

Moving On: Planning Your Child's Transition

Children's Integrated Services (CIS) - Early Intervention (EI) to

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)



Supporting Each and Every Child's Full and Equitable Participation:

The Vermont Guiding Principles

Each and every young child (birth through grade three) and family in Vermont has diverse strengths rooted in their unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. They have gifts and abilities that should be celebrated and nurtured. Full participation means promoting a sense of belonging, supporting positive social relationships, and enabling families and early childhood professionals to gain the competence and confidence to positively impact the lives of each and every child and their family.

The Guiding Principles describe what individuals, organizations, and communities understand and do to realize the promise of each and every young Vermont child. They highlight explicit, intentional, and strengths-based practices that are respectful of and responsive to child, family, and community values, priorities, and beliefs. They are consistent with relevant state and national laws and policies. These principles articulate Vermont's commitment to fully include each and every child and their family in a continuum of meaningful experiences to ensure their health, mental health, safety, happiness, and success now and into the future.

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We believe that each and every child . . .

- Learns within the context of secure and authentic relationships, play, and interactions within their environments.
- Deserves equitable access to experiences that acknowledge and build on their uniqueness.
- Deserves opportunities to deeply learn and develop to their full potential through joyful interactions in safe, accepting environments.

For each and every family, we will...

- Respect and support them as experts, partners, and decision-makers in the learning and development of their children.
- Pledge to be open, genuine, reflective, and respectful listeners and communication partners.
- Build caring communities that are accepting of differences and foster a sense of belonging.

Visit the [Full Support of Supporting Each and Every Young Child and Family's Full and Equitable Participation VERMONT GUIDING PRINCIPLES](#) for the complete document.

The DEC Recommended Practices

[The DEC Recommended Practices](#) were developed to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The purpose is to help bridge the gap between research and practice by highlighting those practices that have been shown to result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the personnel who serve them.

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC)'s 3-minute video, [Share the Knowledge with Families](#), features leaders in the early childhood field describing how the DEC Recommended Practices in Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education (April 2014) can benefit your family.

Introduction

As family members of a young child with a disability, you play a key role in your child's planning from Children's Integrated Services/Early Intervention (CIS-EI) to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at age three. *Moving On* will help provide information and guidance about this transition process for your family.

Whether your child is moving on to a Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) program in your local school district, private center, or family home, a family-based childcare, private childcare program, or another community setting, the intent of *Moving On* is to provide information to your family so that you are confident, knowledgeable, and active members of your child's transition team.

For information about transitioning to kindergarten, please refer to the booklet *Moving On Up: Transition to Kindergarten for Each and Every Child* (currently in revision, 2023). *Moving On Up* explains what to expect when your child enters kindergarten and also contains information, resources, and frequently asked questions that family members often have.



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Preparing for my Child's Transition

What is Transition?

Transition refers to the events, activities, and processes associated with key changes between environments or programs during the early childhood years and the practices that support the adjustment for your child and family to the new setting. These changes occur at the transition from hospital to home, the transition into CIS/Early Intervention (Part C), the transition from CIS-EI to early childhood programs such as private and public Universal Prekindergarten (UPK), the transition to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE Part B 619) by age three, and the transition to kindergarten or school-age programs.

As with other life transitions or changes, positive relationships— in this case positive teacher-child and practitioner-family relationships— are associated with greater satisfaction, better adjustment, and better child outcomes.

IDEA Requirements: Federal Law and State ECSE Rules

[The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) 2004](#) was enacted by the federal government to ensure that all children with disabilities are provided with “equality of [educational] opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.”

