

# MISSISSIPPI FIRST STEPS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

## *Vision and Mission Statements Principles and Values*

### **Vision Statement**

Mississippi's children with special needs, under three years of age, and their families will grow, develop, learn, and actively participate in their homes and communities throughout their lives.

### **Mission Statement**

Mississippi First Steps Early Intervention Program provides high-quality, family-centered developmental supports and services to families and caregivers to enhance their child's development through early learning opportunities embedded in their daily routines and activities.

### **Principles and Values Statements**

1. Early identification, early services and supports, and family involvement are critical for optimal development of young children. The earlier supports and services begin, the better the developmental outcomes for the infant or toddler and the family.
2. Infants and toddlers learn best through enriched environments, everyday experiences, and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts.
3. The early intervention process, from referral through transition, must be dynamic and individualized to honor and respect each family's preferences for their child and family, learning styles, and cultural beliefs.
4. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their child's early learning and development.
5. The family's concerns, priorities, and resources are addressed more appropriately by a primary service provider who represents and receives team and community support.
6. The primary role of service providers and coordinators in the early intervention process is to work with and support family members and caregivers in making informed decisions about their children's lives.
7. The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) outcomes must be functional, based on high-quality standards, and meet family-identified priorities based on the child's and family's needs.
8. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, the best available research, validated practices, and relevant laws and regulations.
9. Children are most likely to attain their goals when families actively participate in service provision and consistently incorporate interventions into their daily routines and activities.
10. Transition is a process of transforming relationships and responsibilities. Service Coordinators work collaboratively with other agencies and program staff to ensure a smooth and effective process.