



from Equip for Equality's Legal Advocacy Program

EFE FACT SHEET – Special Education Early Intervention

Transition from Early Intervention to 3-5 Services

Introduction

If your child currently receives Early Intervention (EI) services and is almost three years old, it is time to begin planning for the transition from EI services to 3-5 year old services which are school-based services. This fact sheet will provide you with information about that transition.

When does the transition happen?

- At age three children transition from EI services to school-based programs.
- Transition planning should begin six months before your child's third birthday.

What should you expect during the transition time?

- Six months before your child's third birthday, your service coordinator will begin talking to you and your local school district about the transition.
 - The service coordinator will:
 - Inform you in writing of the educational rights of students with disabilities under the law.
 - Inform the school district that your child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services, and work with the school district to complete any necessary referral information.
 - The school district will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your child and will hold an eligibility meeting to determine your child's eligibility for preschool services
- At least 90 days before your child turns three years old, the service coordinator will convene a transition meeting to discuss services for your child.
 - If your child is eligible for preschool services, you, the local school district, and the service coordinator will attend the meeting. The school district is required by law to participate in the meeting.

- If your child is not eligible for preschool services, you and the coordinator will meet with providers of other services appropriate for your child.
- In addition to discussing services for your child, the meeting will include a review of your child's program options for the period from your child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year.
- You have the right to refuse any services recommended for your child or your family.
- The service coordinator may also convene an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team meeting to discuss and document progress toward child outcomes and functional goals.
 - If an annual IFSP meeting is not otherwise due, this meeting will take place no more than 120 days prior to your child's third birthday.
 - If the IFSP team is able to participate in the transition meeting described above, it will not be necessary to convene a separate IFSP team meeting.
- At either the transition meeting or final IFSP meeting discussed above, the team will establish a transition plan.
 - The plan will provide for the transition of your child to school-based services and for training you and the rest of your family on this process.
 - The plan will also document referrals to any services and whether you decided to accept or reject those services.
- If your child is eligible for preschool services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting will be scheduled within 60 days of the assessment to develop your child's written IEP and determine the least restrictive educational placement.

How do I prepare myself and my family for this transition?

- There are many steps you can take to ease the transition for you and your child, including:
 - Gathering as much information as possible about the new programs.
 - Locating another family whose child has been in the proposed program to learn about their experiences.
 - Taking your child to visit the proposed program in advance so your child can become acquainted with the new people and the new environment.
 - Talking to the teachers and administrators of the program about your experiences in early intervention, your child's strengths and needs, and your expectations for the new program.

- Evaluating the proposed program carefully. Remember that you have the right to approve or refuse the services recommended for you or your child.
- The more information you gather and the stronger the relationships you develop, the easier the transition will be for you and your child.



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Contact Equip for Equality's Special Education Clinic Helpline
1-866-KIDS-046 (voice) or 800-610-02779 (TTY)
SpecialED@equipforequality.org
www.equipforequality.org

This resource material is intended as a guide for people with disabilities. Nothing written here shall be understood to be legal advice. For specific legal advice, an attorney should be consulted.

Equip for Equality, an independent nonprofit organization, is the Illinois state Protection & Advocacy System whose mission is to advance the human and civil rights of children and adults with disabilities. The Special Education Helpline seeks to empower parents to advocate effectively. The Special Education Clinic, Helpline, and these publications were made possible by grants from the Chicago Bar Foundation, The Field Foundation, Illinois Bar Foundation, Illinois Equal Justice Foundation, Polk Bros Foundation, and the State of Illinois Department of Human Services. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not represent the official views of the grantors.

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