

Frequently Asked Questions about the NCSEAM Family Survey

Here are the top 10 questions and concerns raised by families, and answered by the Department Public Health

I don't want to make anyone mad or lose any services my child is getting.

- First of all if you have concerns about any aspect of EI, talk to your Service Coordinator or Program Director. They will work with you to resolve any problems.
- Second, your child and family's services are spelled out in your IFSP. Nothing can change without your agreement.
- Thirdly, your responses on the Family Survey are anonymous. You do not have to give your name or any identifying information. Programs receive only aggregate information about what families say on the Survey.

I don't want private information about my family to be shared broadly. What you put on the Family Survey is completely anonymous. Your responses go into a large database with no personally identifying information. The information is combined and analyzed to provide statewide information. Your EI program gets a report based on what families say, but no names are ever asked for or shared.

I might have gotten a Survey from my EI program, but I'm not really sure and I can't find it anyway. What should I do? Talk to your Service Coordinator; each EI program has a list of families who should complete the Survey. She/he can tell you if they gave you a Survey. If yours is lost they can give you another. Just be sure to only complete one Survey!

I got a Survey, but didn't get around to filling it out. Does one family really make a difference? You've asked two important questions. It's not too late to complete and return your Survey. Do it today! And yes, every family is important. We want to know how having your child enrolled in Early Intervention has helped you help your child.

I've heard the words Family Outcomes before? What does that mean? Outcomes are the results children and families experience from participating in Early Intervention (EI). In Massachusetts we measure both family and child Outcomes using different tools. Family Outcomes are measured by the NCSEAM Family Survey.

I didn't have to do this Survey when my older child was in Early Intervention and the services my second child is receiving are just the same. Why do families have to do this now? The Department of Public Health is now required by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to ask you about your Early Intervention services. The information you give us is reported directly to OSEP and helps identify ways to improve what EI does for children and families.

I'm still confused about the Family Survey and why it's important. What should I do? Talk to your service coordinator and ask for more information and help in understanding the process. You may also call the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project toll free line: 1-877-353-4757 to talk with another parent.

How can I find out what other families had to say about my EI program? Each Early Intervention program receives a report annually that gives specific results based on information returned by families. Program results are given compared to state averages. You can ask your Program Director to show you this report. In addition, results of all federally mandated performance indicators are posted on the DPH website. You can find this information at www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention

I answered the Survey questions, but there are other things I'd like to say about EI services. How can I let DPH and my program know what's on my mind? You can share additional information, concerns and ideas directly with your Service Coordinator or Program Director. Families can also call the EI Parent Leadership Project toll-free line at 1-877-353-4757. A staff member, who is the parent of a child who received EI services, will be glad to get your input and can direct you on if you have concerns that need to be addressed.

My neighbors are from Mexico and don't speak much English. I know that they can't read English. They have a two year boy in EI, but won't be able to fill out a Family Survey right? The Family Survey is available in English and Spanish. Families may choose which language they are more comfortable using. In the future we hope to have the Survey in more languages.