

Family Centered Early Supports and Services (FCESS)

Family Centered Early Support and Services (FCESS/ESS), is a service provided to families and children under the age of three who may have a developmental delay or disability, are at risk of becoming delayed due to environmental or medical factors, and/or have an established condition. Any child from birth to age three who may be experiencing a delay in reaching developmental milestones may be referred to FCESS.

Who can make a referral?

Parents, or with parents' permission, extended family, physicians, child care providers or anyone with a concern about a child's development can make a referral for an intake and developmental evaluation.

Is my child eligible for services?

To be eligible for Family Centered Early Supports & Services in New Hampshire, a child must meet one of the three specific eligibility categories:

- Established condition;
- Developmental delay of 33% or greater in any area of development (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional or adaptive development), or
- At risk for developmental delay (in five or more documented conditions or circumstances).

A comprehensive developmental evaluation is provided to assist in determining a child's eligibility for services.

What Happens Once a Child is Eligible to Receive Family Centered Early Supports & Services?

If your child shows a delay and requires therapy or other services, FCESS staff will assist you in establishing goals and directing the implementation of services. This is done through the creation of an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP). Services can include a wide range of developmental therapies, parent coaching and services coordination that bring welcomed relief and support to the entire family. These services are provided through in person visits at home or in community settings, or through teletherapy (phone and video conferencing).

Can I afford this service for my child?

Family Centered Early Supports & Services are funded by state and federal funds, private and third party insurances. No child will be declined for services because of the family's lack of financial resources.

What are some of the Supports & Services Provided Through an IFSP?

As part of the IFSP, a child may receive services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, special education, early childhood education, and early intervention services. Service Coordination and parent coaching are also an important part of the services provided to families.

What is parent coaching and why is it important?

Parents are central to all parts of the FCESS system. Parents know their child best and have the greatest chance of making the biggest difference in their child's life. FCESS families are provided a coaching model to assist them in meeting the needs of their child. Coaching is an interaction style used to build the capacity of parents and other caregivers to promote child learning and development within and across typical routines and caregiving contexts. It fosters social-emotional well-being by supporting the parent's responsiveness to the child in ways that have been shown to result in positive developmental outcomes.

What happens when my child turns three?

Each child who enters FCESS receives service coordination. As a child moves through FCESS, service coordination is provided to be sure that the child's transition into the school system or other community settings will be seamless.

For more information or to schedule an Intake, contact Karen Willet, kwillett@northernhs.org or 603.447.4356

