

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

Families have a choice.



MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services  
Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program/Preschool Special Education Services

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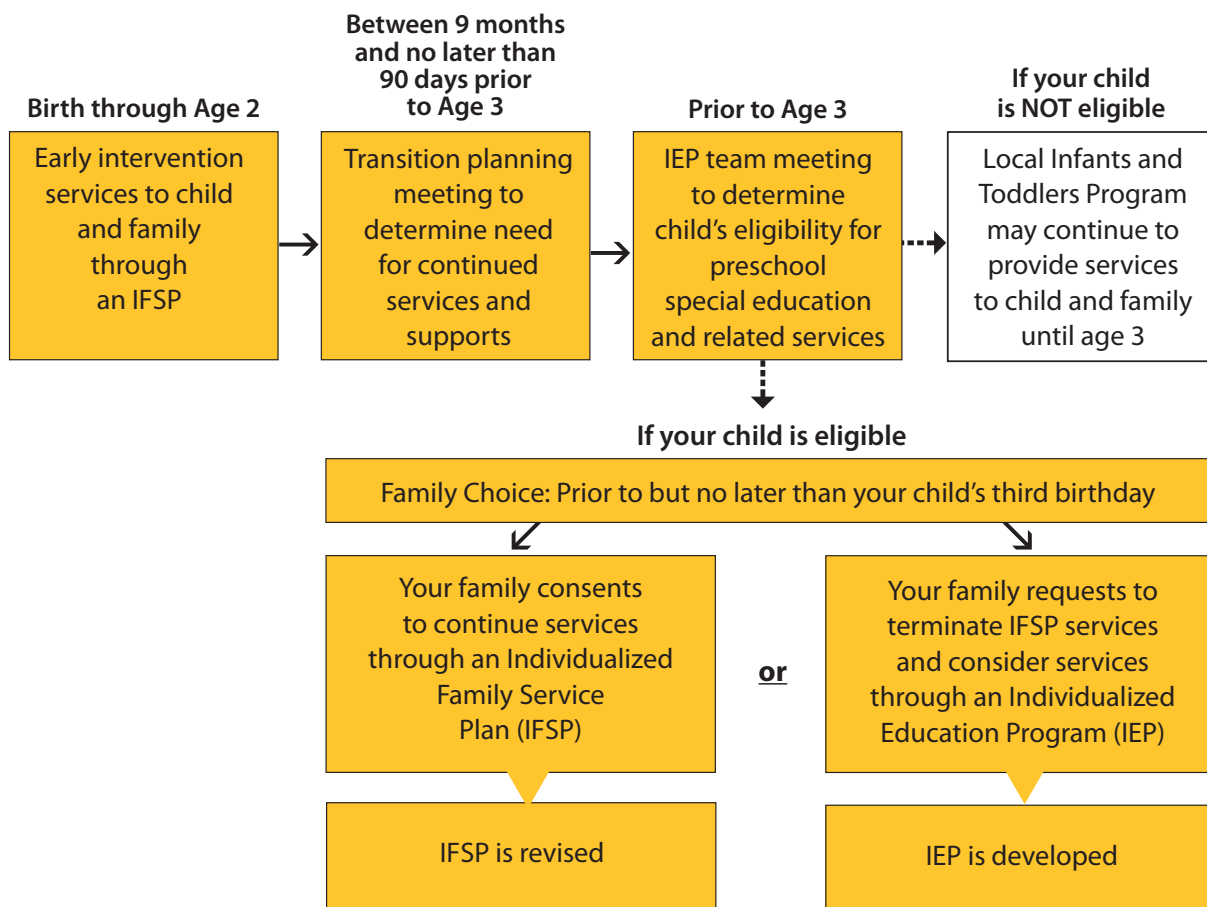
Maryland's  
*Birth  
to  
K*  
Early  
Childhood  
Intervention  
& Education  
System of Services  
For Young Children  
With Disabilities  
and Their Families



# 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).



### 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

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Option		or	Individualized Education Program (IEP) Option	
<b>Services Through An IFSP</b>	To choose the IFSP Option, your child and family must have a current IFSP through a local Infants and Toddlers Program <u>and</u> your local school system must have determined that your child is eligible for preschool special education and related services.		To choose the IEP Option, your local school system must have determined that your child is eligible for preschool special education and related services.	<b>Services Through An IEP</b>
	Individualized <i>Family Service</i> Plan (IFSP)		Individualized <i>Education</i> Program	
	<i>Service coordination</i> to support IFSP implementation across agencies		<i>IEP team process</i> to ensure IEP implementation	
	Services in <i>natural</i> environments		Services in the <i>least restrictive</i> environment	
	<i>Continuous year-round</i> services		<i>Extended school-year</i> services, if the child is eligible	
	<i>Family support and training</i> through IFSP outcomes		<i>Parent education</i> through some services and programs	
	<i>The IFSP includes an educational component</i> to continue the child's school readiness skill development		<i>Child receives preschool special education and related services</i> to continue school readiness skill development	
	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.		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.	

