

Hi, I'm Audra Classen. I currently work as an assistant professor at the University of Southern Mississippi. My personal interest in military families is that my brother deployed to Iraq in 2005, when his son was only three weeks old. And so during that time I was beginning my studies as a doc. student, and just continued exploring that interest. What I would like to talk to you about today is, how we can support families when they are transitioning from an IFSP to an IEP. Sometimes this is a very difficult process for our parents because they've played an active role in the services that their children are receiving, and during the IEP, this process is more school centered, and around that school environment. This is particularly difficult, sometimes, for military families, because they're not only transitioning from an IFSP to an IEP, but they may be transitioning from state to state, or country to state, and they have experienced many other different changes in their life. So, ways that early interventionists and early educators can support families: one, is by making sure that we as early interventionists and early educators, really listen to the families, and take their considerations and listen to where they want their child to be. What are their goals? What are their plans for their children? Also, where have they been? Where did their child start, as far as their development, and their present levels of performance currently? And where do they see their child going as far as their next steps? Step two. Number two is making sure that when we write an IFSP goal or an IEP goal, we write it in such a way that it's very detailed and very clear to the next team receiving that child and that family. Making sure that there's enough detail that we understand as a receiving team how the team came up with that goal as well as how we are going to measure that goal. Number three is really taking that step number two to the next level. And that is when early interventionists and early educators are intentional about the documentation that we maybe additionally attach to that IFSP or IEP goal. Making sure that the next team knows exactly what we did to come up with that IFSP goal and the IEP goal. So, extra documentation on maybe the assessments we use, or data sheets that we plan to use to measure that IEP or IFSP goal, would be beneficial to that receiving team.