



Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia

Policy Page

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Question: We understand from the December 2005 *Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia Update* that we cannot deny Part C services to a family that cannot keep appointments even if that happens repeatedly. So how do we appropriately handle the situation in which there are repeated “no shows” for appointments and intervention visits?

Response: Although Part C regulations do not specifically address “no shows,” the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) did provide policy interpretation in an October 24, 2003 response to a Connecticut inquiry about this issue. The December 2005 *Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia Update* included excerpts from that OSEP letter, which emphasized the following points:

- Part C does not allow a state to deny early intervention services to an eligible child whose family cannot keep appointments, even if this occurs on a repeated basis.
- It would be inconsistent with Part C of the IDEA for a State to adopt a procedure that “after the third time the early interventionist comes to a home for a scheduled visit and finds no one home...that the family receive prior written notice, along with a copy of their rights, that their child will be exited from the system unless they are able to call or write to schedule and be present for, another visit.” (This is the policy that Connecticut was proposing to adopt.)
- The State cannot assume the parent has revoked consent for services listed

on the existing IFSP or that the consent provided for those services is time-limited.

- The State may determine that repeated absences from appointments and home visits are “conditions” that warrant a review of the IFSP. As a separate practical approach to addressing a child and parents’ repeated failure to attend appointments, the State may wish to use the periodic IFSP review meeting to explore the reasons for the repeated absences.

In order to ensure that “no shows” are handled consistently across the Commonwealth and that procedures are in keeping with the October 24, 2003 OSEP letter, the flow chart attached specifies the steps to be taken to address “no shows” in Virginia’s Part C system. The steps and timelines in the flowchart reflect the importance of addressing a “no show” situation quickly (after the **first** missed appointment); the critical role of the service coordinator in the process; the need for thorough documentation; and the fact that the child may only be discharged from the Part C system when all steps in the flow chart have been completed and there has been no contact from the family and the projected end dates for all entitled services listed on the IFSP, including service coordination, have been reached.

If you have additional questions, please contact your Part C Technical Assistance Consultant.