

# Early Childhood Special Education

Educating Young Children (Ages 3-5 Years) With Disabilities

## Contact Information:

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## Early Childhood Special Education:

Each school district in Wisconsin is responsible for providing a continuum of Special Education and Related Services to children with disabilities and who need special education. Children are evaluated to determine if they meet the state's eligibility criteria. Special education and related services may provide consultation to staff, direct services to the child, training related to the disability, and other services that are identified in the child's Individualized Education Program.

### PI 11.35 Determination of Eligibility.

**(1)** . An evaluation conducted by an IEP team under s. 115.782, Stats., shall focus on the consideration of information and activities that assist the IEP team in determining how to teach the child in the way he or she is most capable of learning. Specifically, the IEP team shall meet the evaluation criteria specified under s. 115.782(2)(a), Stats., when conducting tests and using other evaluation materials in determining a child's disability.

**(2)** A child shall be identified as having a disability if the IEP team has determined from an evaluation conducted under s. 115.782, Stats., that the child has an impairment under s. PI 11.36 that adversely affects the child's educational performance, and the child, as a result thereof, needs special education and related services.

**(3)** As part of an evaluation or reevaluation under s. 115.782, Stats., conducted by the IEP team in determining whether a child is or continues to be a child with a disability, the IEP team shall identify all of the following:

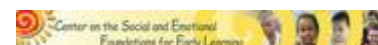
(a) The child's needs that cannot be met through the regular education program as structured at the time the evaluation was conducted.

(b) Modifications, if any, that can be made in the regular education program, such as adaptation of content, methodology or delivery of instruction to meet the child's needs identified under par. (a), that will allow the child to access the general education curriculum and meet the educational standards that apply to all children.

(c) Additions or modifications, if any, that the child needs which are not provided through the general education curriculum, including replacement content, expanded



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[Second Step](#)



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core curriculum or other supports.

**Least Restrictive Environment:** Throughout Wisconsin, options are expanding for young children with disabilities. Professionals working with 3 through 5 year old children with disabilities are finding innovative ways to provide an array of Special Education Services including services in the home, Head Start, Child Care, and other community setting. The goal is to provide integrated learning activities and environments for young children with disabilities and to provide these experiences in the least restrictive environment.

**Referrals can be initiated by:**

- Agencies
- Parents
- Birth to Three
- Other professionals

**How does one enroll?**

- Enrollment into any of the program options is done through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Teacher recommendation and parent involvement in the placement decision determines the appropriate option for each child.

**Goals of the program:**

- Provide an individualized curriculum in helping the child achieve the Wisconsin Early Learning Standards.
- Use the resources of various school and community agencies and professionals to serve the child's needs.
- Provide children the opportunities to learn skills in empathy, manage their emotions, and be part of a community classroom in which they agree to be respectful, listen, and be positive toward their peers.
- Provide children with daily learning opportunities for language and reasoning, problem solving, science, math, block play, dramatic play, art and music.
- Provide opportunities that can benefit ALL children within the community to better prepare them for kindergarten and their future by ensuring school readiness, allowing for social interaction, building comfort levels with routine and processes, and enabling children to engage with peers their own age.

**Who works with the children?**

- Highly qualified teachers who are DPI certified in early childhood and special education as well as related services professionals.

**What skills will children learn? (From the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards)**

- Physical Health and Physical Development
- Motor Development



[Western Regional CYSHCN Center For Children With Special Health Care Needs](#)



[River Source Family Center](#)



- Emotional Development
- Self-Concept
- Social Competence
- Language Development and Communication
- Listening and Understanding
- Speaking and Communicating
- Early Literacy
- Curiosity, Engagement and Persistence
- Creativity and Imagination
- Diversity in Learning
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Mathematical Thinking
- Scientific Thinking
- Exploration, Discovery and Problem Solving



[Autism Society of Wisconsin](#)