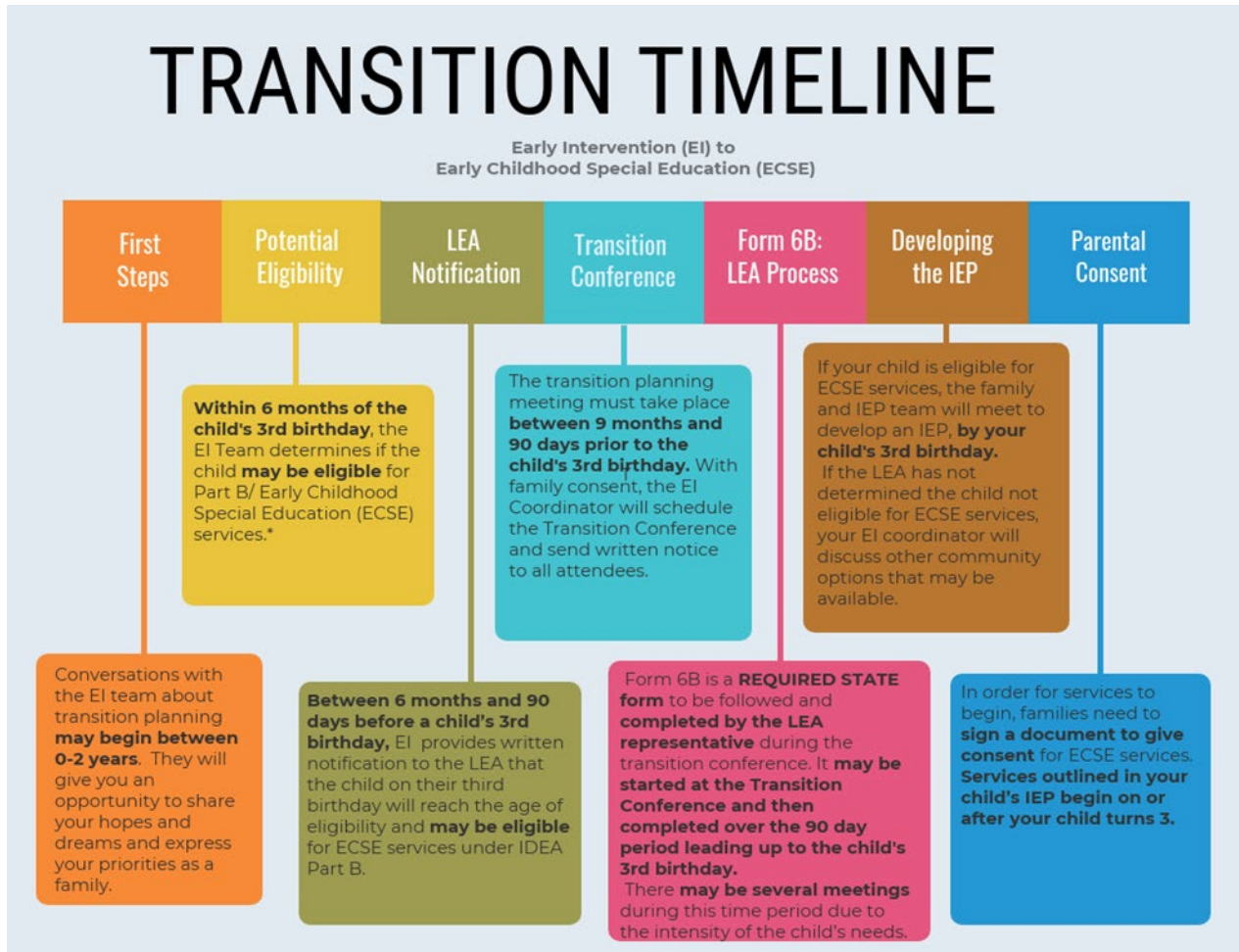
The Vermont Agency of Education also provides [State Special Education Rules \(Series 2360\)](#) (revised May 13, 2021) designed to ensure:

- (a) Eligible Vermont students with disabilities have available to them free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living; in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and a cost-effective manner; and
- (b) The rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected (2360.1 Statement of Purpose).



Transition Timeline

If your child is determined eligible by your local school district (also referred to as local education agency or LEA) to receive ECSE services at age three, your local school district will work with you to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in order to meet your child's individual needs. The timeline below gives a brief overview of how the transition process from CIS-EI (Part C) to ECSE (Part B 619) works.



First Steps: Ask Questions and Gather Information

Background

Around your child's second birthday, your CIS-EI service coordinator will begin talking with you about the transition process. You and your family members have valuable information about your child that no one else has! That is why it is important for you to share this information with other team members. Conversations with your CIS-EI team about transition planning will allow you to express your priorities as a family, explore what lies ahead, and share your hopes and dreams for your child. Take the time you need to ask questions, share concerns, and discuss the goals you have for your child's education.

Suggested information to share

Information you may want to share about your child with your future team:

(See also **Appendix C**):

- A photograph of your child
- Important people in your child's life
- Hopes and dreams for your child and family
- What you want everyone to know about your child
- What you are concerned or worried about
- Ways your child asks for help or shows signs of distress
- What you would like your child to learn in the next 6-12 months
- Supports your child may need including education, therapeutic services, medical services, or special equipment
- How often you would like to communicate about your child and the best methods to communicate with your family
- Information about your family's culture and languages

Notes

Potentially Eligible: What Does it Mean?

Background

“Potentially eligible” means your child **may be eligible** for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services at age three. The CIS-EI team reviews information from your child’s current evaluation(s), formative and summative assessments, and ongoing services. CIS-EI uses this information to decide if your child may be eligible. IF CIS-EI believes your child is potentially eligible, they will share your child’s and family name, birthday, and town of residence with your local school and with the Agency of Education (AOE). This occurs between six months and ninety days before your child’s third birthday. While potential eligibility is determined by CIS-EI, **eligibility for ECSE can only be determined by your child’s school district.**

Questions you may have

- **My child currently receives CIS-EI services. Will they automatically receive ECSE services?**

No. If the CIS-EI team decides your child **may be eligible** for ECSE, with your permission, they will gather evidence to share with your local school district, between six months and 90 days before your child’s third birthday. Eligibility for ECSE can only be determined by your child’s school district.

- **What is the difference between “potentially eligible” and “eligible”?** “Potentially eligible” means your child **may be eligible** for ECSE services at age three. “Eligible” means your child is eligible for ECSE and **will receive ECSE services** as stated in their developed ECSE IEP.

