

## Standard 4 Orientation to Role of Developmental Specialist (DS) For Children (ages 3-17)



**Standard 4 requires the student:**

- A. Understand the definition of developmental therapy, and what is considered a billable activity.
- B. Understand the definition and qualifications of a Developmental Specialist (DS) for Children (ages 3-17).
- C. Understand the purpose for the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), the Individualized Education Program (IEP), and the Individual Program Plan (IPP).

### Key Terms for Standard 2

**Developmental Therapy:** Developmental therapy is directed toward the rehabilitation/habilitation of physical or mental disabilities in the areas of self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, and capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency. A qualified Developmental Specialist (DS) must deliver, or supervise the delivery of, developmental therapy.

---

**A. Understand the definition of developmental therapy, and what is considered a billable activity.**

**Developmental therapy** is defined as:

- The assessment, treatment and instruction of individuals in the acquisition of activities of daily living skills that an individual has not gained at the normal developmental stages in his or her life, or is not likely to develop without training or therapy beyond age appropriate learning situations.
- Developmental therapy can include training in self-advocacy and rights, and the development of positive social behaviors and parenting skills.
- Developmental therapy **does not** include the treatment or instruction for skills that a person would normally learn at his or her current age or developmental level, for instance toileting skills below the age of two. Nor is developmental therapy provided to a person below his or her skill level reimbursable. For example, if an individual already has the basic cooking skills necessary for independence, cooking training would not be a billable service to Idaho Medicaid.
- Developmental therapy **does not** provide services that are usually taught in a primary or secondary school such as reading, writing, and math, and they are not considered developmental therapy. A Developmental Disability Agency (DDA) **may provide** training in some functionally related areas such as recognizing street signs or making a mark for a signature for some individuals who were not able to learn these skills in an educational setting.
- Developmental therapy **does not** provide services directed towards assessing an individual's work skills, aptitudes, or training in specific job skills that are directed toward employment. A DDA **may provide** training in prevocational areas such as safety, staying on task, being on time, etc.
- Developmental therapy **does not** provide services related to participation in recreational or leisure activities or attendance at such activities for recreational or leisure purposes. A DDA **may provide** services to teach an individual to access his or her community including recreational activities (e.g., learn to ride the bus to a fitness center).
- Developmental therapy to develop socialization skills must be based on specific socialization needs (e.g., does not make eye contact when interacting with others). Broad or general goals to learn socialization skills are not acceptable.

---

**B. Understand the definition and qualifications of a Developmental Specialist (DS) for Children (ages 3-17).**

A Developmental Specialist is a person qualified to conduct developmental evaluation and therapy to children. Developmental Specialists providing services to children ages three to seventeen (3-17) must:

- ✓ Meet **one** of the Developmental Specialists definitions listed below in *A, B, C* (see DDA Rules 16.04.11.003.13 Rules Governing Developmental Disabilities in Appendix E)
- ✓ Complete a competency course regarding developmental evaluation and therapy for children.
- ✓ Pass a competency examination that includes demonstration of learned skills within one (1) year of the availability of the Department approved competency course and examination.

To qualify as a DS the following guidelines must be met:

**A.**

|                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A person who possesses a bachelor's or master's degree in: | Special education, early childhood special education, speech and language pathology, applied behavioral analysis, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work, or therapeutic recreation |
| Has a minimum of:                                          | Two hundred forty (240) hours of professionally supervised experience with individuals who have developmental disabilities                                                                                   |

B.

|                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A person who possesses a bachelor's or master's degree in: | An area not listed in Section A. above                                                                                                                                                      |
| Has completed:                                             | A competency course jointly approved by the Department and the Idaho Association of Developmental Disabilities Agencies which relates to the job requirements of a developmental specialist |
| Has passed:                                                | A competency examination approved by the Department                                                                                                                                         |
| Has a minimum of:                                          | Two hundred forty (240) hours of professionally supervised experience with individuals who have developmental disabilities                                                                  |

C.

|                                                            |                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A person who possesses a bachelor's or master's degree in: | An area not listed in Section A                                                                                            |
| Has passed:                                                | A competency examination approved by the Department                                                                        |
| Has a minimum of:                                          | Two hundred forty (240) hours of professionally supervised experience with individuals who have developmental disabilities |

A person who is exempt from the requirements of these rules is:

- ✓ Any person employed as a DS prior to October 6, 1988 will be exempt from these rules as long as there is not a gap of more than three (3) years of employment as a DS



- ✓ Any person employed as a DS prior to May 30, 1997, unless previously disallowed by the Department

### **C. Understand the purpose of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), the Individualized Education Program (IEP), and the Individual Program Plan (IPP).**

#### **1. Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)**

The IFSP is a major requirement and guiding feature of early intervention services (birth-3) as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) under Part C. The Department of Health and Welfare is the lead agency for infants and toddlers in the state of Idaho and will authorize services under the IFSP.

The purpose of an IFSP is for families and early intervention professionals to work together in an effort to develop a plan. The plan should describe the services and supports that will enhance the development of the family's infant or toddler with a disability. The plan should be designed to help the family build their capacity to meet the needs of their child.

#### **2. Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

The IEP is developed for school age children and young adults (ages 3-21) and is implemented by the local school district. The requirements for and IEP are outlined under IDEA, Part B.

An IEP is a written document (developed collaboratively by parents and school personnel) that outlines the special education program for a student with a disability. This document is developed, reviewed and revised at an IEP meeting each year.

