

IFSP

(Individual Family Support Plan)

Development





One early intervention paradigm shift that began in the 1990s and affects the way we develop IFSPs today:

In the beginning....

Home visitors working one-on-one with the child to stimulate acquisition of developmental milestones using specially designed toys and materials. In this model the parent usually observed, but was not considered to be an important part of the intervention



Now

- A multi-disciplinary team of professionals from various disciplines is guided by the family, working together to share roles and responsibilities.
- Team members, including parents, plan and integrate intervention strategies on the child's IFSP that can be done throughout the day in naturally occurring play, routines, and activities using the child's favorite toys and materials to achieve functional outcomes.

- 
- Family members and other identified caregivers, such as child care providers, identify natural learning opportunities for the child within typical activities.
 - Services are provided in a variety of venues, including the home, community groups, child care programs, family child care settings, neighborhood and community settings.



Natural Learning Opportunities

Natural Learning Opportunities are defined as typically occurring events and opportunities in a child's and / or family's daily routine in which learning and development can be introduced, promoted, supported, enhanced, practiced, consolidated or mastered.



Recommended Practice in developing an IFSP is:

To develop child-initiated, family guided, contingently responsive, functional, activity-based, and play-based interventions within the natural learning environment.

To put it more simply, activities that children and families enjoy and where they typically enjoy them.

