

# **Code of Ethics for Early Intervention Specialists**

## **Preamble**

The Early Intervention Specialist Code of Ethics offers guidelines for responsible behavior and provides a guide for decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise during the course of providing early intervention services. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how Early Intervention Specialists (EIS) should act in all situations. Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in early childhood intervention where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues.

## **Expectations and Core Values of the Early Intervention Specialist**

### **Responsibility to families and colleagues**

- § Early Intervention Specialists believe in responsive and interactive relationships with families, teams and communities.
- § Early Intervention Specialists, through a team approach, empower families to support their child's development to reach his/her fullest potential.
- § Early Intervention Specialists commit to providing high quality services for every family by being prepared for and engaged at every visit.
- § Early Intervention Specialists commit to teams by recognizing themselves as professionals.
- § Early Intervention Specialists strive through their appearance and through their interactions with families, community partners, and colleagues, to promote a positive and professional image of their discipline, their program, and ECI.
- § As professionals, Early Intervention Specialists take responsibility for determining their own professional development needs and keeping current with emerging research and intervention techniques in the early childhood intervention field.
- § Early Intervention Specialists commit to communities by increasing community awareness of early intervention and of their discipline.
- § Early Intervention Specialists advocate for children with developmental delays and special needs by providing education and awareness to families and community partners.

### **Flexibility**

- § Early Intervention Specialists value differences, view differences as strengths, and appreciate others for their own unique qualities.
- § Early Intervention Specialists respect individual and cultural differences, families' choices for interventions and parenting styles.
- § Early Intervention Specialists provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services for each family.

### **Honesty and Integrity**

- § Early Intervention Specialists recommend services based upon the child and/or family's individual needs.
- § Early Intervention Specialists shall treat colleagues, other professionals and families with respect, fairness, and discretion.
- § Early Intervention Specialists commit to families and colleagues by developing relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

## **Early Intervention Specialist Code of Ethics**

1. EISs must know and comply with both their program's policies and Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) Early Childhood Intervention Services Policy.
2. EISs must operate only within the boundaries provided by their education, training and credentials.
3. EISs must take measures to avoid imposing or inflicting harm.
4. EISs must truthfully represent their services, professional credentials and qualifications. EISs must inform families of the scope and limitations of their credential.
5. EISs must strive to maintain and improve their professional knowledge, skills, and abilities.
6. EISs must maintain the confidentiality of families served by the ECI Program in accordance with HHS Early Childhood Intervention Services Policy.
7. EISs must establish professional boundaries and avoid establishing dual relationships or conflicts of interest with families. Any prior relationships with a family member must be reported to the EIS's supervisor immediately.
8. Sexual or intimate relationships are prohibited between the EIS and family members of children enrolled in the ECI Program that employs the EIS for three years after the child "exits" the ECI program.
9. Financial relationships between the EIS and family members of children enrolled in the ECI Program that employs the EIS are prohibited until the child "exits" ECI.
10. EISs must not exploit their position of trust and influence with a family by benefiting from relationships established as an EIS.
11. EISs must not provide direct service while impaired; including impairments due to the use of medication, illicit drugs or alcohol.
12. EISs must not falsify documentation.
13. EISs must not refuse to provide services for which they are credentialed solely on the basis of a child's and/or family's, gender, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.
14. EISs must make reasonable efforts to ensure that families receive appropriate services when they are unavailable or anticipate that they will no longer be employed with the ECI Program.
15. EISs have a professional obligation to report unethical behavior demonstrated by other colleagues throughout the ECI system to their program director and to the appropriate board or state agency.

By signing below, I agree to abide by the Early Intervention Specialist Code of Ethics:

EIS Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_