



### **676 Children:**

- Children born between July 1<sup>st</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>
- Must have an IEP in place prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to kindergarten
- The IEP Team will determine if the child will enter public school or remain with CDS for an additional year
- Parents must be notified by CDS of this choice by January 1<sup>st</sup>
- Transition meetings for these children/families must be held by April 15<sup>th</sup>
- Parents must inform the CDS site of their decision in writing, by May 1<sup>st</sup>



## AGES 3-5 (Part B)

### What is Part B?

A subsection of the IDEA; children aged 3 and older are served under Part B.

### Special Education and related Services (Part B):

Special Education and related services refer to the services available through Part B to children 3 and older who have been evaluated and determined eligible by a team of individuals including the parent.

**Special Education services include:** Evaluations, Development of individualized plan, Special instruction, identifications/eligibility, IEP, behavior consultation, and physical/speech and occupational therapies.

Part B services are delivered in the least restrictive environment with same age peers who do not have a disability whenever possible.

### What is the referral and evaluation process like for Part B?

For children age 3 to school age 5 the CDS site has 45 days from the date it receives signed permission to complete the initial evaluations and meet with parents to determine eligibility and develop an Individualized Education Plan. Parental consent is not required for referral, but is required for screening, evaluations and services. Part B evaluations must include formal assessment, parent input and an observation of the child with their typically developing peers in an educational setting whenever possible. By law, the evaluation should take many factors into account and be culturally sensitive.

### Eligibility for Part B?

Eligibility becomes a little more involved if your child is 3 or older. There are 3 main questions that must all be answered "yes" for your child to be eligible for special education and related services:

- 1) Does your child meet eligibility based on the listed categories of disability or developmental delay?
- 2) Does the disability or developmental delay have an adverse effect on educational performance?
- 3) Does your child need special education and related services to progress in the general school curriculum or early education with typically developing peers?

Your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes you, the parent, reviews the evaluation report to determine if the criteria are met and what services are most appropriate. All children determined eligible will be provided an appropriate education and related services at no cost to the family.

**14 different categories of disability:** autism, deafness, developmental delay (3-5 or kindergarten), emotional disturbances, hearing impairment, mental retardation, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, multiple disabilities, speech and language problems, specific learning disability, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment including blindness.



## **Type of Service plan?**

After a child is determined eligible for services, a plan is developed by the team. The plans differ, depending on age of the child. For children age 3 and older an Individualized Education Program (**IEP**) is developed. The IEP identifies your child's strength and needs; it also identifies parental concerns about enhancing the education of the child, results of evaluations and the academic developmental function needs of the child and present levels of functioning including participation in development activities. The **IEP** includes measurable academic functional goals which must be aligned with Maine's Early Learning Guidelines and must include opportunities for services and education to be provided in the least restrictive environment.

Maine Early Learning Guidelines: <http://maine.gov/earlylearning/standards/index.html>



## **BIRTH TO 2 (Part C)**

### **What is PART C?**

A subsection of the IDEA; children birth to age 3 are served under Part C.

### **Early Intervention (Part C):**

Early intervention (EI) refers to services available to assist infants and toddlers who have Developmental Delay. Delayed development can be in the domains of social/emotional, cognitive, adaptive, motor, or language. Early intervention supports the child and the child's family within the natural environment to support the child's participation in everyday routines and activities.

**EI can include a wide range of services including:** Complete Screenings, Evaluations, Development of Individualized Plan, Special Instruction, Identifications/eligibility, IFSP, behavior consultation, social/emotional intervention and services, health services, physical/speech/occupational therapies, and assistance to parents to gain access to other supports.

Part C Services offered through CDS are provided in the child's natural environment. Part C of the Individual's with Disabilities Act says that to the maximum extent appropriate, early intervention services must be provided in the natural environments, including home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate. Services can only be provided in a setting other than a natural environment when early intervention cannot be achieved satisfactorily in a natural environment. Some Early Intervention Services must be made at no cost, while other services may be on a sliding scale.

### **What is the referral and evaluation process like for Part C?**

A referral is a request that a child may be evaluated to see if services might be appropriate. Referrals are based on a physical or developmental concern about the child. Referrals can be made by parents, doctors, preschool, public health, and any other human service agencies. When CDS receives a referral they have **45 days** to complete the evaluations to determine whether a child is eligible, and develop the Individual Family Service Plan. The evaluation of a child aged birth- 2 must include a review of the child's current health status and child's present level of functioning in their cognitive, motor, physical/social, language and adaptive skills abilities. In addition with the parent consent a family assessment will be performed.

### **Eligibility for Part C?**

To be eligible for services, a child from birth to 3 needs to show Developmental Delay (DD) or be diagnosed with a condition that has a high probability of resulting in a DD (such as low birth weight, deafness, blindness, mental retardation, etc.). Children under age 3 are not required to be classified by their disability to be eligible for services. All children determined eligible for EI by the IFSP team receive services regardless of their family's income or insurance.