The purpose of the IEP is to develop an individualized program that will meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. An interdisciplinary team must be formed for each child which includes the child's parents or guardian, a district representative, a special education teacher and/or other service providers who are relevant to the student's program (e.g., general education teacher, speech and language pathologist, physical therapist). Each IEP must be developed within 30 days after a team evaluation has been conducted and determined eligibility.

The **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** must include the following components:

- A statement of the child's **present level of performance**, including how the student's disability affects his/her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. For pre-school students, present levels of performance describe how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities.

- **Measurable goals** that are related to the needs described in the present levels of performance. Each goal must include at least two benchmarks/objectives that include how far the student is expected to progress on the annual goal and by when.
- **A description of the special education and related services** that will be provided to, or on behalf of, the student (e.g., speech therapy, physical therapy, general education curriculum modifications, extended school year services, transportation).
- An explanation of **why the student will *not* participate** in the general education classroom and curriculum, or general education extracurricular activities.
- A statement on **how the student will participate** in statewide and districtwide assessments – with accommodations, without accommodations, with adaptations, or in the alternate assessment. The IEP team determines what accommodations or adaptations to use based on those that are used regularly by the student during instruction or classroom testing.
- A statement of **how the student's parent/caregiver will be informed of the student's progress** toward annual goals, including the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the IEP time period. The parent/caregiver must be informed at least as often as the district informs parents of students without disabilities of their progress.

### **Additional Transition Components for Secondary-Level IEP's**

Secondary transition services are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post school activities. These activities are based on the individual's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests. The activities include instruction, community experiences, development of employment and other post school adult-living objectives and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.

The following components are required for all **Secondary Level IEP's**:

- Beginning at age 14, or earlier, the IEP will include a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the IEP that focus on the student's course of study. This may include participation in courses that are required for graduation or vocational education. The statement must be developed at the first IEP meeting during the year the student turns 14 years old or earlier if determined appropriate by the IEP team.
- Beginning at age 16, or earlier, the IEP will include a statement of the needed transition services including, when appropriate, a statement of the interagency

responsibilities or other needed resources. The statement must be developed at the first IEP meeting during the year the student turns 16 years old, or earlier if determined appropriate by the IEP team.

- No later than the student's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, the IEP team must include a statement that the student has been informed whether or not special education rights will transfer to the student on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Special education rights will transfer from the parent to the student, when the student turns 18 years old, unless the IEP team determines that: (a) the student is unable to provide informed consent with respect to his or her special education program; or (b) the parent has obtained legal guardianship.

### **3. Individual Program Plan (IPP)**

An IPP can be written for any child or adult served by a Developmental Disability Agency (DDA) in Idaho, and is implemented by a DDA. The purpose of the IPP is to ensure that any person receiving state-funded services participates in a goal-directed plan. The individual and their team must develop the plan together. The focus of the IPP is to address how the individual can be more independent in work, home, and community environments. Whenever possible, the elements of the plan must be carried out in inclusive community settings.

An **Individual Program Plan (IPP)** should contain the following components:

- The individual's name and medical diagnosis.
- The name of the Developmental Disability Professional (DDP), the date of the planning meeting, and the names and titles of those present at the meeting.
- Documentation that the plan is recommended by a physician.
- The type, amount and duration of therapy to be provided (e.g., speech therapy, 30 minutes twice a week).
- A list of the individual's current personal goals, interests and choices.
- An accurate, current, and relevant list of the individual's specific developmental and behavioral strengths.
- An accurate, current, and relevant list of the individual's specific developmental and behavioral needs. This list should identify which needs are a priority based on the individual's choice and preferences. An IPP objective should be developed for each priority need.

- A list of the measurable and behaviorally stated objectives, which corresponds to the list of priority needs. An implementation plan should be developed for each priority objective.
- The discipline or DDP responsible for each objective.
- The target date for completion.
- The review date.
- An individual transition plan designed to facilitate independence, personal goals and interests. The transition plan may include vocational goals directed toward paid employment. The transition plan should specify criteria for transition into alternative settings, vocational training, support or independent employment, volunteer settings, community-based activities, or less restrictive environments. The implementation of some components of the plan may necessitate decreased hours of service or discontinuation of services from DDA.

An **Implementation Plan** is to be developed by the DDA for **each** objective listed on a person's Individual Program Plan.

The plan should include:

- The measurable, behaviorally stated Individual Program Plan objective.
- Baseline assessment to determine the individual's specific skills and abilities related to the specific skill to be learned.
- Written instructions to staff such as curriculum, lesson plans, activity schedules, type and frequency of reinforcement, and data collection directed at the achievement of each objective.
- A statement of where the services will be provided.
- The plans should be completed within 14 days of the initiation of services.
- The target date for completion.

### Points to Remember

- ✓ Developmental therapy does not provide services in academic areas.
- ✓ Developmental therapy can assist an individual to access activities in his/her community.
- ✓ The elements of a child's plan should be carried out in inclusive community/school settings.



**Student Project:** Have each student obtain a copy of a completed Individual Program Plan (IPP) from an agency. Using the IPP have each student write a summary of the required components of an IPP as stated in the DDA Rules, and state whether or not anything is missing. Remind the students to delete any names or other personally identifiable information on the document.

-use your client's.

## References

Idaho Special Education Manual (2001). Bureau of Special Education. Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Department of Education.

IDAPA 16.04.11 Rules Governing Developmental Disabilities Agencies (Appendix D)