

beyond eci

Moving on from the Texas Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Program!
This booklet will help your family make the transition from ECI.





ECI Program Name _____

Program Director _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

ECI Service Coordinator _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

The ECI State Office toll-free ECI Care Line
1-800-250-2246
(512) 424-6770 TDD/TYY

Always talk to your local ECI program first if you need more information or have a concern about your services. If you still have concerns or need more information, call the toll-free ECI Care Line. ECI Care Line staff can connect you to other staff who can talk to you about your concerns. ECI Care Line Operators do not resolve complaints or solve problems or concerns, but they can make sure you are connected to someone who can help you.

Beyond Early Childhood Intervention

Introduction

As parents of a young child receiving early intervention services, you are partners with your ECI program staff. This partnership can help you move into new services when your child turns three and graduates from ECI. As you explore your options beyond ECI, your partnership may expand to include others, including people from your school district, a local Head Start program, or other community representatives. We call the process of moving out of ECI “transition.”

Transition begins when your child turns two. At that time, you and your ECI service coordinator will develop a transition plan that will be part of your child’s Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Transition planning begins at two because it often takes time to explore the possibilities. For example, age two is when your service coordinator notifies the school district that your child will turn three in the next year.

This booklet will help you with transition. It contains information on:



Planning the Move



Transition Meeting



Referral for Services



Definitions and terms that people use to discuss services with children over age 3



Resources



ECI Transition Timelines



An Overview of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



Checklist of Steps in the Public School Transition Process

Planning the Move



Transitions are natural events for all of us. Remember your first day of school? What about the day you brought your new baby home? Successful transitions require planning ahead and working with others who can help. Your family's culture will also bring a unique set of values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors that may affect how you plan and the choices you make.

Through the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), your family sets goals, based on your priorities and concerns, and identifies services and support that you need to reach the goals. During transition, you will identify people and agencies that can help you to continue to access services you are currently receiving. Some services may not be available after ECI. In that case, your ECI providers will help you find ways for you and your child to integrate activities into your family's daily life, with family members or friends.

AS YOU PLAN, ASK YOURSELF:

- What do I hope and dream for my child?
- What does my child need now to grow and develop?
- Where do I want my child to play and learn?

Choices After ECI

If your child moves to the school district's program for children with disabilities, you will find that this program addresses your child's educational needs, but not needs outside of school and not family needs. The school has the responsibility to provide your child with an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. To meet your other needs, you will have to choose other resources.

THESE MAY INCLUDE:

- Friends with young children
- Local parent support organizations
- Cooperative play groups
- Family child care
- Head Start
- Mother's Day Out
- Library story hours
- Community recreation programs
- Child Care Centers
- Mental Health Mental Retardation (MHMR) Centers
- Community nonprofit organizations that focus on parenting



To Plan Ahead...

Your family can:

Imagine what kinds of things you would like to see your child doing.

Imagine an "ideal" day for your child, and consider what steps should be taken to make it happen.

Discuss what types of programs or services you wish to pursue.

Decide if you want a friend, relative, or other person to participate in the process with you.

School District staff will:

Assist in planning and scheduling a transition meeting.

ECI providers will:

Offer families information about transition planning and related community resources.

Assist the family in developing a transition plan with outcomes and strategies.

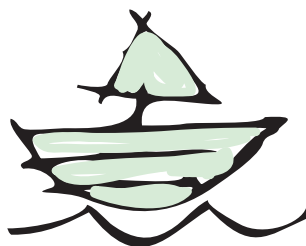
Explain the differences between ECI and other programs.

Invite appropriate people from other agencies to participate in developing the transition plan.

Other receiving programs will:

Assist in planning and scheduling a transition meeting.

Transition Meeting



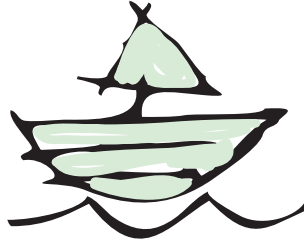
At the transition meeting, you, your ECI providers, and other people you invite will meet with people from programs that you are considering for your child. These programs might include your school district, Head Start, child care, a mother's day out program, or other programs in your community. If you have several options, you may have more than one meeting. If you are considering a group program for your child, the meeting(s) may include visits to the actual classrooms or program sites. In accordance with federal law and state policy, the transition meeting(s) occur(s) at least 120 days before your child's third birthday.

Meeting with the School District Staff

If school district services for children with disabilities are an option for your child, the transition meeting is a chance for you, ECI providers, and school district staff to plan the transition process. They can explain eligibility criteria, service options, and how an educational

plan will be developed for your child. You and others you invite can give the school district personnel information about your child. At the meeting, the school district staff will:

- Explain the program in your native language or provide an interpreter.
- Discuss eligibility requirements and evaluation procedures.
- Explain the next step in the process.
- Explain your parental rights and answer your questions.
- With the team, decide what new information is needed.
- Use terms you understand.
- Discuss options for where services may be provided.
- Share ideas for goals and objectives.
- Consider your family's concerns about the change in services and the transition process.