Suggested questions to ask

- The school district: Who will be my contact at the school district if my child is “potentially eligible” to receive ECSE services?
- CIS-EI: What evidence do you have that supports my child being “potentially eligible” for ECSE services?

Notes

LEA Notification: Sharing Information with your Child's School District

Background

Your school district will be notified in writing by your CIS-EI service coordinator that your child **may be eligible** for ECSE services. This will occur between six months and ninety days before your child's third birthday.

Questions you may have

- **What information is used by my school district to help determine if my child is eligible for ECSE services?**
 - Evidence that your child has demonstrated a 25% delay in one or more developmental domains as measured by ongoing assessment and use of a Part C State approved assessment tool, **OR**
 - A medical condition diagnosed by a licensed physician that may result in significant delays by their sixth (6th) birthday, **AND**
 - Prior to your child's third birthday, if your child received consistent specialized instruction, developmental therapy services and/or speech and language services as specified on your child's One Plan.

- **What are the five developmental domains that my child may have a delay in?**
(See **Appendix A**) The five developmental domains include speech and language development, adaptive development, social and emotional development, physical development (including gross or fine motor skills), and cognitive skills development (such as perception, memory, processing, and reasoning).

- **Is there a certain medical condition my child needs to have to be potentially eligible?**
No. The important piece is that the medical condition is diagnosed by a licensed physician.

- **What other evidence is needed to show potential eligibility?**
It is **IMPERATIVE** that CIS-EI present evidence that your child received consistent specialized instruction, developmental therapy services or speech and language services as specified on the One Plan. Additional information provided to your school district should include ongoing assessment information and observations showing progress or lack of progress during this time. Other information provided to the school district should include on-going process summary reports from Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Physical Therapists, for example. Your school district will consider these reports, documents, and notes in determining Part B (ECSE) eligibility.

- **What if my child is found potentially eligible less than 90 days before they turn three years old?**

Transition requirements do not change but you and your team may choose to hold the One Plan Meeting and Transition meeting at the same time depending on individual cases and your preference.

Further information and guidance on late referrals can be found in the [Late Referral Transition Policy and Procedures memo](#).

- **What if my child is not “potentially eligible”?**

If a child is not “potentially eligible”, there is no obligation for CIS-EI to notify the school district. However, **with your family’s approval**, the regional CIS-EI program will make reasonable efforts to convene a conference with your family and community-based providers to discuss other appropriate services that the child may receive.



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Transition Planning Conference

Background

The purpose of the Transition Planning Conference is to develop a written plan describing steps that will enable your child to move from CIS-EI services to ECSE services or other community services. Eligibility, your child's needs, and possible services will be discussed at this meeting and written into a Transition Plan. The plan you develop should describe activities designed to help your child make a smooth transition to ECSE services, or other settings if they are not eligible for services. Other information the transition plan should contain includes the individuals who will carry out activities, other services your child may require, and possible funding sources.

Questions you may have

- **How will my transition conference be scheduled?**

With family consent, the CIS-EI Service Coordinator will:

- Send notification to the school district of residence and the State of Vermont, Agency of Education that your child **may be eligible** for ECSE services.
- Schedule the transition planning conference at a time/place that is **convenient for you** and send written notice to all attendees.
- With your consent, send copies of your child's records to the school district's early childhood special educator or representative **at least 10 business days before the meeting**.

- **When does the transition planning conference take place?**

With your consent, a transition planning conference will take place **at least ninety days but no more than nine months before your child's third birthday**. If you are in need of transportation, an interpreter, or other supports for your participation, please let your CIS-EI service coordinator know.

- **Who should attend the transition planning meeting?**

Participants at this meeting include:

- Your family
- A representative from the local school district
- A representative from the CIS-EI program, and other One Plan team members or service providers
- Other individuals as determined by you and your CIS-EI coordinator such as a friend, family member, or other service provider such as a Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) social worker.



- **What Information will my CIS-EI Service Coordinator share with the school?**
With your help, your CIS-EI Coordinator will gather relevant information about your child and services in order to identify appropriate steps and services to be written into the transition plan. This includes:
 - The **consent form** giving your written permission to release records
 - Your contact information
 - Your child's **most recent One Plan**, including identified outcomes and services
 - **Evaluations** and other information CIS-EI used in deciding your child's potential eligibility
 - **Present levels of functioning, updated evaluations, frequency and consistency of services**, and any other necessary clinical data for the school district Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to consider when determining eligibility and appropriate ECSE services for your child

Suggested questions to ask

- Who do I call when I have questions?
- What services will be different or not available when my child turns three?
- Will my child be eligible for services not included in the ECSE IEP through other funding or resources?
- What is my role in the early childhood special education process?
- Will my child need a support person in the classroom?
- Where will my child receive services?
- What do I do if I don't agree with the services outlined in my child's ECSE IEP?
- Will my child be eligible for summer services?
- Are there parent trainings to help me understand the evaluation and ECSE IEP process better?