## **Type of Service plan?**

After a child is determined eligible for services, a plan is developed by the team. The plans differ, depending on age of the child. For children age Birth – 2 an Individual Family Service Plan (**IFSP**) is developed. The **IFSP** focuses on family perspective. It identifies the strengths and needs of the child and the family, as well as the child's present levels of developmental functioning. The **IFSP** team works to develop outcomes based on parent's priorities. CDS encourages a coaching model that allows professionals to assist families and other caregivers to facilitate the child's development in their daily activities and routines. Early Intervention Services (EIS) can begin once the IFSP is written and approved by the parent. CDS provides ongoing case management and monitors the **IFSP**, which must be reviewed every 6 months. An IFSP must include parent input regarding their child's strengths and needs; present level of performance, projected beginning, length, duration and frequency of identified services and their measurable goals/objectives; services required to meet established goals; opportunities for services and education to be provided in a child's natural environment.

## **What is the Transition from Part C to B Like?**

Transition planning begins when the child turns 2, and intensifies during the last 6 months before the child's third birthday. Transition activities include:

- Writing a transition plan as part of the child's IFSP,
- Holding a transition conference at least 90 days before the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- Visiting new educational programs (parents, family, and child), communicating with other agencies about the transition, and
- Families can support their child by demonstrating positive attitude toward the preschool setting and learning, ensuring continuity in curriculum and a child's expected progress, and gathering information about the transition process.

Every child's IFSP is required to have a transition plan, which includes: specific transition needs, methods of evaluation and assessment, timelines, date of child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, date of transition conference, date the child exited the early intervention program, anticipated date of transition, person responsible for transition plan, date transition plan was initiated and date transition plan is to be completed.

**Transition Conference:** The transition conference must be convened at least 90 days before the anticipated date of transition, but no later than 90 days before the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Families, service providers from early intervention system, representatives of the local school system and any other appropriate community organizations should be invited to the conference. Conference tasks include: 1) reviewing program options from the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday through the remainder of the school year; 2) transferring, with parental consent, records, including evaluations, assessments and current **IFSP**; 3) identifying actions that need to be completed before the child moves into new service setting (enrollment, immunizations, transportation issues, medical needs, etc.); 4) scheduling an IEP meeting at least 90 days before the first day services are to be provided, if the child is transitioning to preschool; 5) supporting family's decision as to the time and location of the child's transition and educational placement; 6) deciding how to evaluate whether the transition process was smooth and effective; and 7) deciding if a post transition follow up, including service coordination and consultation with new staff is needed.

Transition activities provide opportunity for families and children to be better acquainted with new staff, policies, procedures and philosophy of their new educational setting.



## **What is Child Developmental Services (CDS)?**

Maine's Child Developmental Services is responsible for locating and identifying children under school age 5 who may be in need of early intervention or special education and related services. A CDS case manager works closely with families to have a child evaluated and, if found eligible, develop an individualized plan. CDS is made up of a state office house in the Department of Education and 16 regional offices around the state. Regional CDS sites provide case management and direct instruction for families with children from birth through age five. Each site conducts **Child Find (see below)**, which is the process of identifying children with disabilities. Screenings and evaluations are provided in order to identify children who are eligible for services.

CDS focuses on supporting your family as well as your child when the child is under 3. When preschool becomes an option (age 3), the focus of the support turns more toward education, and the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that the CDS case manager helped you develop when your child was under 3 is replaced with an Individualized Education program (IEP) for your child.

<http://www.maine.gov/education/speced/cds/index.htm>

## **Child Find Program:**

There are two methods for identifying and referring a child to EI. The first is a referral, usually by an educator or a parent. The second is the **Child Find program**. Mandated by IDEA, Child Find continuously searches for and evaluates children who may have a disability with the use of **Child Find** activities, which can vary widely from school district to school district. For example, one district might hold periodic conferences to train staff on policies, while another may hold playgroups, during which parents are asked to complete a developmental milestone questionnaire.

**An example:** Mrs. Jones is a teacher at Acme Preschool. She notices that Johnny rarely makes eye contact, does not respond to his name and speaks infrequently. From her participation in Child Find activities, she recognizes that these signs indicate possible autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Mrs. Jones follows her state's Child Find policies for notifying Johnny's parents that he is being referred for screening for a possible disability. Once Johnny's parents provide their consent for his evaluation, it must be completed within the state-specified time frame.

The referral of a child can sometimes be a delicate situation. Parents may be less than receptive to the idea that their child might have a disability. However, it's always best for the teacher to follow Child Find policies, regardless of how the parents may respond. Once notified of the referral, the parents do have the legal right to refuse evaluation and services. Furthermore, an evaluation can bring peace of mind: the evaluation team might conclude that the child does not have a disability, or if he or she does, that needed help is readily available.

<http://www.specialeducationguide.com/early-intervention/early-identification-how-the-child-find-program-works/>