

Illinois Early Intervention Messaging Checklist & Guidelines

As a way to increase consistency in the information distributed about the early intervention program, we have created a brief checklist listing the key messages we focus on in early intervention. Not every document will have every message, but we want people to hear/see the same messages consistently. Please use the key messages in the documents shared with families, providers, and other stakeholders in the EI system.

Does Your Document Have These Key EI Messages Included?

	Yes	Somewhat	No	Comments
EI supports and empowers families to help their children learn and overcome challenges				
EI uses a team approach				
EI recognizes the parent(s) as the most important member(s) of the team				
EI stresses providing services in natural environments: daily routines, familiar spaces, family lifestyle, family's culture				
EI services are provided in the family's preferred language or mode of communication				
EI uses developmental outcomes to guide progress				
EI emphasizes and builds on child and family strengths				

Other Key Points to Keep in Mind

In addition to the key messages, please keep the following in mind when evaluating existing public awareness/informational materials or when developing new materials:

Purpose

- Is the purpose of the document clear?
- Is it clear who the audience of the document is?

Reading Level

- Is the information shared at an appropriate reading level for the target audience?

Visuals

- The “Look What I Can Do” graphic files are available upon request. Contact the EI Clearinghouse for more information. These graphics should be used to maintain a consistent look throughout the EI system.
- Font size should be size 11 points or larger. Limit instances of “all capitals” because this is difficult to read. Keep a consistent font style throughout a document. Use standard fonts such as Cambria (this font), Times New Roman, Calibri, or Verdana. Avoid gimmicky “fun” fonts (Comic Sans), which are often hard to read, especially for parents with low literacy skills.
- Provide white space to allow readers to focus on the text you want them to read. It is also less intimidating to parents with low literacy skills.



Contact Information

- Is there information on how to refer a child for services? A link to the CFC Locator on the IDHS website or is the DHS toll-free number provided? The recommended number is (800) 843-6154.
- Do you provide your local CFC contact information? Whenever possible provide at least two ways for people to get additional information (e.g., phone number, website, address)