFPS team will begin to discuss potential transition options.
- The transition steps and services will be written on the transition plan page of your child's IFSP.

#### By the time your child is 2 years 3 months...

- The Infant Learning Program must notify the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Special Education Child Find Office (Child Find) that your child is approaching 3 years of age and may be eligible for preschool special education services.
- **You can opt out of this notification any time prior to your child's 27<sup>th</sup> month by notifying your Family Service Coordinator and signing a form.**

#### By the time your child is 2 years 9 months...

- You will have a transition conference with your early intervention service providers, a representative from a future program and anyone else that you would like to invite.

#### At least 3 months prior to your child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday...

- Your Family Service Coordinator will follow up with activities included on your child's transition plan.

#### By your child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday...

- If your child is eligible and you choose to participate in preschool special education services you will meet with the school district to develop an **Individual Education Program (IEP)** which will outline the special education services your child will participate in.

## ACCA PRIVACY NOTICE

This notice is to inform you about ACCA's privacy practices and how we safeguard information. Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of information about our consumers is very important to us and we strive to comply with the following practices:

- We do not release or disclose personal or health information of our consumers for purposes unrelated to our services or without signed consent.
- We work to ensure information confidentiality and security. We maintain business practices that make sure personal information is gathered and stored in a secure manner.
- All ACCA employees respect the personal information of consumers and carry out practices developed to protect information about consumers and their families.

Information Collection: We collect information for the following purposes:

**Treatment:** determine eligibility for our services, provision of educational and therapeutic services, service coordination, referrals and consultation between providers within the agency and outside agency providers.

**Payment and insurance functions:** We may share your information with health plans, insurance companies, tribal or government programs to help you receive your benefits and so that we can be paid for services that are reimbursable.

**Program operating functions:** We sometimes utilize personal information when engaging in program quality assessment, development of clinical guidelines, compiling statistics for future planning or funding requests, and during employee performance evaluations.

**Information that we collect includes:** Nonpublic personal, financial, and health information such as names, addresses, social security numbers, demographics of consumer, insurance information, and health and medical records.

*Personal Health Information* applies to any information, whether oral or recorded in any form that relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual or the provision for the health care of an individual.

### Information Disclosure and Authorization

We will not disclose your personal health information or that of your minor child unless you have signed a form authorizing the use or disclosure. You may be asked to complete and sign an "Authorization for Mutual Exchange of Information" Form listing physicians, insurance companies, or health and social service agencies that you authorize ACCA to provide information to or obtain

information from. With your consent, only information that is generated through services at ACCA will be disclosed to outside agencies. In the case of minor children, the parent, legal guardian, or authorized surrogate parent acts as the minor's *personal representative* in all aspects of consent and treatment.

### **Other Uses and Disclosures**

We follow laws that tell us we have to share health care information in certain instances. It may be necessary to make disclosures without your authorization as follows:

- Contagious diseases and birth defects registries.
- When the court orders us to or to law enforcement officers when required.
- When abuse or neglect is related to child protection or vulnerable adults is suspected.
- When a court or other law authorizes someone other than the parent to make treatment decisions for a minor, the parent is not the personal representative of the minor.
- To state or federal entities, when required for statistical or program monitoring purposes.
- To the Federal Government when required by law for national security reasons.

### **Your Rights:**

- **Access** to your Personal Health Information and files: You have the right to inspect and/or copy any information in your or your child's file.
- **Amendments to information:** You have the right to request changes or corrections to any information on file at our agency. Your request will be given careful consideration.
- **Restrictions to use and disclosure:** You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses of your information for insurance payment, health care, or others involved in care.
- **Request for Confidential Communications:** You have the right to request that communications about your information be made by alternate means. For instance, you may ask that messages not be left on voice mail or sent to a particular address.
- **Revocation of consent:** You have the right to request that your signed consent to exchange information be revoked. This request is available on the reverse of the Consent form.
- **Copy of this Notice:** You have a right to obtain a copy of this notice.
- **Ask questions or file a complaint.** (See complaint procedure below)

### For Further Information:

If you have questions or feel your privacy rights have been violated you can contact the Privacy Official at ACCA by calling 907-456-4003 x105 or by writing to: Privacy Official, 1020 Barnette St. Fairbanks, AK 99701.

You may also call the State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Service Privacy Official at: 907-465-2150 or by writing to: State of Alaska, DHSS Privacy Official, PO Box 110650, Juneau, AK 99811-0650 or by e-mailing [PrivacyOfficial@health.state.ak.us](mailto:PrivacyOfficial@health.state.ak.us).

Your health care services will not be affected by any complaint made to our agency or the DHSS Privacy Official.