Notes

Form 6B: The School District Process

Background

Transition [Form 6B](#) is a **REQUIRED STATE** form to be followed and completed by your school district's Early Childhood Special Educator or appropriate school district representative with the CIS-EI Coordinator and your family during the transition planning conference. Team members can continue to complete the document over the ninety-day period leading up to your child's third birthday. There may be several meetings during this time period due to the intensity of your child's needs.

Form 6B is used to

- guide the discussion between school district representative(s) and your family
- verify evidence that is necessary for your school district to determine eligibility for ECSE services and/or related services once your child turns three-years-old.

If your school district needs more information, they may arrange to evaluate your child and ask your permission to review your child's records for evidence of eligibility. **You can review your child's records at any time.**

Questions you may have

- **If my child is determined eligible for ECSE services by the school district, do I need to provide parental consent?**

Form 6B requires your written parental consent for IDEA Part B placement as well as consent for ECSE services to begin at age three. This will be your child's interim placement under IDEA Part B until their three-year evaluation occurs.

- **What happens if my child is not determined eligible for ECSE services by the school district?**

If your child is **not eligible** for services, transition support will occur with your CIS-EI Team until your child's third birthday. Your CIS-EI service provider will discuss programs that can help your child grow, develop, and get ready for kindergarten. Some of these programs include:

- Universal Prekindergarten (located in public schools, private centers, Head Starts, and family homes)
- Childcare centers
- Parent-child center services
- Community playgroups

- **What if I change my mind after I give my parental consent?**

Should you change your mind prior to the start of initial ECSE IEP services, you must notify your school contact so that services will not commence. If you wish to revoke your consent after the initial IEP services have begun, the revocation of consent shall be

in writing on [Form 6a: Revocation of Consent for Provision of Special Education Services](#) (provided by your school district) or in any other written form. The date of the revocation must also be indicated.

- **What if I do not give my parental consent for any of the initial IEP services to begin?**
If all IEP services are refused, the school district may attempt to resolve the matter through an informal meeting with you and your family or by requesting mediation, a reevaluation, or a review of existing data to determine if your child continues to be eligible for ECSE services and/or related services.

Notes

Developing the ECSE Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Background

If your child is eligible for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services, you and the IEP team will meet to develop an ECSE Individualized Education Program (IEP) together prior to your child's third birthday.

An ECSE IEP is a written plan based on your child's individual needs to help them reach specific educational goals. This section describes the purpose of the ECSE IEP. **Appendix D** compares the differences between CIS-EI services and ECSE services.

Before an IEP meeting takes place, you will be notified by your school district about the purpose of the meeting and who will attend. The meeting will be scheduled at a time and place that is **mutually convenient** for you and school personnel. Members who attend the IEP meeting will be different from One Plan team participants.

Questions you may have

- Who will participate in the IEP meeting for my child?

IEP meeting participants include:

- Parents and family members
 - Early Childhood Special Educator
 - Early Childhood Educator
 - A qualified individual to interpret evaluation results
 - Other special educators or related service providers
 - Other team members or service providers you would like to invite such as a member of the CIS-EI team
 - An interpreter (if needed)
- What will happen during the IEP meeting? How will I be involved?
- At the IEP meeting, you and other IEP team members will, as a team:
- Discuss eligibility for ECSE services and identify the special education and related services your child needs.
 - Identify annual goals and short-term objectives to help your child meet these goals.
 - Agree upon the kinds of services, supports, and accommodations needed to help your child develop and retain skills.
 - Identify the individuals who will support your child's program and progress.

Educational Placement/Environment and ECSE service delivery

Background

Conversations with the IEP Team should begin with **the most inclusive and least restrictive environment (LRE)** for your child. LRE does not merely refer to a particular setting. Rather, identifying the LRE involves making decisions about what services and supports your child needs to be successful first and then where and how those services and supports can be provided effectively.

When making decisions about when, where, and how your child will receive ECSE and related services, you and your school district **must consider a full continuum of educational placement options to address your child's individual needs**. It is important to consider how your child will **access and participate in age-appropriate learning opportunities and activities across all settings**. **Frequency, duration, and intensity of services** must be individually determined for your child.

Some of the educational settings in which your child may receive ECSE services include Universal PreK programs in public schools or private settings, Head Starts, private centers, family homes, childcare centers, or your home.

Questions you may have

- **What topics are generally discussed at the IEP meeting and generally included in my child's ECSE IEP?**
 - Your hopes and dreams for your child
 - Recent evaluations, on-going assessment, and medical history
 - Your child's strengths, concerns, and needs
 - Goals and objectives that will address your child's educational concerns, how progress will be measured, and how often progress will be measured
 - Early Childhood Special Education services
 - Related services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and/or speech and language therapy
 - Who will provide your child's ECSE services
 - Where, when, and how often ECSE and related services will be provided
 - Projected start date for ECSE and related services
 - Necessary curriculum modifications, environmental supports, and accommodations
 - Extended school year services (ESY) which may include summer services

- **What if my child's birthday is during the summer?** If your child turns three shortly before the end of the school year or over the summer, the IEP team should write the ECSE IEP **before the last day of school** so that it can be in effect the first day of the school year. The ECSE IEP can also be **written over the summer** with a representative from the school.

