



Parent Infant Advisor Handbook

2024-2025

Welcome to the Ector County Regional Day School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD). We are privileged to be among the first professionals to support families and their child, from birth through 35 months, who have been identified as Deaf or Hard of Hearing. This Parent Infant Advisor Handbook is designed to guide you in providing support and coaching to families as they navigate their child's diagnosis. It offers valuable insights into how hearing differences impact development and communication, helping families make informed decisions during these critical early years.

Our program is dedicated to empowering families of infants and young children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing by providing the tools, resources, and expertise needed for their child's development. The Parent Infant Advisor plays a vital role in guiding and supporting families, offering strategies to foster communication, language growth, and listening skills. We honor all modes of communication, including but not limited to Signing Exact English (SEE), American Sign Language (ASL), and spoken language. Parents have the right to choose the communication approach that best meets their child's needs and can adapt their decision as their journey evolves.

The Parent Infant Advisor is responsible for understanding the information in this handbook and adhering to its guidelines. Additionally, they must ensure that assessments and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) are completed within the required time lines.

Sincerely,

Carmen Castro Toriano
Director Ector County RDSPD

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Child Find Overview

Child Find is a federally mandated process that requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may have disabilities and be eligible for special education services.

- Child Find covers children from birth through age 21.
- The LEA must evaluate any infant (Ages 0-2 years) that it knows or is suspected of having the following disabilities:
 - o Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)
 - o Visual Impairments (VI)
 - o Deaf-Blindness (DB)

Ector County ISD Board Policy

The District provides special education and related services to eligible students ages 3 through 21 who reside within the District. Additionally, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or with visual impairments from birth through age 21.

RDSPD Policy

In coordination with ECI and LEAs, Ector County RDSPD will identify, locate and evaluate any scholars with suspected or documented hearing difference.

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

The following services are provided with no out-of-pocket expenses from the parent:

- Child Find
- Evaluation and Assessment
- Development of Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Services to children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH), have visual impairments (VI), or are DeafBlind (DB)
- Case management
- Managing and coordinating activities to ensure procedural safeguards and other parts of the statewide system of early childhood intervention services are properly provided.

Determination of Hearing Loss

Before ECI makes a referral to the LEA, the IFSP team reviews current information and determines whether additional assessments are necessary.

- With parental consent, ECI must refer a child requiring further hearing assessments to an audiologist within five working days.
- If an audiological assessment confirms that a child is deaf or hard of hearing, ECI must refer the child to the LEA within five business days. This ensures that the Parent Advisor joins the interdisciplinary team to determine eligibility. Parental consent is not required for this referral.
- With parental consent, the Parent Advisor will complete assessment and the Communication Evaluation.

RDSPD ECI Referral

ECI will send the referral to the Ector County RDSPD Director, when the family resides in Ector County. For families in Midland, services will be provided locally. If the family lives in another school district, ECI will refer them to both the LEA and the Ector County RDSPD Director.

SEE APPENDIX FOR DETAILED PROCEDURES.

Assessments for Birth- 2 Years Assessment Ages

- Communication Matrix (Any child with a severe delay in communication)
- Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language, and Speech (CASLLS) (Ages Birth-3 years)
- SKI-HI Language Development Scales 3 (SKI-HI LDS 3) (Ages Birth- 5 years)

IFSP Progress Monitoring

- Progress Monitoring and Assessments should occur every 6 months (2 times a year).

Complete a session log for each visit.

Email completed session logs to ECI before the 5th of every month.

Transitioning from ECI to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

At age 3, a child with a hearing difference may become eligible for special education services from a public school.

If the child receives ECI services, the following will occur:

1. At least 90 days prior to the child's 3rd birthday, a meeting will be held for transition from ECI to Special Education services, if appropriate.
2. With parental consent, the LEA and TODHH will complete the child's evaluation within 45 days of receiving consent.
4. An initial ARD meeting will be held 30 calendar days from the evaluation.
3. The ARD committee will determine if it is appropriate for the child to receive DHH services at the child's home school in the LEA or the Regional Day School Program for the Deaf cluster classroom in Ector County ISD.

Family Information and Resources

- Parent Resource Website <https://www.ectorcountypisd.org/departments/special-education/regional-day-school-program-for-the-deaf>

This website includes but is not limited to the following resources for students:

RDSPD IOL information, communication philosophy of the program, family support links, amplification resources, organizations, SEE, etc.

Forms

All forms are available in the Parent-Infant binder.





New Referral Process for Parent-Infant Services (Through ECI)

1. ECI will send the referral packet to the RDSPD director for review and coordination.
2. Begin by contacting the child's parent to schedule a meeting. Introduce yourself and the RDSPD director, get to know the child and family dynamics, and discuss any concerns or goals. If not already provided, request a copy of the audiological report. Obtain consent for evaluation and set a date for the assessment.
3. Evaluation: Use the SKI-HI LDS to evaluate the child. If the child has multiple disabilities, use the Communication Matrix. The LDS is easy to use. Ask the parents each question. If they say "yes" add a + sign, and if they say "no" add a - sign. The evaluation ends when you have more minus signs than plus signs in both the expressive and receptive sections. Schedule a time to complete the IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan).
4. Contact ECI to determine if the child has an Early Intervention Specialist (EIS) assigned. Inform them that an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is needed to initiate services. Coordinate a meeting with the DHH teacher, parent, and EIS (The IFSP can be completed before the meeting to allow for a more focused discussion on goals). Request that the EIS adds you to the service grid on the IFSP.
5. Meet with the parent to complete the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Leave the "Family Resources and Needs" section (top of the second page) blank, as it is completed only by ECI. Ensure the parent circles "yes" on all six questions on the last page and signs it.
Enrollment can be completed during this meeting or scheduled for another time. For enrollment, have the parent fill out the enrollment form. Please note: A birth certificate and Social Security number are not required to enroll the child in services. However, this information is requested for PEIMS reporting purposes and may be submitted at a later time. Provide TSD information and have them sign a receipt confirming they received it.
6. Submit the enrollment form to the RDSPD Administrative Assistant to enroll the baby in "Dummy Campus" (191). Once enrollment is complete and a student ID number is assigned, fill out the PEIMS Data Entry form and submit it to the PEIMS clerk.
7. Begin Services. Services should begin within 28 days of the signed IFSP. Most services are typically scheduled 1x per week for 45 minutes. Confirm the location for each session (home, daycare, or office). A session log must be completed for each visit. If a parent cancels a session, resume services the following week as scheduled. If the provider must cancel, offer a make-up session, unless the parent chooses to waive it.



New Referral Process for Parent-Infant Services (Not through ECI)

1. Begin by reaching out to the child's parent to gather detailed information about the child's hearing loss and the progress of obtaining amplification devices. Schedule a time to meet and request a copy of the audiological report. Within seven days, contact Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to share referral information. If needed, a referral to ECI can be made on behalf of the family.
2. Quick meeting: Meet with the parent to introduce yourself and the RDSPD director. Learn about the child, family dynamics, and any concerns or goals they have. Obtain consent for evaluation and schedule the assessment.
3. Evaluation: Use the SKI-HI LDS to evaluate the child. If the child has multiple disabilities, use the Communication Matrix. The LDS is easy to use. Ask the parents each question. If they say "yes" add a + sign, and if they say "no" add a - sign. The evaluation ends when you have more minus signs than plus signs in both the expressive and receptive sections. Schedule a time to complete the IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan).
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