As a parent you have information about your child that no one else has. During the meeting, you can share what you know. To help school district staff understand your family you can:

- Share information you feel is important about your child and family.
- Ask questions.
- Share ideas and dreams for goals and objectives.
- Invite friends, relatives, or child care staff who may have useful information.
- Describe your child's activities and routines.
- Describe future activities and routines.

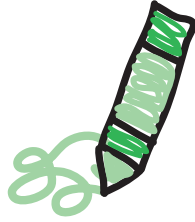
Meetings with Head Start, Private Therapy Providers, Child Care Providers, or Other Community Service Providers

You can also schedule transition meetings with other services in the community. You will share much of the same information that you share at meetings with school district staff (see above). In addition you may address:

- Costs
- Scheduling
- Transportation
- Medication administration
- Environmental adaptations
- Special diet requirements



Referral for Services



About ninety days before your child's third birthday, with your consent, your ECI provider will make a referral to the school district, Head Start, or other community service provider(s) that you have selected. Your child's evaluation information and IFSP may be sent with the referral, if you give consent. You will meet with the new service provider to plan for services. If your child may receive school district services, you will go through the planning process described below.

School District Services: Evaluation, Eligibility Determination, and Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Eligibility requirements for school district services are different from those for ECI. The school must determine that your child needs services. A comprehensive evaluation must be conducted to determine if your child is eligible to receive school district services. The evaluation will provide information about your child's unique talents and needs to help you and the staff decide on services. Other sources of information, such as your child's ECI records, will also be considered.

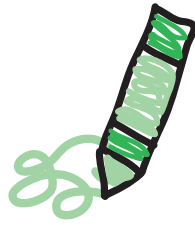
FORMING THE ARD COMMITTEE

If your child is eligible for school district services for children with disabilities, a team will meet to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for your child. This team is called

the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee. The people on the committee will include you, as parents, and may include a regular education teacher, an early childhood special education teacher, a representative of the school district, a person who can interpret the results of the evaluation, one or more therapists, and others with knowledge about your child. You may invite people to participate.

DEVELOPING THE IEP

As you develop the IEP, the ARD Committee will consider your child's strengths, your concerns, your goals for your child, evaluation results, and factors that will help your child's progress. These factors may include behavior considerations, language needs if English is not your native tongue, or your child's need for assistive technology services or devices. Other special concerns include Braille for a child who is visually impaired or



the mode of communication for a child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

As part of your child's ARD Committee, you will help develop annual goals for your child. The goals will address your child's identified needs. They will enable your child to be involved and progress in age appropriate activities. Goals are written so that your child's progress can be measured. Steps needed to meet goals are called short-term objectives or benchmarks. Objectives reflect milestones toward meeting goals. The committee will also write objectives so that they can be measured. Goals and objectives are part of the IEP.

MAKING SERVICES DECISIONS

The Committee then decides on services your child will receive. The Committee chooses how often, how long, and where your child will receive the services. By law, your child must receive services in the least restrictive environment (LRE). If your child turns three during the summer months, extended school year (ESY) services must be considered. Once the Committee agrees on the plan, it is written, and you are asked to sign consent for services.

Other issues you may discuss at the meeting include planning to make your child's first days in the new program happy and successful.

You may wish to schedule visits to the new classroom, bringing a familiar toy from home, or other strategies to ensure a successful transition.

SPEAKING UP

If you don't understand something, ask questions. No question is too small. The key to a good beginning is communication among all who know and care for your child. As you talk, you will think of many creative ideas to help your child enjoy the step ahead. If problems arise, they can be discussed with openness and respect.

OTHER OPTIONS

If your child is determined ineligible for school district services, your ECI service coordinator will assist you in exploring and planning for other options. Those options may include some of the community services explored earlier as you began looking into possibilities for transition.

Future Transitions

Your transition from ECI will give you a chance to learn and practice planning skills that you can use in the future. All transitions are more successful when families and service providers work through the process together.



Definitions



Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee: The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee is composed of a student’s parent(s) and school personnel who are involved with the student. The ARD committee determines a student’s eligibility to receive special education services and develops the individualized education program (IEP) of the student.

Evaluation (formerly known as Assessment): The collection of information about a student’s special learning needs, strengths, and interests which helps the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee make informed decisions regarding the development of the student’s individualized education program. An evaluation may include giving individual tests, observing the student, looking at educational records, and talking with the student and his/her teachers and parents.