- **How can I prepare for my child’s IEP meeting?**
 - Review and share information you gathered for transition planning.
 - Identify other information you believe will help the team get to know your child (**Appendix C**).
 - Understand the differences between EI and ECSE (**Appendix D**).
 - Review the special education rights for you and your child and ask questions if you need help understanding them.
 - Identify goals and services you would like included on your child’s IEP.
 - Make a list of questions you have about the IEP process and possible educational environments for your child.
 - Visit educational settings where your child may receive services.
 - Think about other supports your child may need.

- **Will my child receive the same type and/or amount of special education service in ECSE as they did in CIS-EI?**

Making informed decisions about special education and related services that will address your child’s educational needs, is the role of an IEP team. If you and your child’s IEP team agree, it’s possible that your child will continue to receive similar services that they received as part of their One Plan.

- **Will my child receive the same type of services over the summer?**

While your child participated in CIS-EI, they received services year-round. ECSE services are provided only during the school year, unless the IEP team decides your child requires extended school year (ESY) services. ESY services may be provided over the summer and during school breaks. **If you think your child needs year-round help, the IEP meeting is the place to have this discussion.** In deciding whether your child may need ESY services, the team will consider the type and degree of your child’s needs and evidence that they experience a significant loss of skills that are not relearned in a reasonable length of time.

Other areas the team should consider include:

- If summer services are needed for your child to reach their IEP goals
- Whether your child typically loses skills over school breaks or vacations and how long it takes for your child to catch up
- Areas of your child’s ECSE IEP that may need ongoing attention

- **What happens if I disagree with the team’s decision about my child’s educational placement?**

If you disagree with the team’s decision about your child’s educational placement, there are steps you can take as part of your parental rights. Once the team agrees on your child’s educational setting, you will be asked to give written consent to have your child begin receiving ECSE services.

Suggested questions to ask

- Ask any questions about services and/or the IEP process you may still have.
- Ask to set up regular times to talk to our IEP case manager and teachers to learn more about your child's services.

Notes

Parental Consent: Your Parental Rights and Other Information

Background

By your child's third birthday you should receive a copy of your child's final ECSE IEP. For services to begin you will need to **sign a document to give consent for ECSE services**. ECSE services outlined in your child's IEP begin on or after your child turns three.

Here are a few important points regarding your parental rights.

- You have the right to disagree with the decision made by the IEP team about your child's ECSE services.
- If you believe your child needs a specific service, you have the right to ask for that service to be included in the ECSE IEP. Put your request in writing, explaining your reasons for the request and share any information you may have to support your request.
- IEP decisions are made by consensus.
- When team members can't agree, the school district representative will make the final decision.
- If the school district refuses your request, they must provide you with a written justification using [Form 7: Notice of Local Educational Agency Refusal](#).

Notes



Appendix A: Developmental Domains

What is the VELLS?

The [Vermont Early Learning Standards](#) or VELLS represents common goals for development and learning across the early childhood years (birth through Grade 3). The VELLS is a resource tool for adults, including families, who are responsible for young children. When embedded in IEP goals, the VELLS help provide opportunities and experiences that allow each and every child to make progress toward or achieve their individual goals. VELLS family materials include family-focused activities, articles, and national resources to learn more about VELLS to engage with your child can be found on the [VELLS Family Website](#).

What is the intention or purpose of the VELLS? The VELLS answers two main questions: 1. What should children know and be able to do to prepare them to succeed in school and in life? 2. What experiences should be available in homes, schools, and communities to help them gain the knowledge and skills that prepare them for school and life?

How does the VELLS address diverse learning needs? Your child with a disability or developmental delay may follow a course of development that differs from their typically developing peers. Your child's abilities may be delayed in one area but may be very strong in another area! Appropriately meeting the needs of diverse ability learners requires special attention. Acknowledging these differences does not diminish the importance of learning standards to guide early childhood education and practice for every child. Instead, it invites us to have a deep understanding of individual children and adaptations, accommodations, and specially designed instruction (SDI) that are needed for children who develop differently.

Developmental Domains

Speech and language development

Most infants or toddlers can understand what you're saying well before they can clearly talk. As they get older and their communication skills develop, most children learn how to put their feelings into words. This includes receptive communication, expressive communication, articulation, fluency, and voice.

Adaptive development

Adaptive skills are practical, everyday skills your child needs to function and meet the demands of their environment, including the skills necessary to take care of themselves effectively and independently and to interact with other people. Adaptive skills are essential to be an independent adult including self-help skills, communication skills, motor coordination skills, social interaction skills self-sufficiency skills, and cognition skills

Adaptive developmental delays refer to conditions in which children have not reached age-appropriate life skills. It is important that children learn adaptive and self-help skills so they can live independent and productive lives as adolescents and adults.

Social and emotional development

Positive social and emotional development in the early years provides a critical foundation for lifelong development and learning. These are skills that must be taught! Both social and emotional development are important for young children's mental health. In fact, early childhood mental health is the same as social and emotional development.