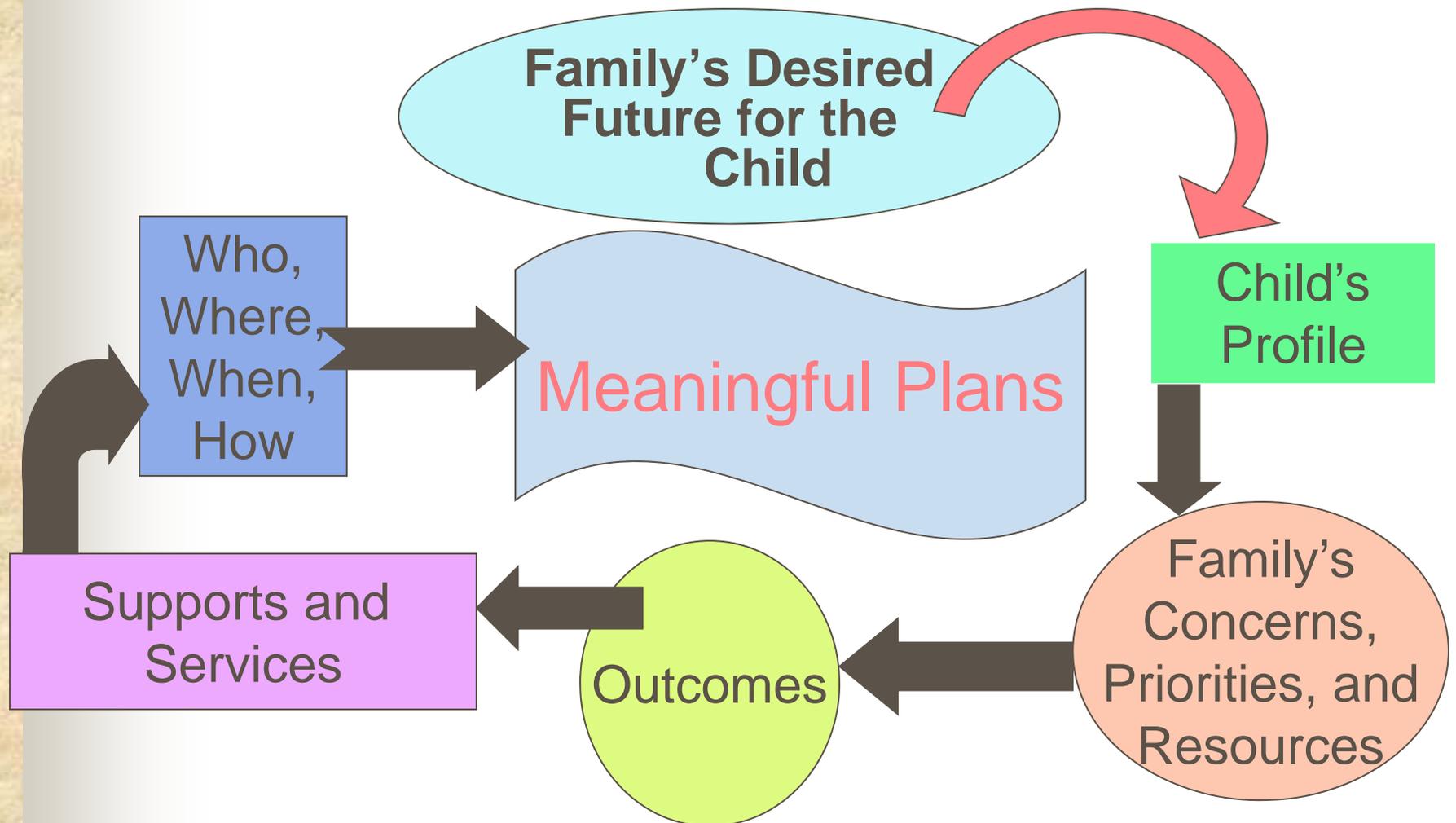


This paradigm shift requires change in provider skills:

Expanded knowledge base concerning:

- ❖ Typical child development
- ❖ The impact of the environment on development
- ❖ Competency in observing children in their environments
