Early Childhood Special Education Bootcamp: An Overview of What you Need to Know

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Illinois State Board of Education

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Objectives

- Participants will understand the three early childhood indicators.
- Participants will identify resources to assist in success with indicators.
- Participants will identify professional development to improve data.



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State Report Card Data

- Go to the Illinois Report Card.
- Enter school district name.
- Select “Custom Report Card Builder.”
- Select “Deselect All.”
- Select “Students with Disabilities” from the Students dropdown.
- Select “Generate Report.”
- The last page of the report lists all State Performance Plan Indicators.

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Indicator 6

Preschool Least Restrictive Environment

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Preschool Least Restrictive Environment

- Percentage of children 3-5 enrolled in a preschool program attending:
  - A -- Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program.
  - B -- Separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility.
- IDEA states children should be educated with their peers to the maximum extent possible.

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Benefits of a High-Quality Inclusive Setting

- Research indicates that meaningful inclusion is beneficial to children with and without disabilities across a variety for developmental domains.
- Children with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities and the highest needs, can make significant developmental and learning progress in inclusive settings
- Children with disabilities in inclusive early childhood programs also demonstrate stronger social-emotional skills than their peers in separate settings.
- Meaningful inclusion in high-quality early childhood programs can support children with disabilities in reaching their full potential and result in broad societal benefits.



Equity • Quality • Collaboration • Community

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What is the Least Restrictive Environment in Early Childhood?

- IDEA presumes that the least restrictive environment (LRE) is where the child would be if he or she did not have a disability.
- LRE applies regardless of if a school district runs a regular early childhood program or not.
- Joint Policy Statement on Promoting Inclusion
- Dear Colleague Letter

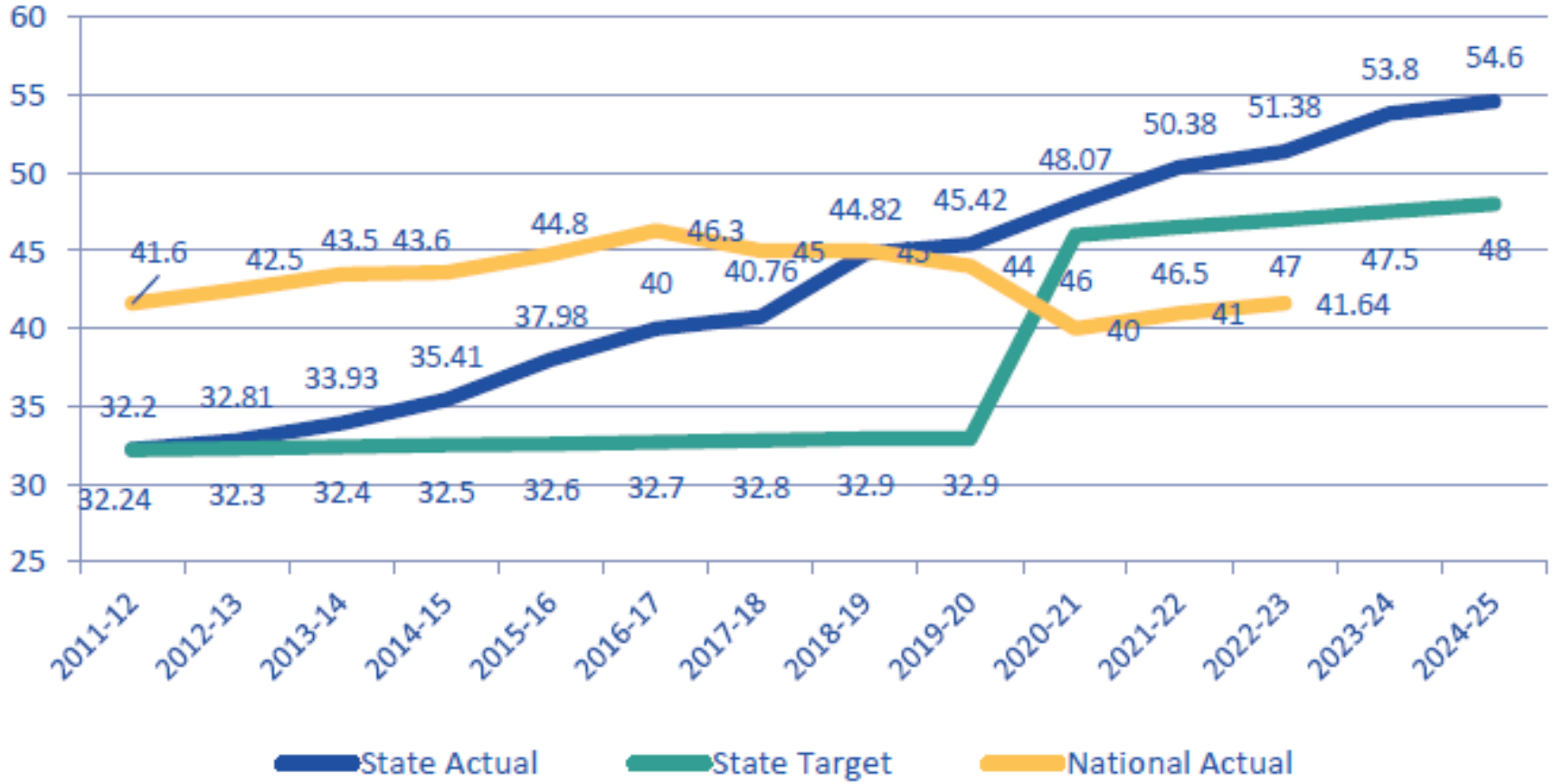
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Regular Early Childhood Program