## 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.**



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*

## Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Option

or

## Individualized Education Program (IEP) Option

### Services Through an IFSP

### Services Through an IEP

#### Free Appropriate Public Education

- 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.
- While all eligible children are entitled to a free appropriate public education, the service models and types of services vary.

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#### System of Payment

- Parents are not charged for services.
- Medicaid, with parental consent, may apply to health-related services and case management only.
- 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.

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#### Individualized Plan or Program

- 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.
- 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.
- The IFSP includes family resources, priorities, and concerns, child's present levels of functional development, measurable child and family outcomes, and early intervention services.
- 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.
- The IFSP focuses on both the child and the family within their daily routines.

- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) means a written plan for providing special education and related services to a student with a disability.
- The IEP is developed, reviewed, and revised at least annually by an IEP team, which includes the child's parent.
- The IEP includes present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, measurable annual goals with benchmarks or short-term objectives, special education and related services and supplementary aids, program modifications and supports, and individual accommodations as necessary.
- The IEP focuses primarily on how the child's disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities.



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### Services Through an IFSP

### Services Through an IEP

#### Parent 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.

- A parent is required to consent for evaluation and the special education and related services within the child's IEP before services are provided.
- If, at any time after the initial provision of special education and related services, the parent revokes consent in writing for the continued provision of special education and related services, the public agency must terminate the provision of **all** services specified in the child's IEP.

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



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**Individualized  
Family Service Plan  
(IFSP) Option**

or

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Education Program  
(IEP) Option**

## Services Through an IFSP

## Services Through an IEP

### Types of Services

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.

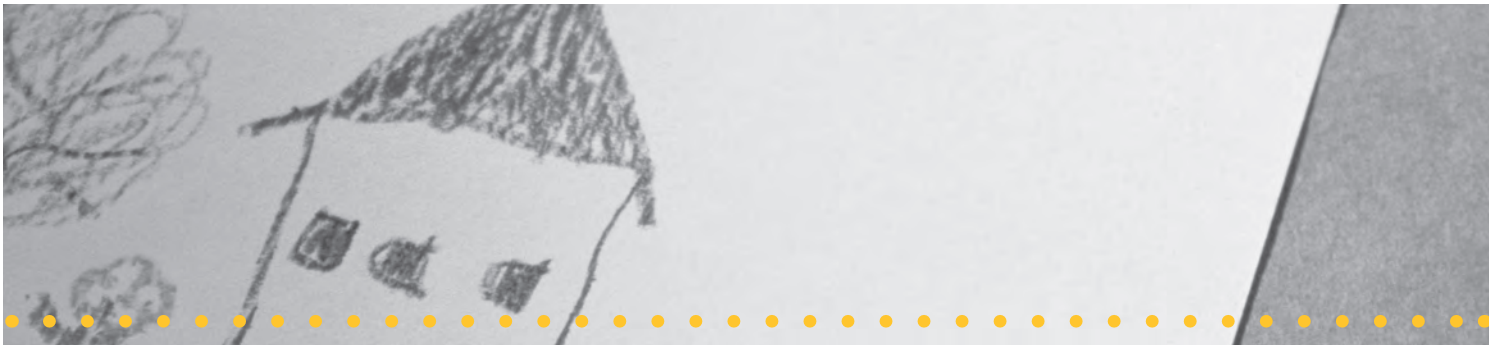
Early intervention services may include, but are not limited to:

- 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 instruction
  - Speech and language pathology services
  - Transportation
  - Vision services
- Continuous year-round services for all children

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



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## Services Through an IFSP

## Services Through an IEP

### Location of Services

#### *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

#### *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
Queen Anne's County	443-758-0720, ext. 4458
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](https://marylandlearninglinks.org/birth-to-kindergarten/) 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](http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/index.aspx). 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) (<http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/info.aspx>).

## Additional Information

Maryland State Department of Education  
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