Extended School Year (ESY) Services: An individualized instructional program for eligible students with disabilities that is provided beyond the regular school year. The need for ESY services must be determined on an individual basis by the ARD committee.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Federal law mandates that students have the right to a free appropriate public education, including special education and related services. The public school provides these services at no cost to the parents.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A federal law which gives parents access to their child’s school records and certain other rights regarding their child’s school records.

Head Start: A program funded under Title V of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as amended and carried out by a Head Start agency or a delegate agency that provides ongoing comprehensive child development services to eligible children and their families.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): The ARD committee, of which parents are active members, develops the IEP. The IEP includes the student’s present levels of performance, measurable annual goals including benchmarks and short-term objectives, specific supports and modifications, dates of service, and evaluation procedures.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The federal law that contains requirements for serving eligible children.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): Each student with a disability has the right to an education in a setting with nondisabled peers, with access to the general curriculum. The term “least restrictive environment” is used to describe a student’s right to be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled.

Local Education Agency (LEA): The public schools (including charter schools) operating in accordance with state statutes, regulations, and policies of the Texas Education Agency.

Preschool Services for Students with Disabilities: The term used to describe the special education and related services available for eligible children ages three through five.

Related Services: Support services needed by a student in order to benefit from special education services. Related services may include occupational therapy, physical therapy, music therapy, orientation and mobility training, travel training, and more.



Resources

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Nick Joins In. Written and Illustrated by Joe Lasker. Albert Whitman & Company. Morton Grove, Illinois. 1980. Nick, who uses a wheelchair, goes to school for the first time. The story explores his feelings about school, his reactions to his classmates and their reactions to him.

The Kissing Hand. Written by Audrey Penn. Illustrations by Ruth E. Harper and Nancy M. Leak. Child & Family Press. Washington, D.C. 1993. The Kissing Hand is a story for any child who confronts a difficult situation.

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

Still A Good Idea. The Arc of Texas. This manual walks parents and students step by step through the special education process.

To order a copy, write:

What a Good IDEA!

8001 Centre Park Drive, Austin, Texas 78754

or call 512-454-6694.

Download from the internet at: www.thearcoftexas.org

A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process. Texas Education Agency, 2002. Division of Special Education, 1701 North Congress Avenue. Austin, Texas. 78701-1494 Telephone: 512-463-9414. Fax: 512.463.9560
Download on the internet at: www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/ardguide/

TELEPHONE INFORMATION LINES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) information line, 1-800-514-0301 or 1-800-514-0383 (TDD).

U.S. Office of Civil Rights, 1-800-421-3481.

WEBSITES

Americans with Disabilities Act

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/disability.html>


Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

<http://www.ideapractices.org/lawandregs.htm>

ERIC

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

ECI Transition Timelines

	CHILD'S AGE IN MONTHS													
		24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	THIRD BIRTHDAY
Program notifies school district that the child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services.	←→													
Parent visits school district programs for 3-year-olds and/or other options as appropriate.														
IFSP includes a plan for transition to educational programs and/or services as appropriate.	←→													
Implement transition plan steps such as visiting community services for 3-year-olds or meeting with school district staff.			←→											
Schedule, with family approval, the 120 day conference between the family, ECI program and school district program.			←→											
Conduct the 120 day transition conference to review the child's program options, review eligibility for services under IDEA, develop a plan for transition which ensures that services begin on time.			←→											
Local educational agency and family conduct assessments as needed to establish eligibility so that an IEP can be developed and implemented by the child's third birthday.									←→					
Meeting to determine eligibility and develop IEP for special education services.									←→					
IEP from school district implemented on third birthday.														

An Overview of ADA, IDEA, and Section 504*

Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), amended in 1997	Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Type/Purpose		
A civil rights law to prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations.	An education act to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities.	A civil rights law to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities, public and private, that receive federal financial assistance.
Who Is Eligible?		
Any individual with a disability who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities; or (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Further, the person must be qualified for the program, service or job.	Children and youth aged 3-21 who are determined through an individualized evaluation and by a multidisciplinary team (including the parent) to be eligible in one or more of 13 categories and who need special education and related services. The categories are autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment including blindness. Children aged 3 through 9 experiencing developmental delays may also be eligible. Infants and toddlers from birth through age 2 may be eligible for early intervention services, delivered in accordance with an individualized family service plan.	Any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. The person must be qualified for the services or job; in the case of school services, the person must be of an age when nondisabled peers are typically served or be eligible under IDEA.
Responsibility To Provide a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?		
Not directly. However, ADA provides additional protection in combination with actions brought under Section 504 and IDEA. ADA protections apply to nonsectarian private schools, but not to organizations or entities controlled by religious organizations. Reasonable accommodations are required for eligible students with a disability to perform essential functions of the job. This applies to any part of the special education program that may be community-based and involve job training/ placement. Although not required, an IEP under IDEA will fulfill requirements of Title II of the ADA for an appropriate education for a student with disabilities.	Yes. A FAPE is defined to mean special education and related services that are provided at no charge to parents, meet other state educational standards, and are consistent with an individualized educational program (IEP). Special education means "specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of the child with a disability." Related services are those required to assist a child to benefit from special education, including speech-language pathology, physical and occupational therapy, and others. A team of professionals and parents develop and review at least annually, an IEP for each child with a disability. IDEA requires certain content in the IEP.	Yes. An "appropriate" education means an education comparable to that provided to students without disabilities. This may be regular or special education. Students can receive related services under Section 504 even if they are not provided any special education. These are to be provided at no additional cost to the child and his or her parents. Section 504 requires provision of educational and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual educational needs of the child. The individualized educational program of IDEA may be used to meet the Section 504 requirement.