- Program that includes a majority (at least 50 percent) of nondisabled children (children with no Individualized Education Program [IEP]).
  - Head Start.
  - Preschool classes, public or private.
  - Group child development center or child care.
- Where the child is enrolled when they are not at the school is important.

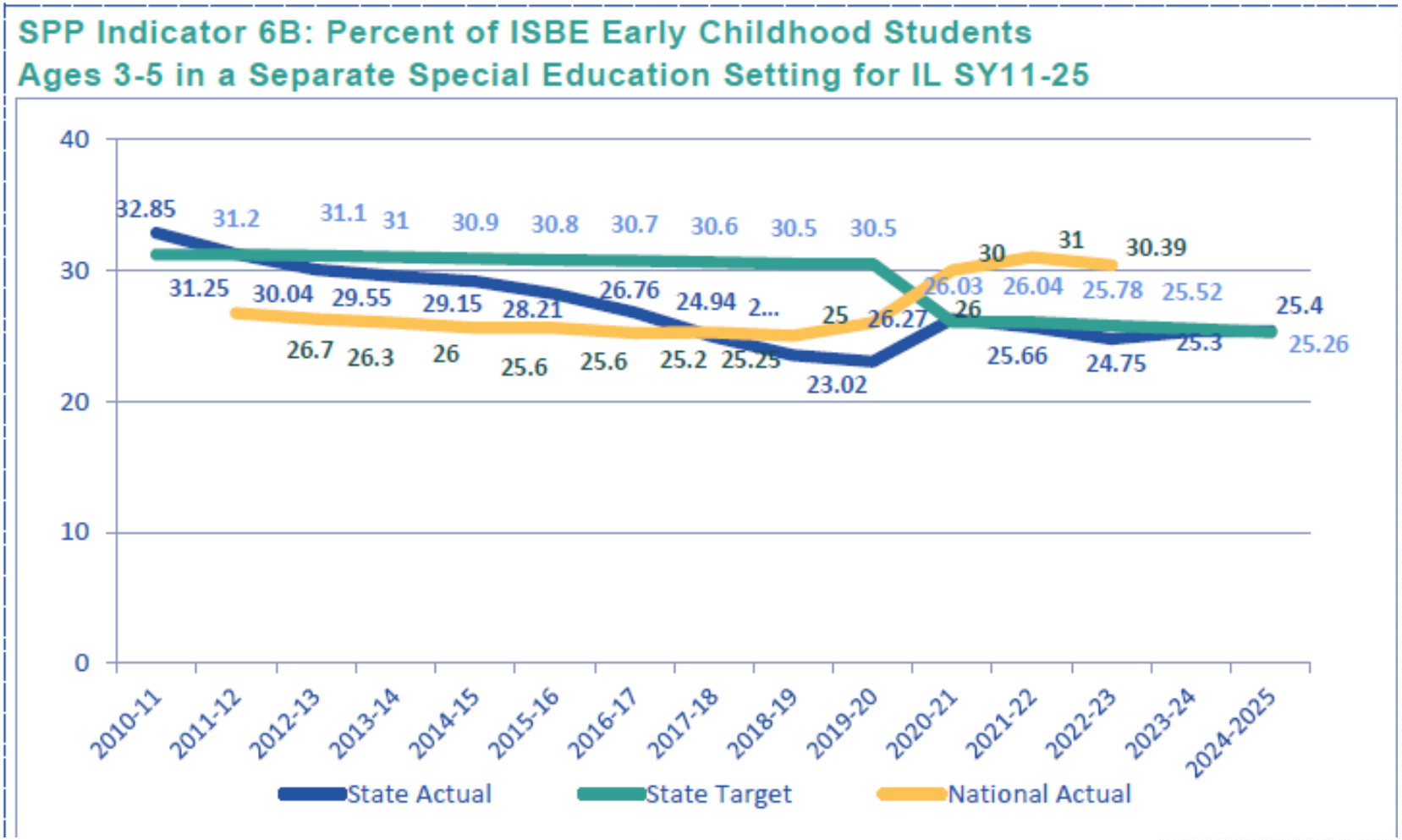
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SPP 6A: ISBE Early Childhood Students Ages 3-5* in Regular Early Childhood Programs and Receiving the Majority of Special Education Related Services in that Location



