A Family Guide To Next Steps When Your Child In Early Intervention Turns Three

Families have a choice.
Before Your Child Turns 3

Prepare for Next Steps in Early Childhood Intervention and Education

The Maryland State Department of Education offers families the option to extend early intervention services through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) after a child reaches age 3 until the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday. **As part of this option, by age three, your family can choose to continue services through an IFSP.** Children currently enrolled in a local Infants and Toddlers Program and who are found eligible for preschool special education and related services will have the opportunity to continue services through an IFSP or move to an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

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### About This Guide

*A Family Guide To Next Steps: When Your Child In Early Intervention Turns 3* is part of Maryland’s Birth to Kindergarten Parent Information Series, a collection of publications designed to support families in the statewide early intervention and education system of services in Maryland. To receive copies of this guide, or others in the series, contact your Local Infants and Toddlers Program. Refer to the back page of this guide for contact information.
### From Age 3 Until the Beginning of the School Year Following Your Child’s 4th Birthday

**Choosing to Receive Services Through the IFSP Option or Through the IEP Option**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services Through An IFSP</th>
<th>Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Option</th>
<th>or</th>
<th>Individualized Education Program (IEP) Option</th>
<th>Services Through An IEP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To choose the IFSP Option</strong>, your child and family must have a current IFSP through a local Infants and Toddlers Program and your local school system must have determined that your child is eligible for preschool special education and related services.</td>
<td><strong>To choose the IEP Option</strong>, your local school system must have determined that your child is eligible for preschool special education and related services.</td>
<td><strong>Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individualized Education Program</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Service coordination</strong> to support IFSP implementation across agencies</td>
<td><strong>IEP team process</strong> to ensure IEP implementation</td>
<td><strong>Services in natural environments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Services in the least restrictive environment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Services in natural environments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extended school-year services</strong>, if the child is eligible</td>
<td><strong>Continuous year-round services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Parent education</strong> through some services and programs</td>
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<td><strong>Family support and training</strong> through IFSP outcomes</td>
<td><strong>Child receives preschool special education and related services</strong> to continue school readiness skill development</td>
<td><strong>The IFSP includes an educational component</strong> to continue the child’s school readiness skill development</td>
<td><strong>Once you make the choice (through written notification to the local Infants and Toddlers Program) to terminate services through an IFSP and pursue services through an IEP, the choice to return to services through an IFSP is no longer available.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>At any time, you may choose to request termination of IFSP services and consider preschool special education and related services through an IEP. IFSP services continue until services through an IEP are scheduled to begin or until the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday, whichever occurs sooner.</strong></td>
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### To Help Your Family Choose

Implementation of service delivery models and location of services vary through the local jurisdictions in Maryland. Your local Infants and Toddlers Program will support you in making the best choice that meets the needs of your child and family. The next pages provide a side-by-side look at the IFSP and IEP options.
To Help Your Family Choose

*A Side-By-Side Look at the IFSP and IEP Options*

<table>
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<th>Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Option</th>
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<td>• Maryland assures a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for all students with disabilities, birth through the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years old.</td>
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<td>• While all eligible children are entitled to a free appropriate public education, the service models and types of services vary.</td>
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### Free Appropriate Public Education

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<th>System of Payment</th>
<th>Individualized Plan or Program</th>
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<td>• Parents are not charged for services.</td>
<td>• An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) means a written plan for providing early intervention supports and services to an eligible child and the child’s family.</td>
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<td>• Medicaid, with parental consent, may apply to health-related services and case management only.</td>
<td>• The IFSP is reviewed at least every six months and the IFSP is revised at least annually by the IFSP team, which includes the child’s parent.</td>
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<td>• Private insurance, with parental consent, may apply to health-related services only for children who have both private insurance and Medicaid coverage. If denied by private insurance, Medicaid is billed. If paid by private insurance, in rare instances, parents are reimbursed costs.</td>
<td>• The IFSP includes family resources, priorities, and concerns, child’s present levels of functional development, measurable child and family outcomes, and early intervention services.</td>
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<td>• Medicaid, with parental consent, may apply to health-related services and case management only.</td>
<td>• The IFSP specifically requires the designation of a service coordinator to ensure appropriate implementation and coordination of the plan across agencies with which the family is involved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Private insurance, with parental consent, may apply to health-related services only for children who have both private insurance and Medicaid coverage. If denied by private insurance, Medicaid is billed. If paid by private insurance, in rare instances, parents are reimbursed costs.</td>
<td>• The IFSP focuses on both the child and the family within their daily routines.</td>
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In accordance with IDEA 2004, 20 U.S.C. sec.1435 and Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.13.01.09B(8)(a), parents are required to receive this Annual Notice of the Extended IFSP Option to assist in decision-making.
To Help Your Family Choose

A Side-By-Side Look at the IFSP and IEP Options

Parents Consent

- The contents of the IFSP are fully explained to the parent and informed written consent from the parent is obtained before early intervention services described in the IFSP begin.
- If the parent does not provide consent with respect to a particular early intervention service, or if the parent withdraws consent after first providing it, that service may NOT be provided.
- Only the early intervention services to which parental consent is obtained are provided.

