

# What's the Difference Between Facilitation and Mediation?

*For the Birth to Three Early Intervention Program*

## IFSP Meeting Facilitation

**Goal:** The outcome of a successful Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team meeting is a written plan that includes child and family outcomes and how early intervention services and supports will be delivered to eligible children and their families.

**Who:** The IFSP team meeting involves the entire IFSP team as dictated by state and federal laws.

**Where:** IFSP team meetings are held at a place or setting that is more convenient to the family (usually their home).

**When:** A facilitator usually works with the parties before they have reached an impasse.

**What:** The facilitator assists the team to work together to develop an IFSP for the child and their family.

**How:** The facilitator works within the IFSP meeting process and creates an environment of open dialogue and understanding.

**Decisions are made by the IFSP team, not the facilitator.**

## Mediation

**Goal:** The outcome of mediation can be a resolution to the conflict documented in a legally binding written agreement, or no resolution.

**Who:** Mediation involves a limited number of participants, mutually determined by the mediator, family, and the program (Part C).

**Where:** Mediations are held in a neutral location at a time and place convenient to all participants.

**When:** A mediator works with the parties after they have reached an impasse.

**What:** The mediator assists the parties to discuss and resolve specific conflicts regarding the child's early intervention services.

**How:** The mediator establishes the mediation process which encourages open-dialogue, understanding, and joint problem-solving.

**Decisions are made by the participants, not the mediator.**

**Contact the Birth to Three Early Intervention Mediation and Facilitation Programs staff in the Conflict Resolution Program ([partc-info@udel.edu](mailto:partc-info@udel.edu)) for more information.**

*This resource was developed in partnership between Delaware's Birth to Three Early Intervention Program and the Conflict Resolution Program at the University of Delaware.*