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SPP 6B: Percent of ISBE Early Childhood Students Ages 3-5* in a Separate Special Education Setting



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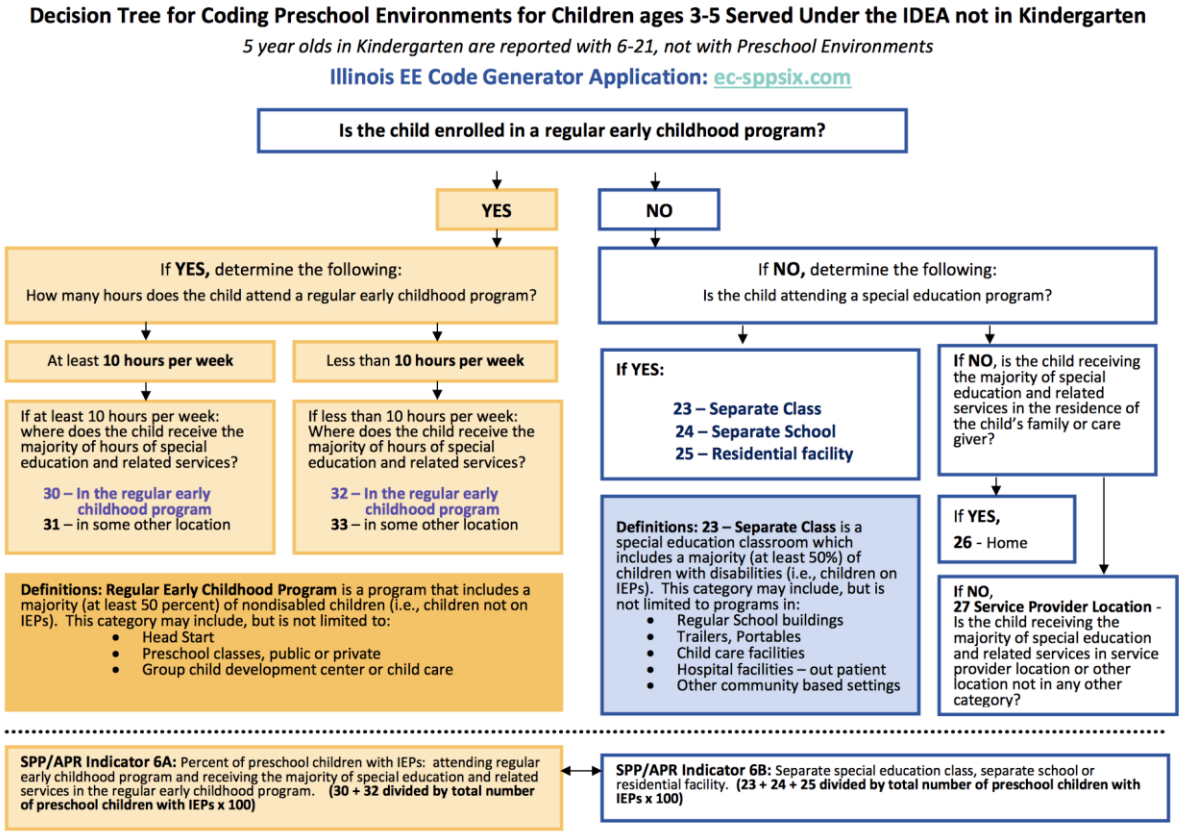
What Makes Inclusion Work?