- ❖ The role of the family
- ❖ Effective curricula and intervention strategies
- ❖ The systems for delivering services
- ❖ Community resources
- ❖ Family empowerment strategies

Creating Meaningful Plans





Family's Desired Future for the Child

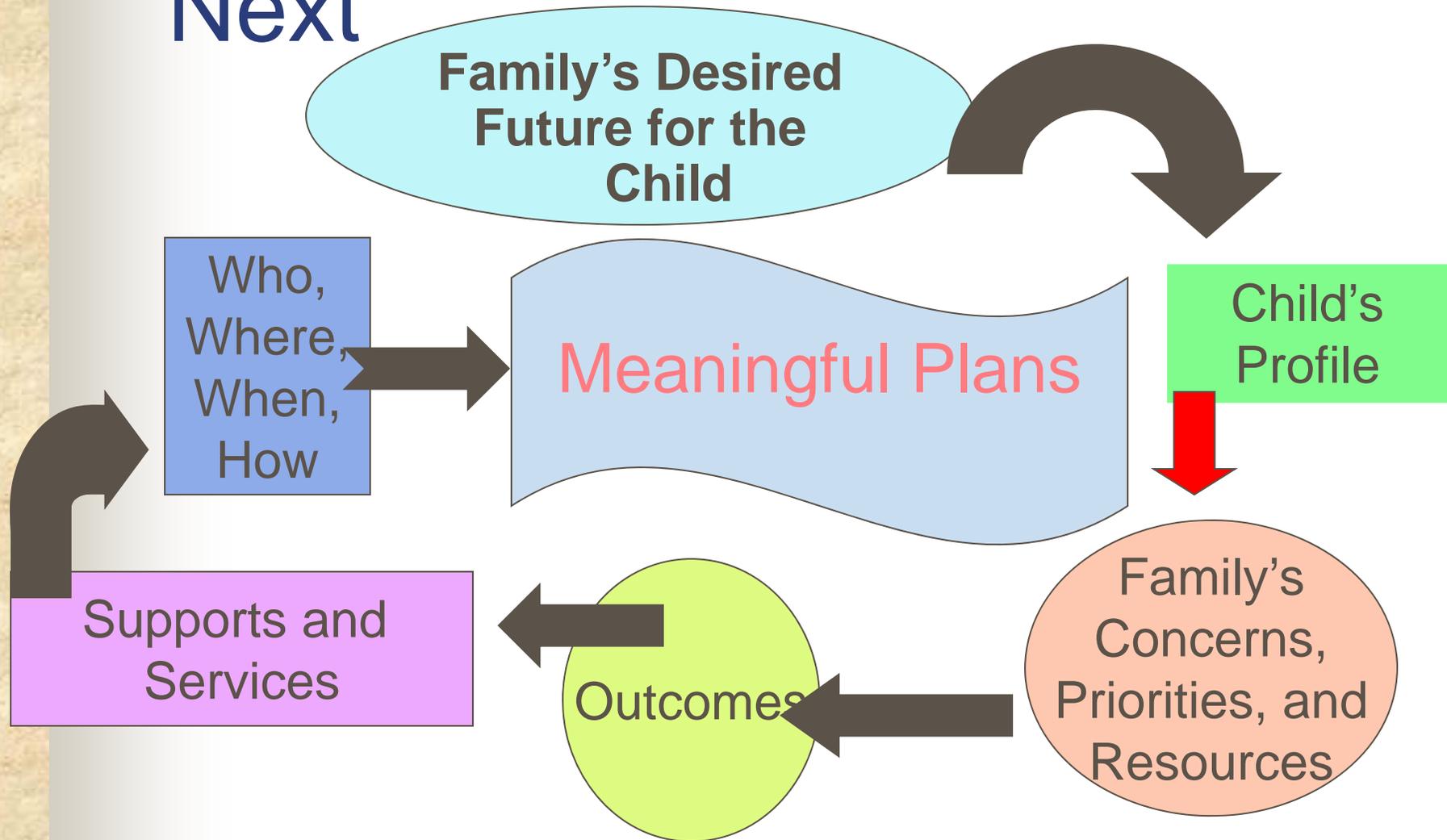
Purpose:

Identify what families would like to see for their children's lives.

Key Questions to ask:

- What do you want to see happen for your child?
- What do you want for your child?

Next





Child's Profile

- **Purpose:**

To collect information about the child from a variety of sources. These can be family report, information from child care, evaluations, observations and more.

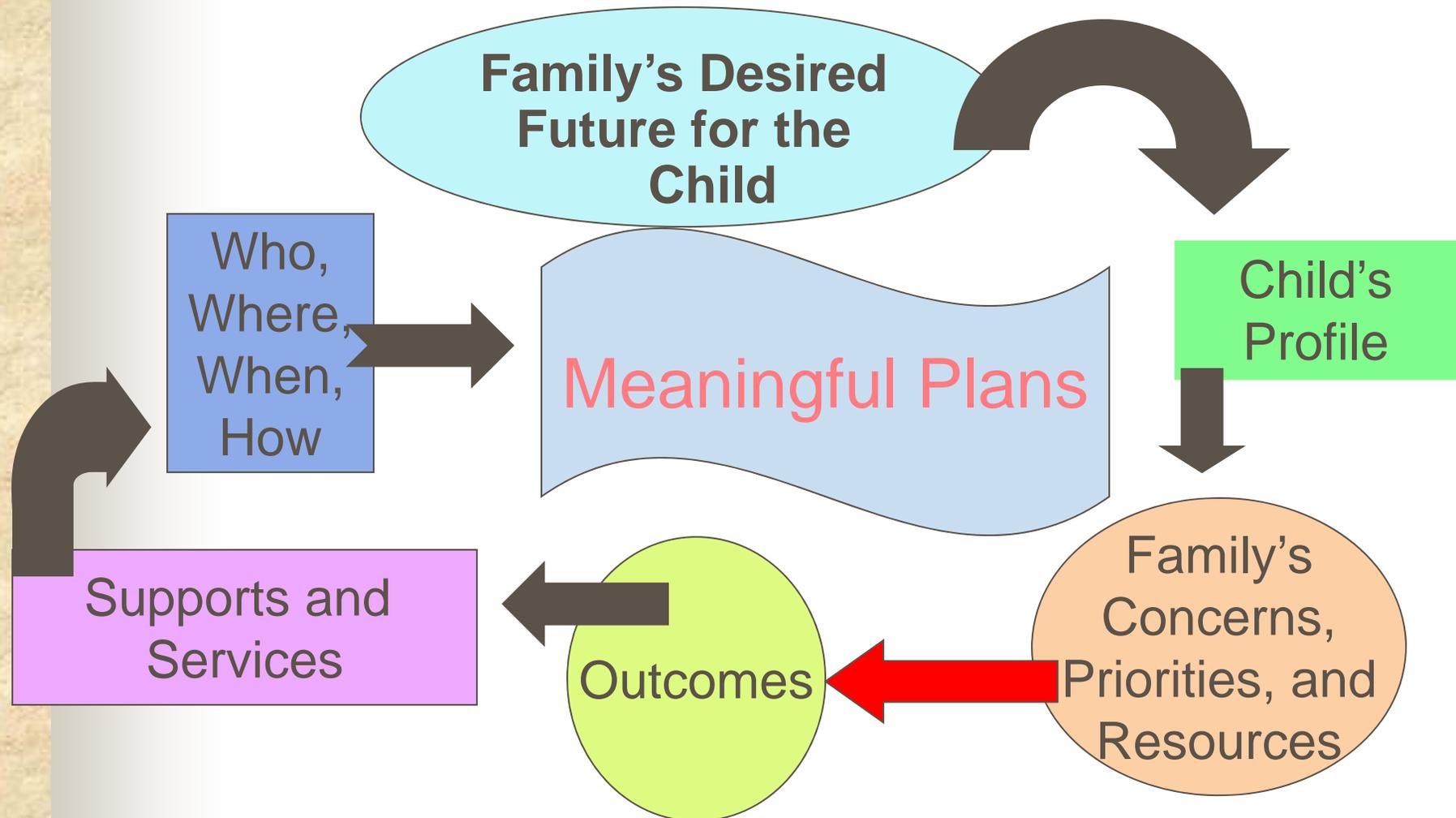


Child's Profile

Key Questions:

- What are your child's strengths?
- What does your child enjoy? (activities? toys? people? places?)
- Where do you go with your child in a typical week?(What do you do there?)
- What does the assessment information tell us about your child's development?
- How does the assessment information fit with what you know and believe about your child?

Creating Meaningful Plans





Concerns

- **Purpose:**

To identify issues that are important to the family related to the child's development.



Key Questions:

- What do you think your child needs help with?
- What worries you about your child?
- How are these concerns impacting on your child's development? On your family?
- What would make your life easier?