Social development refers to a child's ability to create and sustain meaningful relationships with adults and other children. Emotional development is a child's ability to express, recognize, and manage his or her emotions, as well as respond appropriately to others' emotions. This includes emotions and self-regulation, self-awareness, and relationships with adults and peers.

Physical development

Children in early childhood are physically growing at a rapid pace. Physical development includes both gross and fine motor skills. Gross Motor skills involve the use of big muscles in the body. Crawling, walking, jumping, skipping, and running are all examples of gross motor activities. Fine motor skills target hand-eye coordination. These activities require a child to learn to precisely control the muscles in the hands. Coloring writing, cutting, tracing, and tearing paper are examples of these skills in use.

Cognitive skills

Cognitive development involves how children think, explore, and figure things out. It refers to things such as memory, and the ability to learn new information. This domain includes the development of knowledge and skills in math, science, social studies, and creative arts.

Children experiencing developmental delays in cognitive skills may need additional time and intentional adult guidance and support to achieve goals.

Appendix B: Universal PreK

What is Act 166?

[Act 166 of 2014](#) provides access to [publicly-funded](#) prekindergarten education for Vermont students, ages 3, 4, and 5 years old (not currently enrolled in kindergarten). All prekindergarten education programs, including Head Start and public school-operated programs, must meet specific requirements to operate in Vermont. The State Board of Vermont created administrative rules to guide Act 166 implementation by the Agency of Education and the Agency of Human Services.

What is High-Quality, Effective Prekindergarten Education?

What defines Vermont Universal Prekindergarten Education is the implementation of high-quality, effective instruction by licensed educators who use evidence-based practices within intentionally designed early learning environments. Early educators align curriculum with the Vermont Early Learning Standards while adapting experiences to support the full participation of each and every child to realize their full potential and promote successful outcomes.

Questions you may have

- **What do I look for when visiting a Universal PreK program?**
 - Are the children playing and engaged with each other as well as with learning materials/toys/books?
 - What is the ratio of staff to children?
 - Are the staff responsive to children's needs?
 - How does the program reflect and respect the languages and cultures of the children and families?
 - How does the program support professional development for staff members?
 - Can I picture my child in the classroom?
 - Is the classroom set up to encourage play and exploration?
 - How will my child receive the support they need to be successful in the program?
 - Will my child be able to easily access the building, playground, and classroom?
 - What will collaboration of team members look like to ensure my child's entitlement to IDEA?

Appendix C: All About My Child

Use this page to record information that you would like to share about your child.

1. People I want to share this information with (i.e., IEP team, PreK teacher, childcare/afterschool)

2. Important people in my child's life (name and relationship)

3. Hopes and dreams for my child and family

4. What I want everyone to know about my child (e.g., likes and dislikes, what my child does well and what they find hard or frustrating)

5. I am concerned or worried about

6. Ways my child asks for help

7. What I would like my child to learn in the next 6-12 months

Appendix D: Similarities and Differences Between Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

Federal Laws and Regulations

- **Early Intervention**- Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), intended for infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth up to age three.
- **Early Childhood Special Education**- Part B 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), is intended for young children with disabilities ages three through five (up to age 6.)

Eligibility

- **Early Intervention** - CIS-EI eligibility is based on developmental delay or established medical conditions that have a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - The child meets eligibility by receiving consistent services through the IFSP/One Plan and is considered potentially eligibility for ECSE services by the CIS-EI team; or the child has a diagnosed medical condition that may result in delays by the child's 6th birthday or has a developmental delay 2.0 SD at or above the mean (2nd percentile) or a 1.5 SD at or below the mean (7th percentile) in two or more developmental domain areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive development.

Where Services Occur

- **Early Intervention** - CIS-EI services occur in the child's natural environment and are integrated into the family's natural daily routine. They could occur at home, childcare, and/or community settings. Services are conducted with the parent present and involved.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - ECSE services occur in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) with the child's typically developing peers. The LRE could be a Universal PreK public program or private childcare, Head Start, or licensed family childcare. Services do not have to occur in a UPK. For example, they can also occur in a family's home or another location.

How Services Are Funded

- **Early Intervention** - Funding sources include Medicaid, private insurance, State and Federal funds.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - Funding occurs through State and local Special Education funding

Ages Served

- **Early Intervention** - 0 up to the child's 3rd birthday (ages 0 through 3)
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - 3 up to the child's 6th birthday (ages 3 through 5)

IFSP/One Plans or IEPs

- **Early Intervention** - Individual Family Service Plan/One Plan (IFSP/One Plan) includes outcomes and services for the family and child and are inclusive of early intervention, nursing, and early childhood mental health.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - The Individual Education Program (IEP) is child centered. Goals and services are created by the IEP team which includes the child's family. The IEP is focused on the child's educational needs.

Service Coordination

- **Early Intervention** - A primary service provider coordinates services for the child and their family.
- **Early Childhood Special Education** - The IEP case manager ensures that the IEP is being appropriately implemented and continually updated. In most cases, this is the Early Childhood Special Educator.

