

Nebraska Department of Education  
Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services  
**RBI 101: Frequently Asked Questions**

This document is intended to respond to questions received by NDE/NDHHS regarding the Routines- Based Interview (RBI). To share other questions or comments, please contact: Sue Bainter [suebainter@yahoo.com](mailto:suebainter@yahoo.com), Janice Lee [janicelee1705@gmail.com](mailto:janicelee1705@gmail.com), or Jeanne Fielder [jeanniefelder21@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanniefelder21@yahoo.com).

**Question 1: How many outcomes are required on an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)?**

There are no federal or state requirements for a specific number of outcomes on IFSPs. However, when using the RBI as the child and family assessment, it is typical for families to identify 6-10 child and family priorities from an in-depth 1½-2-hour interview. The priorities identified by the family should be listed on the “Concerns, Resources, and Priorities” page of the IFSP. Including the routine(s) during which the priority occurs, as explored during the RBI, will help make for more effective IFSP discussion about what the family would like to see differently or how they will know when they don’t need to work on the outcome anymore. It is up to the family and team to determine whether every priority becomes an actual IFSP outcome. If the family/team determines that a priority does not need to be addressed within the IFSP, the team should make note of how and when the priority will be revisited.

**Question 2: What are “family outcomes” and who is responsible for them?**

Family outcomes typically identify: (1) information the family wishes to obtain, (2) something the family would like to do differently either for themselves (e.g. get a job, go to school) or for their child/family; or (3) resources they want or need. The “actor” of the outcome is typically one or both parents.

IFSP team members need to support families in accessing information or provide methods for obtaining the resources/services so that families can achieve their outcomes. All members of the team are responsible for supporting the family, as well as each other, to accomplish these outcomes to the family’s satisfaction.

**Question 3: What are the steps to writing functional and measureable IFSP outcomes?**

Federal and state IDEA regulations require that outcomes be measureable and include the criteria, procedures and timelines by which progress will be determined. Best practices, as identified in *“Characteristics of Functional Participation-based IFSP/IEP Outcomes/Goals”* (NDE/DHHS, August, 2008), recommend that outcomes:

- Reflect the family’s concerns, resources and priorities for their child and family
- Reflect recent assessment information provided by the family (e.g., Family wants Joey to go on weekly family shopping trips)
- Identify the child/family as the “actor” (e.g., Sasha will assist with taking her clothes on and off... OR... Kelly

will secure respite care at least monthly for an afternoon outing with friends.)

- Reflect function rather than discipline or domain-specific skills (e.g., Jill will walk to the car with one hand held... OR... When reading stories, Jill will talk about pictures in the story), and
- Include a possible and logical time frame for achievement (e.g., Patti and Dan will be able to take Sasha with them on their bike rides by May 1...OR...Sasha will be able to travel by car or bus safely by March 15). Use wording that is precise and easily understood.

Following “Steps to Build a Functional Child Outcome” (McWilliam, 2006)

(<https://edn.ne.gov/cms/sites/default/files/Steps%20to%20Build%20a%20Functional%20Child%20%20%20Outcome.pdf>) will also result in well-stated functional, meaningful and measurable outcomes.

Nebraska’s IFSP Quality Outcome Checklist

([https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/rbi2/home/IFSP\\_Outcome\\_Quality\\_Checklist.pdf](https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/rbi2/home/IFSP_Outcome_Quality_Checklist.pdf)) outlines the following steps when writing **child outcomes**:

- Begin with the short hand version of each priority identified through the RBI, including the routine(s) affected and in words the family would use
- Emphasize child participation: “child will participate in the {routine(s) in question}”
- Write “by (insert verb + ing),” which addresses the observable indicator that is necessary, clearly connected, or useful for participating in the routine(s)
- Specify a reasonable time frame for completion, with criteria that are clearly linked to the outcome  
e.g., “Samantha will participate in hanging-out times by playing with toys as they were intended. We will know she can do this when she will play appropriately (by parent’s judgment) with 3 different toys for 3 minutes each in one week”.  
e.g., “Emily will participate in play times by reaching for or pointing to the toys she wants to play with instead of banging her head. We will know she can do this when she will go for an entire day without banging her head for 5 consecutive days.”  
e.g., “Jenevae will participate in toy play by moving independently. We will know she can do this when she will move forward on her tummy across the living room to get a toy or person, twice a day for 3 consecutive days.
- Ensure that the measurement is practical for the family – it should fit the routine and be something that a family could reasonably keep track of on their own.

For **family outcomes**, McWilliam recommends the criterion for measurability simply be the date by which the goal will be met.

e.g., “Jo will have child care lined up when she needs longer term care by June 1.”

e.g., “Chris and Julie will have 3 nights out by April 15.”

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