Priorities

- **Purpose:**

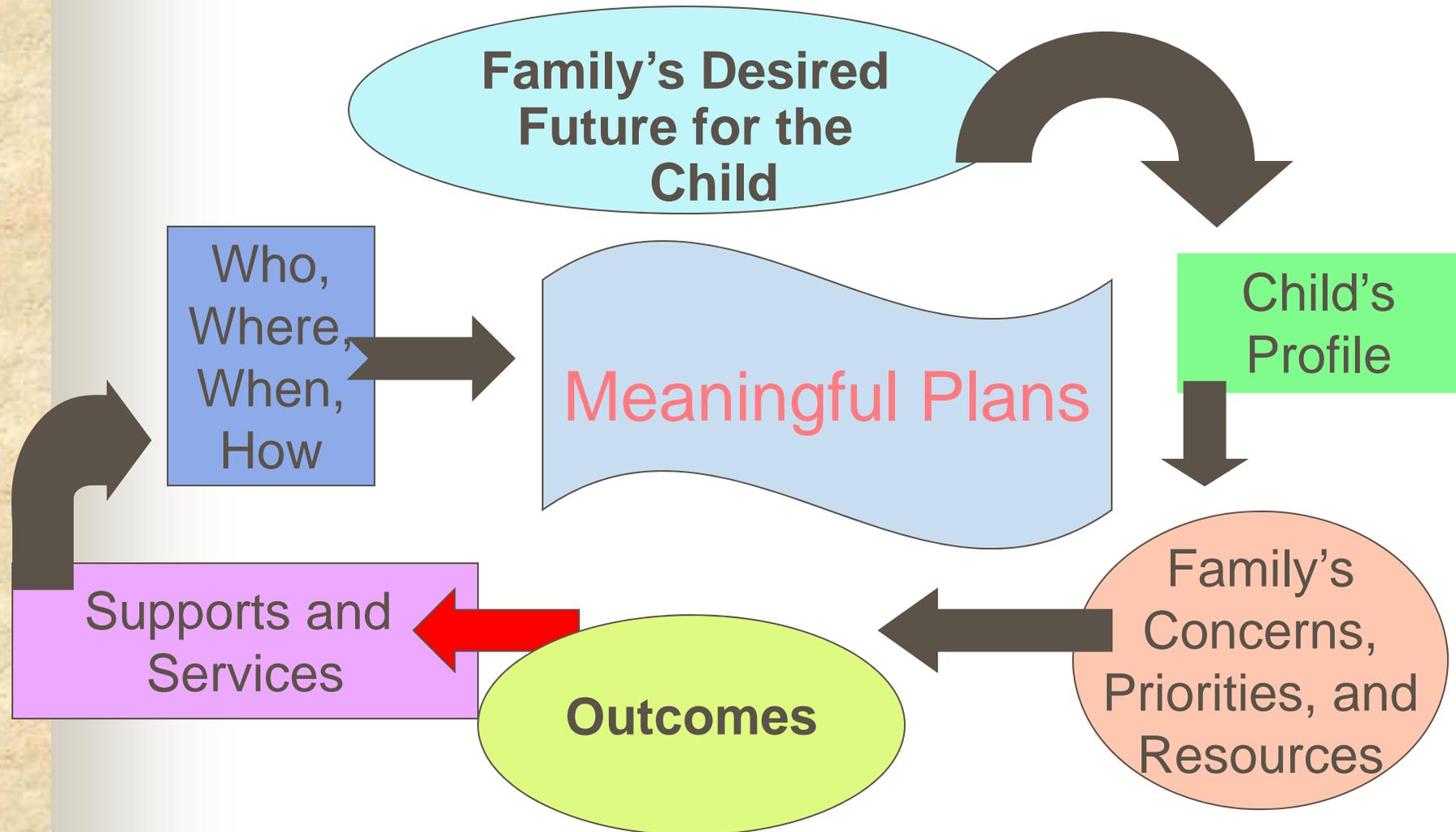
To identify the family's most immediate concerns related to the child's development.



Key Questions:

- What are your most immediate concerns?
- If you were to focus your energies on one thing, what would it be?
- What would you like to see your child doing within the next six weeks? Six months?

Creating Meaningful Plans



Outcomes

Partnering with Parents to Create Functional Outcomes





- **Purpose:**

To identify specific abilities and behaviors in the child's daily life that address the family's priorities.



IFSP outcomes must be:

- Meaningful.
- Measurable.
- Based on the family's priorities – what they want to occur to enhance their child's development.
- Written in family friendly language.
- Functional.
- Interesting & motivating to the child.
- Specific short term goals.



Meaningful Outcomes

- Some outcomes will directly address concerns for the child while others will focus on resources and priorities for the family.



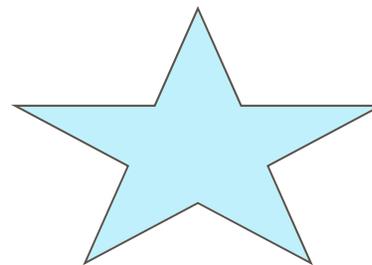
Why are some outcomes not meaningful to the family?