Appendix E: Transition Process Checklist

- My child's CIS-EI service coordinator began to talk to me about the transition process when my child at or before 2 ½ years-old.
- My child's CIS-EI service coordinator notified my school district that my child would be turning three at least 6 months (180 days) prior to their 3rd birthday.
- With my written permission, we held a transition planning meeting and began to develop my child's transition plan at least 3 months (90 days) before my child's third birthday.
- I shared ideas about what works well for my child.
- The transition plan includes activities, timelines, and people responsible for carrying out the plan.
- I have learned about my special education parental rights and ECSE services.
- My child's records have been given to my local school district, with my permission.
- I have visited ECSE placement options for my child and talked to teachers and service providers.
- Before my child turned 3, we held a meeting to develop an IEP and to decide my child's educational placement.
- I have met my child's new teacher and service providers and had a chance to ask questions about my child's new program.

Appendix F: Guiding Concepts for Transition

- Transitions should be viewed as an ongoing process rather than a single event.
- Transition planning should begin early and ensure sufficient time dedicated by all team members.
- Transitions involve changes for your family and child.
- Your family's dreams, concerns, values, culture, language, and experiences are elicited, listened to, and honored.
- Your child's and family's strengths, needs, and preferences are kept in mind during transition planning.
- Your family is encouraged and supported to take an active role in helping to plan their child's transition.
- Your family is assisted in understanding how services and supports will be provided in the next environment.
- A planning process is developed that is outcome based, written, followed, and clearly understood by all team members, including the family.
- A collaborative spirit and partnership among all, is promoted.
- Coordination must be enhanced, alleviating duplication and overlap of services and efforts.
- Regular contact among all team members is assured.
- Confidentiality for all parties concerned is respected.
- A comprehensive plan is based on your child's and family's unique situation, not on labels or programs.
- The number of changes, settings, evaluations, and new people that your child and family experience as a result of transition is kept to a minimum.
- When necessary, your child and family is linked with naturally occurring supports and activities available in their own community. When none exist, they are created.
- Your child is included and supported in community environments with their same age peers.
- All existing strengths and resources of your family, programs, and communities will be examined and utilized.
- Statewide equity and access to transition processes and resources for your child and family is promoted.

Appendix G: Transition During Health and Other Emergencies

*“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me,
‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”*

-Fred Rogers

Honoring IEP and 504 Plans

Your child with special health and/or educational needs, may experience challenges during times of health and other emergencies to a greater extent than their peers without disabilities. Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Vermont State Special Education Regulations, students found eligible for early childhood special education (ECSE) are entitled to special education and related services, such as accommodations and modifications to instruction, speech-language services, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and counseling.

Considerations of flexibility in environment, education, and service delivery are paramount in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Your child is a general education student first. Guidance and policies related to school plans during health and other emergencies apply to all students, including students with special needs who qualify for IEPs under the IDEA and accommodation plans for eligible students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Determining a Child's Eligibility for ECSE Remotely

When health or other emergencies are occurring, your school district (local education agency-LEA) will continue to work with you in determining ECSE eligibility, which can be determined remotely. Practitioners may use approaches such as teleconference, videoconference, sharing information, and video asynchronously. Gathering information from your family is also critical in identifying your child's strengths and needs and for making informed decisions about the goals and objectives on intervention plans. Practitioners will listen to your family members, encourage you to share your knowledge, and clarify your concerns, priorities, and goals for your child.

Teleintervention and Remote Learning

During teleintervention or remote learning, your school district (LEA) should consider alternative service instruction and ECSE services such as providing remote delivery, hybrid model, and/or in person instruction. If your child is unable to access their education as designed, your LEA must ensure individualized and alternative means of delivering instruction and related services based upon student need, present levels of functioning, levels, and family input.

Your Child's Move from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education Services

As your toddler approaches his or her third birthday, early intervention practitioners will work with you to plan your child's transition from early intervention and, if potentially eligible, to preschool special education services. This transition involves key decisions about your child's future. By communicating and collaborating with both the early intervention program staff and the preschool program staff, you can share information you need to actively participate in the transition planning process, share your concerns and preferences, and help your child adjust to the new setting and services.

[Watch a video of this guide](#)

Participating in the Transition Process

- Ask to talk to other families whose children have made the transition from early intervention to preschool special education services. Find out about their experiences and what worked well.
- Attend the transition planning conferences and meetings with early intervention and school district staff. Ask questions that will help you understand the transition process. How are preschool services different from early intervention services? The school district will give you a copy of your legal rights as a parent. Ask questions if anything about your legal rights is unclear.
- Transition meetings provide an opportunity to learn about your child's evaluation process. Ask about what happens when your child is evaluated and how the school district will determine if your child is eligible for preschool special education. Find out how you can participate, share your ideas, and support your child during assessments.
- During the evaluation, be sure to share your hopes and concerns for your child. Discuss what you would like to see your child doing and the supports you think your child may need.
- Visit different preschool programs in your community. Learn about the classroom routines, activities, and schedules. Ask about how supports and interventions would be provided for your child. Find out what skills would be expected of your child in the new setting.
- If your child is found eligible for preschool special education, you will participate in a meeting to develop your child's Individual Education Program (IEP). You are part of the IEP team. You can ask the early intervention program staff and others to participate in the IEP meeting. Share information about your child's capabilities, interests, and developmental needs and suggest goals for your child. Ask how the school district staff will work with your child to address their goals. Share your preferences for the preschool placement you think will be best for your child.
- Once the IEP is developed and services are ready to begin in the selected program, prepare your child for the new setting. Visit the new classroom with your child so he or she can meet the teachers, experience the classroom schedule, try out activities, and interact with other children. Identify and discuss with the teachers, situations you think your child will be able to negotiate easily and situations where he or she might have difficulty. Work with the program staff to consider and plan for the supports your child will need in the preschool setting.
- Once your child starts preschool, continue to communicate with the preschool staff to support your child's adjustment to the preschool programs.

