

**Considerations for
Choosing Early
Intervention (EI)
Phone Applications
for Communication
with Families**

The Getting Ready Approach emphasizes partnerships with families as the foundation for improving child and family outcomes. Communication between providers/services coordinators (SC) and families between visits is one identified component which contributes to meaningful partnerships and the likelihood caregivers will use interventions during everyday learning opportunities.

Step 1: Explore Apps Your Team May Currently Have Access to Through Their Educational Service Unit or District

- Do the apps meet HIPPA and FERPA regulations?
- What experiences have team members already had with apps?

Step 2: Identify Functions Your Team Hopes to Have in the App Related to Desired Outcome(s)

- Identify outcomes the team wants to accomplish with the app. For example, does your team want to:
 - Communicate back and forth with families
 - Share photos, videos, or files
 - Engage with non-English speaking families
 - Monitor progress on child and family outcomes
 - Connect with other team members in team meetings and informally

Step 3: Choose App Based on Data Collected

- Identify team member(s) who will trial the app.
- Practice using desired functions on trial app between team members.
- Bring experiences and data to the team.
- Team makes final decision about app.

Step 4: Establish Guidelines for Use of App

- Determine practices that the team agrees to use with families between home visits. This may include:
 - Criteria for use of the app – what is allowed, what is not allowed
 - How app will be introduced, and expectations will be described to families
 - Potential outcomes and data collection methods to document changes as app is used
- Determine resources needed to implement guidelines.
- Review final guidelines with supervisor, agency, etc.

Step 5: Team Implements the App

- All team members explore the apps' functions in preparation for using with families.
- Provide families with guidelines/instructions to access/use the app using expectations developed by the team.
- Start by using with families who are interested in trying the app and gradually add families as appropriate.

Step 6: Regularly Review Use of App and Data Collected

- Determine what worked well and what can be modified to better enhance between visit communication, including feedback from families.