

Dear Families:

simplifying Transition

It may seem as if early intervention has just started and it is already time to talk about change. The more you know and understand about the transition process, the more comfortable you will feel, as you and your child get ready to move beyond Early Steps services.

The formal transition process for your child begins approximately at 2 years 6 months of age, and with the help of the enclosed information, we will help guide you through the next few months. We encourage you to participate in the complete transition process and take advantage of all the supports and services that are available to you and your family.



Age: Birth to Age 3
Focus: Early Intervention/ Family Support
Type of Plan: Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP)
Service model: Home and community based



Age: Age 3 through 21
Focus: Child Focused Special Education Services
Type of Plan: Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
Service model: School District services with an educational focus.

What Happens Next?



EVALUATIONS

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Before a child can receive special education and related services, the child must be evaluated. Completing the Child Find packet and returning it promptly begins the process of gathering information to guide the assessment process. Typically, your Early Steps service provider will complete an exit evaluation when your child is around 33 to 34 months. The results of this assessment will help the members of the Child Find PreK Assessment Team paint a complete picture of your child and determine if additional assessments are needed.

Other evaluations may or may not include:

- Individualized testing
- Observation
- Review of medical records
- Information from family members, doctors, and others.

Based on the assessment and other information obtained, the PreK Assessment Team will make recommendations about services for your child.

At the Eligibility Staffing meeting, and as part of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Team, you will help make the decision about the services your child may require. Services will be offered based on your child's needs as identified in the Individual Educational Plan.

If your child is not eligible for special education services, visiting community programs for young children may help you decide your child's next step.

Commonly Asked Questions:



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Q: Why does my child have to leave Early Steps by his or her third birthday?

A: According to the federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, after age 36 months, your child is no longer eligible for Early Steps. Your Early Steps Service Coordinator will refer your child to Child Find for coordination of evaluation and eligibility requirements prior to the third birthday to determine eligibility for special education services.

Q: What happens after my Early Steps transition conference?

A: You should receive a Child Find questionnaire a few months prior to your child's third birthday. Please complete and return to Child Find. A member of the Team will contact you approximately two to three months prior to the child's third birthday.

Q. What is the process for accessing school district prekindergarten programs for children with disabilities or special needs?

A. The school district process is as follows:



Your child is evaluated to determine if he or she is eligible for services. An eligibility meeting will be scheduled near the 3rd birthday. If eligible, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is developed and services will be offered based on your child's needs

Q. How can I find information about other programs available in my community for children with disabilities and special needs?

A. Your Early Steps Service Coordinator, Parent Liaison, and/or Family Support and Resource Centers can provide information about community resources. You can also visit <http://fdlrs.mysdhc.org/ChildFind/process> for more information.

Q. Does my child need to be potty trained prior to receiving services?

A. No, potty training is an important and routine part of the prekindergarten program and will be a coordinated effort between home and school.

Q. When can my child begin receiving services?

A. Your child must be three years old, found eligible for services, the IEP completed, and your written consent obtained. After enrolling your child, he or she may begin services any time during the school year.

Q. Does my child have to receive services if he or she is eligible for services?

A. No. If your child is eligible but you do not wish to enroll in a program, there is no obligation to do so. Mandatory school age is 6 years old in Florida, or 5 years old for children who turn 6 prior to February 1, during the current school year. Be sure to discuss all options available to your child during the eligibility meeting.

For additional information, contact Child Find at 813-837-7777