- Sometimes we get so focused on “filling out the form” that we lose sight of what will be meaningful to the family.
- Sometimes we don’t refer back to the family’s information: interests, daily routines, resources, etc.
- They are too broad & generalized.



Meaningful Outcomes

Describe specific abilities and behaviors in the child's daily routines and activities that address the family's priorities.





Out of Context:

She can take two steps up the stairs in the therapy room.

He can produce consonant-vowel combinations with 80% accuracy.

Meaningful:

She can walk up her front porch steps by herself.

He can call “mama” or “dada” when he wants their attention.



Out of Context:

Meaningful:

She can put 5 small pellets into a small neck bottle within 60 seconds.

She can use her fingers to eat cheerios.

He can recognize himself as the cause of an event.

He can play with his pop-up toy by himself.

- 
- Another strategy is to phrase the outcome statement as an “in order to” statement that identifies the relationship between the process and the product.



For example:

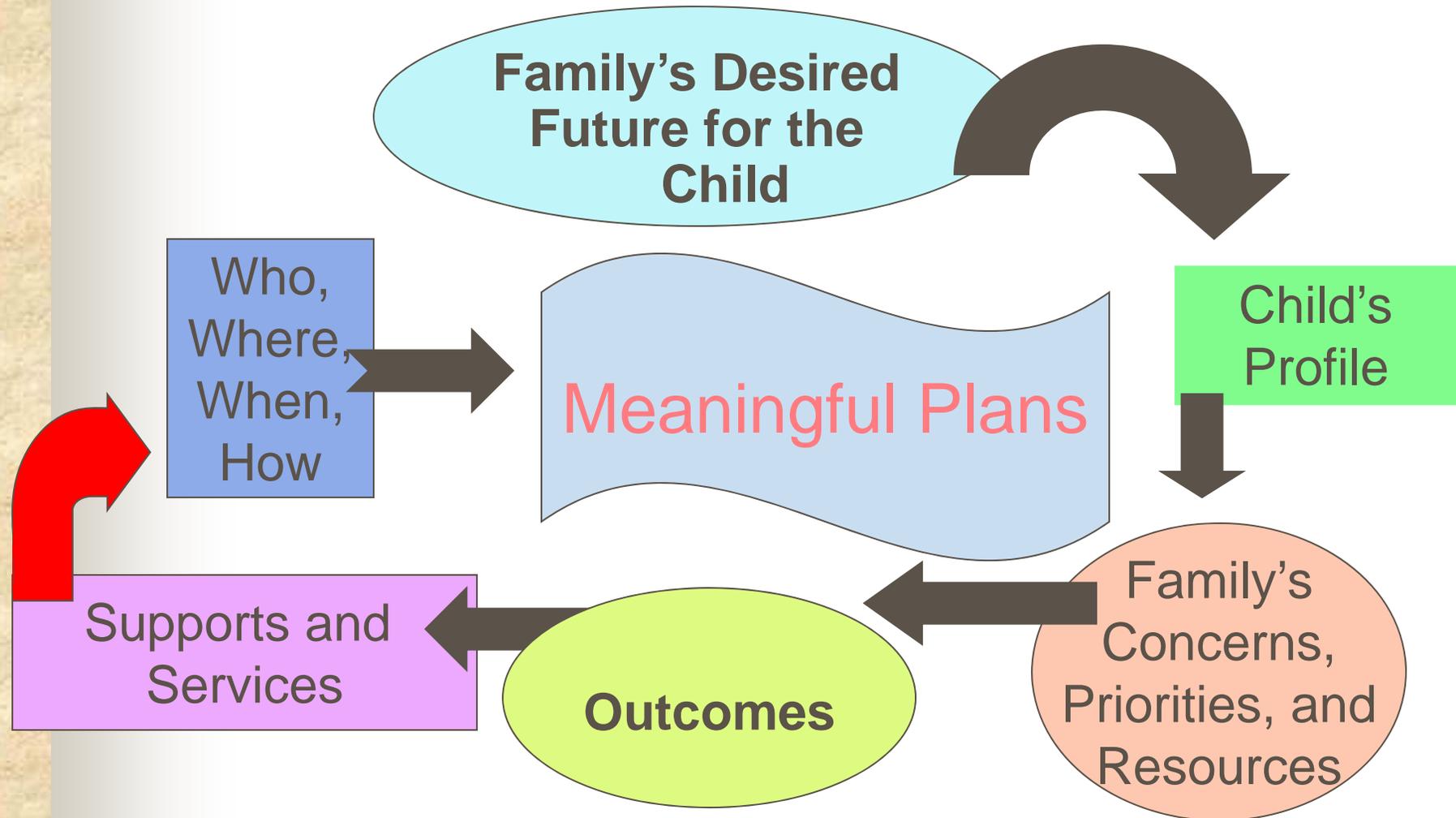
- Jane will use sounds and gestures (process) in order to gain attention (product).
- Tony will attend child care (process) in order to have the opportunity to play with other children (product).
- Donna will use a walker (process) in order to get to an upright position for walking (product).