Notice Of Procedural Safeguards

- Parental notice includes:
  - Opportunity to Examine Records
  - Prior Notice
  - Native Language
  - Parent Consent
  - Parent Surrogate
  - Dispute Resolution
    - Written State Complaint
    - Impartial Due Process Complaint
    - Resolution Session
    - Services During Pendency of Proceeding
    - Mediation
  - Confidentiality
  - Attorney’s Fees

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  - Confidentiality
  - Attorney’s Fees
  - Independent Educational Evaluation
  - Discipline of Children with Disabilities
  - Transfer of Rights at Age of Majority

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To Help Your Family Choose

A Side-By-Side Look at the IFSP and IEP Options

Services Through an IFSP

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Option

Early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the child's family are provided. Services focus on building the capacity of families and caregivers to support the child to successfully participate in daily activities and routines.

Early intervention services may include, but are not limited to:
- Assistive technology services, which may include assistive technology devices
- Audiology services
- Early identification, screening, and assessment services
- Family training, counseling, and home visits
- Health services
- Medical services only for diagnostic or evaluation purposes
- Nursing
- Nutrition services
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Service coordination
- Sign language and cued language services
- Social work services
- Special education
- Speech and language pathology services
- Transportation
- Vision services
- Continuous year-round services for all children

Services Through an IEP

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Option

Special education is specially designed instruction that ensures the child access to the general education curriculum to meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.

Related services, if determined necessary, to enable the child to benefit from special education may include:
- Assistive technology services, which may include assistive technology devices
- Audiology services
- Early identification and assessment services
- Interpreting services
- Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes
- Occupational therapy
- Parent counseling and training
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- School health services
- School nurse services
- Social work services
- Speech and language pathology services
- Student counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling
- Transportation
- Vision services, including orientation and mobility services
- Extended school year services if the IEP team determines the individual student eligible

Types of Services
In accordance with IDEA 2004, 20 U.S.C. sec.1435 and Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.13.01.09B(8)(a), parents are required to receive this Annual Notice of the Extended IFSP Option to assist in decision-making.

To Help Your Family Choose

A Side-By-Side Look at the IFSP and IEP Options

Services Through an IFSP

Natural Environment

• Children are served in settings and activities that are natural within the home and community in which children without disabilities participate.

• IFSP services may be provided in a setting other than a natural environment only if early intervention and education cannot be achieved satisfactorily in a natural environment. A justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment is required and must be based on the needs of the child.

Examples of natural environments may include:

• Home
• Public or private community settings including but not limited to:
  • Public school preschool and pre-kindergarten programs
  • Private community preschool and pre-kindergarten programs
  • Head Start/Early Head Start
  • Judith Hoyer Center Partnerships
  • Child care centers
  • Family child care providers
  • Parks and recreation programs
  • Cooperative play groups
  • Libraries
  • Other child serving programs

Services Through an IEP

Least Restrictive Environment

• To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with students who are not disabled; and

• Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Examples of least restrictive environments may include:

• Home
• Public or private community settings including but not limited to:
  • Public school preschool and pre-kindergarten programs
  • Private community preschool and pre-kindergarten programs
  • Head Start/Early Head Start
  • Judith Hoyer Center Partnerships
  • Child care centers
  • Family child care providers
  • Parks and recreation programs
  • Cooperative play groups
  • Libraries
  • Other child serving programs
• Service provider location
• Public or private day school
• Public or private residential school
More Resources for Families

For additional information, contact your:

Local Infants and Toddlers Programs

Allegany County 301-759-2415
Anne Arundel County 410-222-6911
Baltimore City 410-396-1666
Baltimore County 410-809-2169
Calvert County 410-414-7034
Caroline County 410-479-3246
Carroll County 410-876-4437, ext. 2277
Cecil County 410-996-5444
Charles County 301-609-6808
Dorchester County 410-221-1111, ext. 1024
Frederick County 301-600-1612
Garrett County 301-533-0240
Harford County 410-638-3823
Howard County 410-313-7017
Kent County 410-778-7164
Montgomery County 240-777-3997
Prince George’s County 301-925-6627
Somerset County 410-651-1616, ext. 239
St. Mary’s County 301-475-5511, ext. 32223
Talbot County 410-820-0319
Washington County 301-766-8217
Wicomico County 410-677-5250
Worcester County 410-632-5033
Maryland School for the Blind 410-444-5000
Maryland School for the Deaf 410-480-4545

Online Resources from the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

Maryland Learning Links offers information and resources related to Early Intervention and Special Education in Maryland. Whether you are a parent, teacher or provider, you are sure to benefit from the site’s comprehensive and user-friendly blend of knowledge and real-world practice, all of it built on the belief that every child can learn and achieve both inside and outside the classroom. Maryland Learning Links was developed and produced by the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University, Center for Technology in Education (https://marylandlearninglinks.org/birth-to-kindergarten/).

Maryland Public Schools. The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services provides leadership, support, and accountability for results to local school systems, public agencies, and stakeholders through a seamless system of coordinated services to children and students with disabilities, birth through 21, and their families (http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/index.aspx).

A Spanish translation of this guide is available online at Maryland Public Schools (http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/info.aspx).

Additional Information

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services
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410-767-7770 phone | 410-333-8165 fax | 1-800-535-0182 toll free

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