A Quick Peek

Luis and Carla are making plans for their daughter Lily's entry into preschool. The early intervention and school district staff provide information about preschool programs in the community. The parents visit various programs, learning about the classrooms and their approaches. Having visited the programs before the IEP meeting helps them participate in discussions about the options and make informed placement decisions. During the IEP meeting, Luis and Carla discuss their preference for one of the preschool programs. Everyone agrees that this program is a setting where Lily's strengths will be acknowledged, and her developmental goals will be addressed. The school district will provide services and supports there. Lily's twin sister also will be a student in this preschool. Arrangements are made for the girls to visit the preschool together while their parents talk with the staff about Lily's abilities and needs. Luis and Carla are confident they can help Lily transition to preschool special education services and this new preschool program.



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You'll know the practice is working when...

- Your child interacts with adults, peers, and activities in the new classroom
- Your child adjusts to the schedule and expectations of the new setting
- Your child learns new things as part of participation in the new setting

This practice guide is based upon the following *DEC Recommended Practices: Transition 1, 2*
The DEC Recommended Practices are available at <http://dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>

Access this practice guide and other products at <http://ectacenter.org/decrp>
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Appendix I: Resources

If you would like more information, please contact the following resources:

Vermont Agency of Education:

- Student Support Services Division

- [Early Education Team](#)

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

Assistance for families and schools regarding early childhood special education and parental rights.

- Katie McCarthy, ECSE Coordinator (IDEA Part B 619)
(e): katie.mccarthy@vermont.gov
- Amy Murphy, Early Education Inclusion Coordinator
(e): amy.murphy@vermont.gov

Vermont Agency of Human Resources

- Child Development Division

- [Children's Integrated Services/ Early Intervention \(IDEA Part C\)](#)

Early intervention, family support, and prevention services to help ensure healthy development and well-being of children, pre-birth to age 5.

- Leslie Davis, Part C Program Administrator
(e): leslie.davis@vermont.gov

Vermont Department of Health

- [Children with Special Health Needs \(CSHN\)](#)

Supports children with complex, chronic health conditions and/or developmental disorders, ages birth to 21, and their families, with flexible, experienced, and proactive services.

(p): 800-660-4427 or 802-863-7338

(f): 802-863-7635

(e): AHS.VDHChildrensPersonalCareSvs@vermont.gov

Vermont Family Network

Support and information network for families with children who have a chronic illness, disability or who have been born prematurely.

(p): 802-876-5315

(e): info@vtn.org

[Vermont 211](#)

The Vermont 211 database contains detailed descriptions of programs and services available to Vermonters that are provided by local community groups, social service and health-related agencies, government organizations, and others.

(p): 2-1-1

[Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired \(VABVI\)](#)

Provides direct services, consultation services, assessments, and hands-on training for children (ages 0– 22), teaching them skills that are unique to children with visual impairments.

[Help Me Grow Vermont](#)

Help Me Grow helps early childhood partners work together to build strong, connected communities and healthy, resilient families.

(p): 2-1-1 x6

(t): HMGVT to 898211

(e): info@helpmegrowvt.org

[Vermont Parent Child Center Network \(VPCCN\)](#)

A network of 15 centers that help families make sure children get off to a healthy start. Services include early childhood services, home visits to families with young children, playgroups, parent education, parent support, and information and referral.

[The Howard Center](#)

Serves children, adults, families, and communities as the designated provider for mental health and developmental disability services and the preferred provider for substance use services in Chittenden County.

(p): 802-488-6000

(e): hcinfo@howardcenter.org

[Special Olympics Vermont](#)

Special Olympics Young Athletes is an innovative sports play program for children with and without intellectual disabilities ages 2 through 7 and provides opportunities for young children to be active, have fun, and learn foundational sports skills.

(p): 802-863-5222 (f): 802-863-3911

(p): 800-639-1603 (e): info@vtso.org

Moving On

We hope this booklet has helped you gain a better understanding of what to expect when your child moves from CIS-EI to ECSE. Your child's transition is a team effort, and the information you share with and receive from professionals plays a critical part in helping your child to learn and grow. You and your family become full partners in your child's education when you feel knowledgeable and actively contribute to the decisions being made about your child's ECSE services and educational future.