Funding To Implement Requirements?		
No, but limited tax credits may be available for removing architectural or transportation barriers. Also, many federal agencies provide grants to public and private institutions to support training and technical assistance.	Yes. IDEA provides federal funds under Parts B and C to assist state and local educational agencies in meeting IDEA requirements to serve infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.	No. State and local jurisdictions have responsibility. IDEA funds may not be used to serve children found eligible only under Section 504.
Procedural Safeguards/Due Process		
The ADA does not specify procedural safeguards related to special education; it does detail the administrative requirements, complaint procedures, and consequences for noncompliance related to both services and employment. The ADA also does not delineate specific due process procedures. People with disabilities have the same remedies that are available under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991. Thus, individuals who are discriminated against may file a complaint with the relevant federal agency or sue in federal court. Enforcement agencies encourage informal mediation and voluntary compliance.	IDEA provides for procedural safeguards and due process rights to parents in the identification, evaluation and educational placement of their child. Prior written notice of procedural safeguards and of proposals or refusals to initiate or change identification, evaluation, or placement must be provided to parents. IDEA delineates the required components of these notices. Disputes may be resolved through mediation, impartial due process hearings, appeal of hearing decisions, and/or civil action.	Section 504 requires notice to parents regarding identification, evaluation, placement, and before a "significant change" in placement. Written notice is recommended. Following IDEA procedural safeguards is one way to meet Section 504 mandates. Local education agencies are required to provide impartial hearings for parents who disagree with the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student. Parents must have an opportunity to participate in the hearing process and to be represented by counsel. Beyond this, due process is left to the discretion of local districts. It is recommended that they develop policy guidance and procedures.
Evaluation/Placement Procedures		
The ADA does not specify evaluation and placement procedures; it does specify provision of reasonable accommodations for eligible students across educational activities and settings. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to, redesigning equipment, assigning aides, providing written communication in alternative formats, modifying tests, reassigning services to accessible locations, altering existing facilities, and building new facilities.	With parental consent, an individualized evaluation must be conducted using a variety of technically sound, unbiased assessment tools. Based on the results, a team of professionals (including the parent of the child) determines eligibility for special education. Reevaluations are conducted at least every 3 years. Results are used to develop an IEP that specifies the special education, related services, and supplemental aids and services to be provided to address the child's goals. Placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE) is selected from a continuum of alternative placements, based on the child's IEP, and reviewed at least annually. IEPs must be reviewed at least annually to see whether annual goals are being met. IDEA contains specific provisions about IEP team composition, parent participation, IEP content, and consideration of special factors.	Section 504 provides for a placement evaluation that must involve multiple assessment tools tailored to assess specific areas of educational need. Placement decisions must be made by a team of persons familiar with the student who understand the evaluation information and placement options. Students with disabilities may be placed in a separate class or facility only if they cannot be educated satisfactorily in the regular education setting with the use of supplementary aids and services. Significant changes to placement must be preceded by an evaluation. Section 504 provides for periodic reevaluation. Parental consent is not required for evaluation or placement.

* "An Overview of ADA, IDEA, and Section 504," ERIC (The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education) digest #E606, was made available on the ERIC Web site: <http://www.eric.org/digests/e606.html>. ERIC digests are in the public domain and may be freely reproduced with acknowledgement.



Checklist of the Steps in the Transition Process

- ✓ My child's service coordinator began to talk to me about the transition process on or before my child's second birthday. We developed a transition plan that includes outcomes, strategies, and timelines.
- ✓ When my child turned two, my service coordinator notified my school district that my child would be turning three in one year.
- ✓ With my permission we held a transition meeting(s) 120 days before my child's third birthday.
- ✓ With my permission, my service coordinator made a referral for my child to the placement option of my choice. My child's records were provided with the referral if I gave consent.
- ✓ My child has been evaluated to determine eligibility for services through our local education agency (LEA).
- ✓ Before my child turned 3, we held a meeting to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for my child.



**Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
Division for Early Childhood Intervention Services
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