



## Child Find Frequently Asked Questions For Children 3-5 years of age

### 1. What is Child Find?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) under sec. 34 CFR §300.612. requires all states to have a comprehensive Child Find System that ensures that all children (Birth to 21) who are in need of early intervention or special education services are identified, located and evaluated. Section 115.85(1), (WI Stats.), is consistent with the federal law. Child Find ensures that children with disabilities have access to free, appropriate public education, including special education and related services *“designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living...”*

### Child Find Requirements

### 2. What are the minimal requirements to meet Child Find?

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) comply with certain state and federal special education notices requirements by placing the following notices in newspapers or other media:

- **Model Notice of Child Find Activity: Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information** Child Find Confidentiality Notice, Revised 8/7/2008  
[English](#), [Spanish](#), [Hmong](#)
- **Model Notice to Parents and Individuals Required to Make Referrals**  
Notice to Persons Required to Make Referral, Revised 8/7/2008  
[English](#), [Spanish](#), [Hmong](#)

#### **In addition, the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) shall do all of the following:**

- Establish written procedures for accepting and processing referrals.
- Document and date the receipt of each referral.
- Provide information and in-service opportunities to its entire licensed staff to familiarize them with the agency's referral procedures.
- At least annually, inform parents and persons required to make referrals about the LEA's referral and evaluation procedures.
- Within 15 business days of receiving a referral, send the child's parents a request for consent to evaluate or a notice that no additional data is necessary.

# Locating Young Children

## 3. What is an Informed Referral Network?

- An Informed Referral Network is comprised of community partners working together to serve young children and their families.

## 4. What is the purpose of an Informed Referred Network?

- Relationships with community partners have proven to be the most effective practice in identifying children with disabilities.
- Partnerships with community agencies are a way to learn more about screening opportunities available for young children and share information about community resources.

## 5. Why is it important to screen young children?

- The earlier children are identified, located, and evaluated the sooner appropriate services can be provided.

## 6. What is the LEAs responsibility for children who are not yet age three?

- For children under the age of 2 years 9 months old LEAs should provide contact information for the Birth to 3 programs.
- Interagency Agreements with Birth to 3 programs should address Child Find.

## 7. How are LEAs meeting the mandate to identify and locate children (age 3-5)?

- Posting the annual notices see #2.
- Using the school census to locate children who should be screened.
- Implementing an ongoing public awareness campaign through the mail, electronic notices, websites, news media, billboard messages, and service announcements.
- Placing brochures in libraries, health and community centers, county agencies, Women Infants and Children (WIC) clinics, Laundromats, and other public places that families visit.
- Conducting free developmental screenings.

**8. Can an LEA delay a referral by requiring Response to Intervention (RtI)?**

- No. If someone suspects a child has a disability, the RtI process should not delay a referral.
- RtI does not require that children go through a multi-tiered system of supports prior to being referred to special education, thereby delaying and often restricting referral to special services.

**9. How do LEAs include children who are homeless in Child Find efforts?**

- LEAs should develop an informed referral network so that families residing in emergency shelters (domestic abuse and homeless), transitional housing programs, and temporary housing arrangements are included in Child Find efforts.

## **Screening Practices and Instruments**

**10. Who can be involved in Child Find Screening?**

- Each school district identifies a screening team.
- The screening team may consist of regular education staff, special education staff and community partners/agencies.

**11. Can an Early Childhood Special Education teacher and/or Speech and Language Pathologist screen children?**

- Special education personnel may conduct a universal screening (must be available to all children), but are not allowed to follow-up with the child. When “follow-up” or “rescreen” happen without a referral a violation of due process has occurred.

**12. What should screening activities include?**

- Parent and /or care giver involvement
- Multiple sources of information
- Sensitivity to the child’s cultural background/primary language
- Results reviewed by trained personnel and shared with parents

**13. What should be considered when selecting a screening instrument?**

- Age appropriate
- Easily administered
- Cost effective
- Based on valid, reliable and normative samples

**14. What screening instruments may be considered?**

- Wisconsin Healthy Children's Committee supports the use of Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) ,
- The ASQ-3 is widely used in Wisconsin by doctors, health departments, WIC, Birth to 3 programs, Head Start, childcare and other agencies.

**15. Should locally developed screening tools be used?**

- No. Best practice would be to use a valid and reliable screening tool.

**16. Is signed consent required for a Child Find screening?**

- No. This is a universal screening offered/available to all children and the parent/care givers are directly involved.

**17. Is a parent completed questionnaire such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) sufficient to conduct Child Find screening?**

- Yes. Research shows that parents are accurate reporters of their child's development (Brooks Publishing).

**18. If an ASQ-3 is sent home, do families still need to bring their child to school for screening?**

- No. However, a district needs to provide screening results to the family. This could be done through a letter, home visits, or conference call.

