

All in for Kids

A Birth to 3 Program Family Newsletter

All in for Kids is a newsletter created to keep you and your family informed about the services available through the Birth to 3 Program. The newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.



Birth to 3 Program Services: Special Education

The Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention special education program. It helps children under 3 years old who have delays or disabilities. The program helps children learn, interact, and thrive at home, in child care, and in the community.

Families enrolled in the Birth to 3 Program can receive many services. The services that a family receives are determined by a team, including the family, and are based on the needs of the child and family. The services identified are listed on a family's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

The information provided in this newsletter is published in accordance with U.S. Department of Education, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C Regulations Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

WHAT IS AN IFSP?

Your Birth to 3 Program team, which includes your family, works together to create your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP is a written plan that outlines the actions to support your child's development. This plan is created specifically for your child and family to help meet your unique goals.

Examples of services a family may receive are special education, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and assistive technology.

In this newsletter, we will highlight special education services.

What are special education services in the Birth to 3 Program?

Special education services help a child grow, learn, practice new skills, play, and build relationships. Special education also supports a child who has delays in learning. These services may be called special education or special instruction on a family's IFSP.

Special education teachers or "special educators" provide special education services. They're part of the team of professionals' who families work with in the Birth to 3 Program. They may also be the primary service provider who is the main person providing services to families. Special educators teach other team members like occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech therapists' ways to support a child's learning. This means that no matter what team member is primary, families can get special education services based on their child's needs and goals.

Special educators can have specialties. For example, some specialized special educators know how to help support children who are deaf or hard of hearing or children who are blind or visually impaired.

What does special education look like?

Special education helps in many ways to support a child's overall learning and development. Let's look at some examples of how special education can help families and children. Special education in the Birth to 3 Program can help a child:

- Practice new skills. Children learn by practicing new things. For example, special education might help a child learn how to group things by how they look or feel such as grouping socks from the laundry based on color and size.
- Learn new concepts. For example, when a child pushes a toy's button, they may hear the toy makes a noise after they push the button. This helps children learn the concept of "cause and effect."

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- Build relationships with others. For example, a child putting a toddler puzzle together with a sibling or family member can help teach young children about working together for the same goal. And it is so fun for young children when they see the completed puzzle picture!

How does special education help a child?

Special education uses knowledge of early childhood development to help a child grow and learn based on the child's individual needs. Special education assesses how a child learns best and finds ways to help the child learn in all areas of development.

Special education supports a child's development by adapting activities to create learning opportunities. Special education works with a family in ways that help a child learn from and engage in activities. For example, special education might help a family use an activity like reading a book to talk about what is going on in the pictures and help label different items in the pictures.

To learn more about the special educator on the team and special education services through the Birth to 3 Program, reach out to your service coordinator. ❖

Birth to 3 Program Mediation Available for Families

Disagreements can happen. If a family has a concern or disagreement about services or decisions made by the Birth to 3 Program, and talking to the rest of the team does not fix it, the Birth to 3 Program Mediation System can help!

Birth to 3 Program mediation is voluntary, free, and private. If parents or caregivers of a child and Birth to 3 Program staff do not agree on decisions about eligibility or services on the IFSP, mediation can help solve disagreements and find a solution everyone can agree on.

Families might choose mediation if they do not agree with Birth to 3 Program staff about:

- Their child's eligibility.
- The evaluation process.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Check out the five key focus areas for healthy child development at www.aboutplaysc.com/the-key-5-focus-areas-of-healthy-childhood-development/

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- The services being offered.
- How the services are being provided.

How does mediation help?

Mediation is a safe place to talk openly about concerns. Mediation can be requested by parents or caregivers, local Birth to 3 Program representatives, or both parties together. During mediation, your child will still get Birth to 3 Program services unless you decide to stop.

A neutral third person called a mediator helps guide the conversation and works toward an agreement between you and Birth to 3 Program staff. If an agreement is reached, it will be put in writing. Everyone will sign it, and it will become legally binding.

Additional details are also available in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Mediation brochure. The brochure outlines:

- The process for requesting mediation.
- How to get assigned a mediator.

Families can get mediation information and read the brochure on the Birth to 3 Program website at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/mediation.htm. ❖

Available Now: Introducing Wisconsin Wayfinder

Families often have many questions after learning their child has one or more delays, disabilities, special health care needs, or mental health conditions.

Wisconsin Wayfinder is a resource to help connect you to your area's Children's Resource Centers (previously known as the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Regional Centers). You can call Wisconsin Wayfinder and talk to a live person or go online and use the website if you prefer. It is free, confidential, and supportive to your family!

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What are the Children’s Resource Centers and how can they help?

Wisconsin has five Children’s Resource Centers that are devoted to supporting families of children and youth with delays, disabilities, special health care needs, or mental health conditions. The centers help both families and providers. Each center has children’s resource guides who are trained to help you and your family:

- Connect to community resources.
- Learn about and find supports and services.
- Get answers to questions you have.

How do I connect with Wisconsin Wayfinder?



You can call **877-WiscWay (877-947-2929)** toll free and talk to a live person. They will help connect you to your children’s resource guide.



You can go online at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wiscway/index.htm to find information and resources and reach out to your children’s resource guide.

If you choose to go online to the Wisconsin Wayfinder website, you will find:

- Videos about Wisconsin Wayfinder.
- Information and resources for you to make your own decisions and decide what steps you want to take next.
- Answers to common questions you may have if your child has delays, disabilities, special health care needs, or mental health conditions.
- A contact form you can fill out to have a children’s resource guide in your region reach out to you at your preferred time. ❖

The Birth to 3 Program Wants Your Family Stories and Photos!

The All in for Kids newsletter is for families. We want to feature your photos and experiences for other readers to enjoy! You can share things like:

- A positive interaction with the Birth to 3 Program.

RESOURCES



You can call **877-WiscWay (877-947-2929)** toll-free to connect with Wisconsin Wayfinder.

- An example of how the Birth to 3 Program has helped your family or child.
- A photo or story of an activity you did with your child.
- A photo of artwork or something else your child has made.

Email your family story or photo to dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov with “All in for Kids” in the subject line. You can also send ideas for stories you would like to see in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you! ❖

Join Our Email List

For faster delivery, sign up to get the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the Birth to 3 Program. Go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm and scroll down and click the **Birth to 3 Program Information for Families** link. Don’t forget to tell your family and friends in the Birth to 3 Program to sign up as well! ❖

Helpful Resources for Families

Learn about causes, treatments, and prevention of various respiratory illnesses: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/respiratory.htm

More information about child development for infants and toddlers is available at:

- The Center for Parent Information & Resources:
www.parentcenterhub.org/ei-overview/
- Zero to Three:
www.zerotothree.org/resource/what-you-need-to-know-early-intervention/
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute:
www.fpg.unc.edu/areas-of-work/early-intervention-special-education ❖

Learn More About the Birth to 3 Program

The First 1,000 Days brochure gives an overview of the program:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/p-02928

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The Birth to 3 Program Services at a Glance guide explains the supports and services available: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/p-03011

The Early Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers With Delays and Disabilities in Wisconsin booklet helps you understand how early intervention helps your family and child learn and grow together: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/p-03022

Previous issues of All in for Kids newsletter: Birth to 3 Program: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023 ❖

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All in for Kids is a newsletter published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for children and families in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program.

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention program committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. The program partners with families to assist the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills, and abilities as they interact with and raise their child. For more information, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/index.htm.

Para leer este boletín en español, visite www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023.

Xav nyeem tsab ntawv xov xwm no ua Lus Hmoob, mus xyuas www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023.

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