Key Questions:

- What do you want your child to do?
- How will you know if your child is successful?
- When is it most important for your child to do a specific task?

Creating Meaningful Plans



A decorative header strip featuring a collage of nature scenes: a white star-shaped flower, green foliage, a brown bird, and blue rocks.

Supports and Services

Purpose:

Identify activities and people that help in accomplishing meaningful outcomes.



Key Questions:

- Where does your child go and with whom do they spend time to help them achieve these goals?
- Given everything we know from the earlier steps in the process, how can we achieve the outcomes?
- Which strategies and everyday routines, activities, and places will facilitate the child's specific developmental outcomes best?



Strategies:

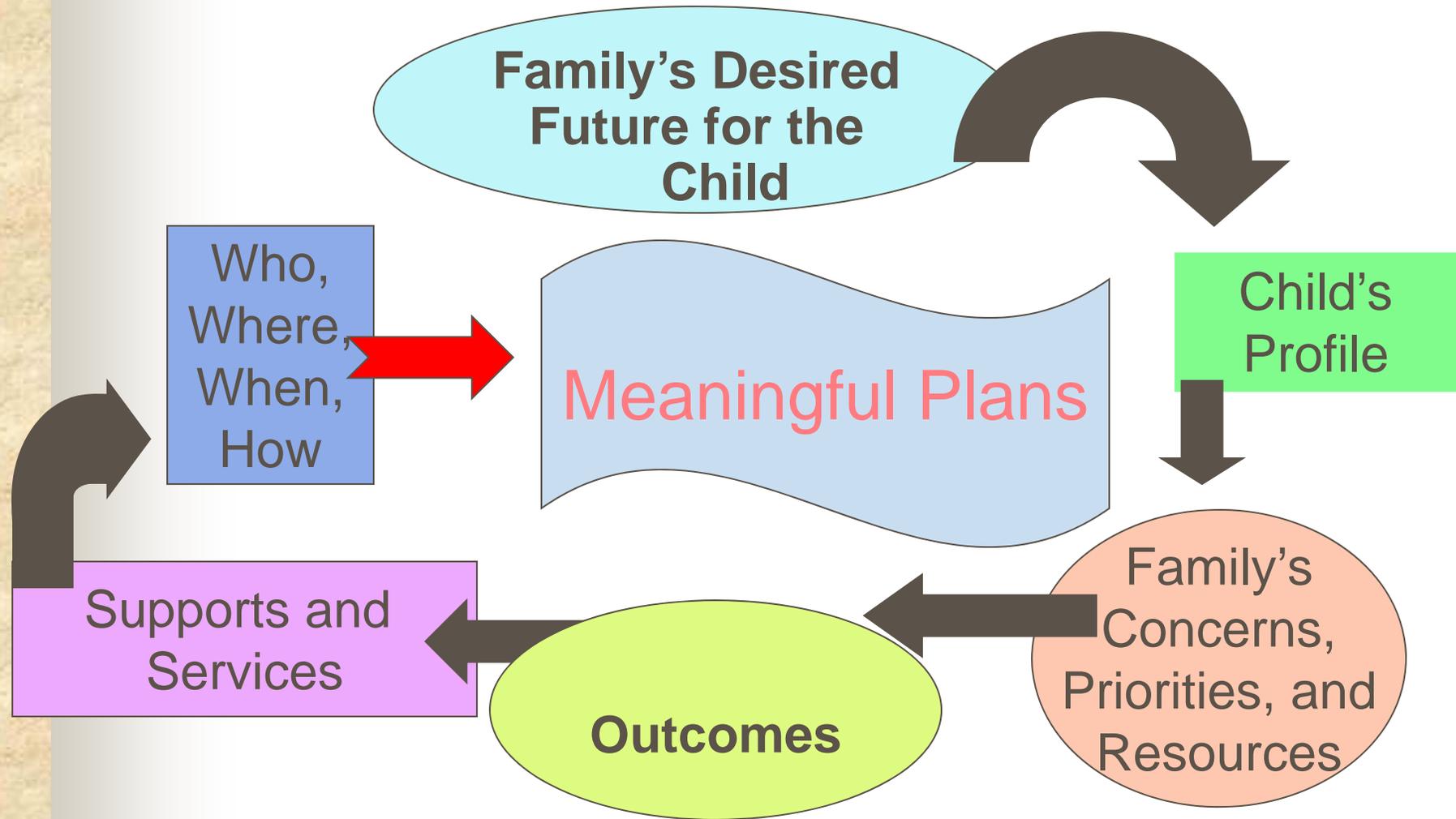
- are the action steps;
- provide information regarding team members' roles and responsibilities
- suggest activities that are consistent with child and family preferences; and
- provide activities that will accomplish the outcomes



Strategies should identify:

- how will outcomes be accomplished;
- who will be involved;
- when the activities will occur; and
- where the activities will occur.

Creating Meaningful Plans





Who, Where, When & How

- Purpose:
Identify the details of the plan that will let everyone know who will do what, when, where, and how.

- 
- A statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and family including:
 - Person responsible / who will help
 - Location / where will services be provided
 - Length of time / How much time will providers be present each week
 - How Services will be provided / group / individual
 - Frequency / How often
 - A statement that all services are provided in the natural environment to the maximum extent appropriate
 - If not in a natural environment, the IFSP must include a justification as to why an early intervention service will not be provided in the natural environment



Key Questions:

- **Who** are the people currently helpful or involved with your child?
- **Where** will the intervention occur that best fits the family's typical routines?
- **When** will the intervention occur that will have the greatest impact?
- **How** will services be provided? In a group or individually?



Points to Remember for Creating a Meaningful Plan

- Developing the plan is a team process.
- The plan must include all mandatory components.
- The components are sequential for a purpose.
- Services are never listed as merely recommendations.
- All services and supports need to be delivered in everyday routines, activities, and places recognizing Natural Learning Opportunities.
- The plan needs to be relevant to the family.
- **Creative planning is hard ... but is satisfying.**



REMEMBER:

Family members and caregivers bring valuable information to the IFSP process:

Families are the experts on:

- Their child
- Their family culture
- Their family's formal and informal supports
- Their available resources

Team members bring:

- Important clinical expertise
- Options for services
- Additional resources
- Available supports

Before beginning a long journey, it is wise to know where you are going....that way you will know that you've arrived once you get there

Pooh Bear