**19. Can a district offer monthly screenings at various locations?**

- Yes. Screenings can take place in a variety of places.

## Parents

**20. What are the LEAs responsibilities if a parent requests a screening?**

- A school district should have a process in place to address a parent request for an individual screening, which includes screening requests made when schools are not in session.

**21. If a parent calls and is only concerned with their child's speech development can a speech and language pathologist screen the child?**

- No. The district Child Find screening team would need to screen all children who request a Child Find Screening.

**22. If a parent asks for an evaluation can the LEA ask the parent to bring the child in for a screening first?**

- No. If a parent requests an evaluation a referral must be made.

**23. What are the Child Find requirements for parentally placed private school children?**

- Each school district must conduct activities to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities ages birth through 21 within its jurisdiction, including those attending private schools.

**24. What is the responsibility of the school districts to conduct child find activities for parentally placed private school children who attend private schools in the district and reside outside the state?**

- The school district where the private elementary schools are located is responsible for conducting child find, including individual evaluations, of all parentally placed private school students suspected of having a disability. This includes children from other states attending private elementary schools located in the school district.

## Rescreening

### 25. What is rescreening?

- Rescreening is repeating a screening to obtain additional information because the accuracy of the initial screening results are in question or do not clearly document the need for a referral.

### 26. Who can do follow-up after a screening?

- Follow-up must be done by someone who is not a special educator (it can be a psychologist, school counselor, regular education teacher).
- If at any point anyone suspects a child is a child with a disability, a referral must be made.

### 27. Why can't a Special Education Teacher be involved in rescreening a student?

**Resource: Guidance Related to OSEP's Letter to Couillard.** A copy of the letter is at: <http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/sped-incidental-benefit.pdf>

- Three considerations guide decision-making about special education teachers instructing students who have not been identified as having a disability and needing special education. These are due process, funding, and licensing.
- Due process: Students may not receive special education services unless the local educational agency (LEA) has gone through proper referral, evaluation, and placement procedures. Procedural safeguards including specific parental rights apply. Instruction by a special education teacher beyond the scope of incidental benefit is considered special education (see below).
- Funding: All staff who are required to be licensed must work within the scope of the position for which they are employed or contracted, and may only perform duties permitted by their funding source. Guidance within this document applies regardless of whether the teacher is funded through federal, state, or local sources.
- Licensing: All staff must be appropriately licensed under PI 34 and work within the parameters of their certifications and contracts. Special education teachers are licensed to provide special education or related services to eligible students with disabilities in accordance with their individualized education programs (IEPs).

### 28. If a parent completes an ASQ-3, can the district suggest the parent contact the SLP for follow up questions or concerns for speech?

- No. At this point due process rights have been violated. You cannot single a child out for follow-up/rescreening without a referral and written consent.

- A district can provide activities and suggestions for parent follow up for all children who participate in Child Find screening activities.

**29. Can a Special Educator ask a parent to bring the child back in after a screening?**

- No. This is considered rescreening by a special educator.

**30. Can a school district encourage a parent to return for another screening during the school year if they offer this to all children?**

- No. That could be misinterpreted as a rescreening. A school district should however continue to advertise upcoming Child Find screening and activities that are offered by the school district.

**31. A school district conducts child find screenings every two months and invites all the 3 year old children in the district to participate. Can a child attend every screening, since it's an open invitation to all children who are 3 years old?**

- Technically yes. Child Find screenings and activities provide information on typical development and parents may wish to access this free information on a regular basis.

**32. After screening a child, can a LEA rescreen a child to determine if a referral for evaluation should be made?**

- No. A LEA may not rescreen a child to determine if he/she should be referred for an evaluation. If, at any time during the screening process, LEA personnel believe the child may be a child with a disability, a referral for evaluation must be made.

**33. When an LEA suspects a disability do they need to make an immediate referral?**

- A person who is required to be licensed under s. [115.28 \(7\)](#), who is employed by a local educational agency and who reasonably believes a child has a disability, shall refer the child to the local educational agency.

## Consent

**34. When is consent needed?**

[Resource: Information Update Bulletin 10.01](#)

- Special education law requires a district to obtain “informed consent” from a parent before conducting an initial evaluation or a reevaluation of a child with a disability (34 CFR 300.300(a) and (c)). The law also requires “informed

consent” from a parent before initial provision of special education and related services to the child with a disability (34 CFR 300.300(c)).

- Consent is defined at 34 CFR 300.9 as follows:
  - (a)** The parent has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in his or her native language, or other mode of communication;
  - (b)** The parent understands and agrees in writing to the carrying out of the activity for which his or her consent is sought, and the consent describes that activity and lists the records (if any) that will be released and to whom; and
  - (c)(1)** The parent understands that the granting of consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at anytime.
  - (2)** If a parent revokes consent, that revocation is not retroactive (i.e., it does not negate an action that has occurred after the consent was given and before the consent was revoked).