- Administrative Support
- Family and Community Partnerships
- Collaboration and Training
- Professional Learning, Formal Time to Plan and Reflect
- Evidence-Based Practices
- Adaptations and Support Systems
- Vision and Attitude

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Decision Tree for Coding Preschool Environments



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Scenarios

- A child attends a special education classroom in the morning at the school and goes to a group child care center in the afternoon.
- A child is in a Preschool for All (PFA) classroom and attends speech in the speech classroom 30 minutes per week.
- A child is enrolled in a district-funded preschool classroom and receives 100% of the IEP minutes within that classroom.

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Educational Environment Coding Resources

- The Early CHOICES module is designed for administrators and educators to learn about Preschool Environment Codes for children ages 3-5.
  - This Early CHOICES webpage generates Preschool Environment Codes for districts in Illinois. The App is now available, too!
- Use this decision tree to determine the correct code for preschool children ages 3-5 under the IDEA not in Kindergarten. Located on the ISBE Early Childhood Special Education Inclusion/LRE webpage.
- Answers to the most commonly asked questions about coding are available on the ISBE Early Childhood Special Education Inclusion/LRE webpage.

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Inclusion Resources

- Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion – Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
- Inclusive Classroom Profile – Early CHOICES has a Live Binder with a self-reflection tool and resources for each practice
- Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices Performance Checklists and Practice Guides
- Preschool Inclusion Toolbox

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Indicator 7

Early Childhood Outcomes

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Early Childhood Outcomes

Early childhood outcomes are used to help measure the impact early childhood intervention has on a child's ability to have:

- Positive social relationships.
- Acquire and use knowledge and skills.
- Take appropriate action to meet their needs.



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Summary Statements

- Percentage of children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in each outcome who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program, and
- Percentage of children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

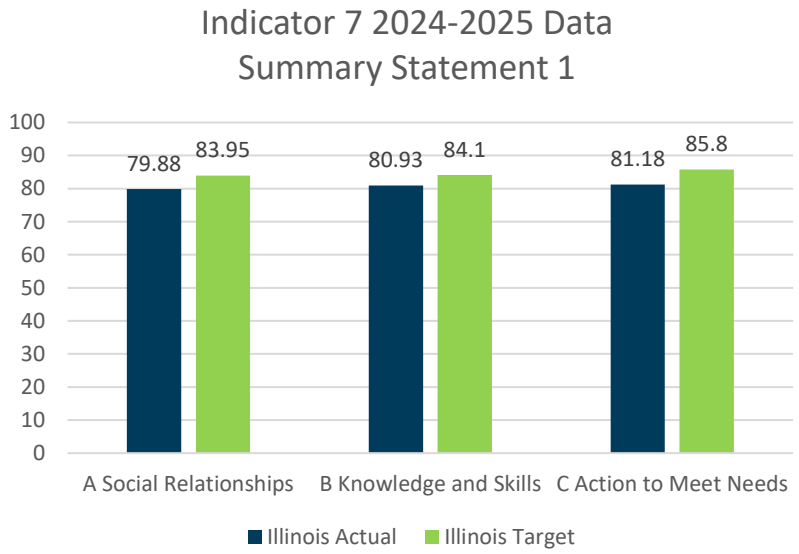
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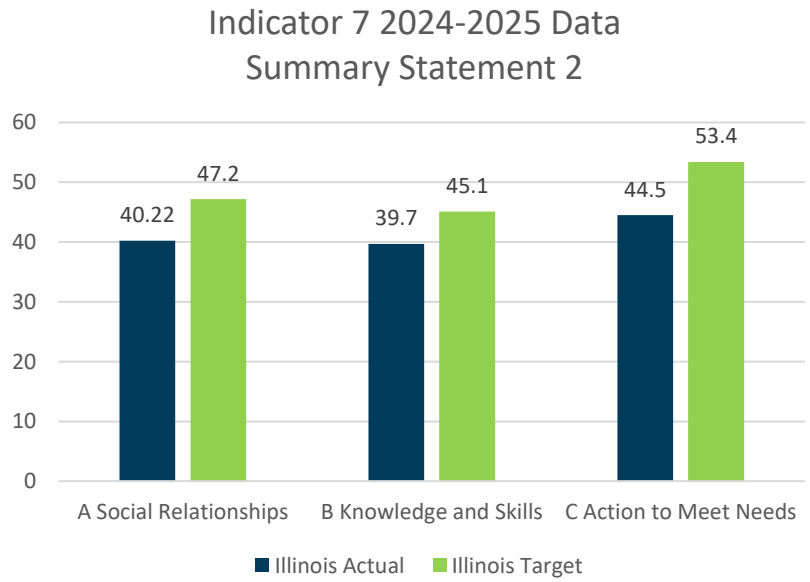
Why Outcomes?

- Achieving each of the three child outcomes is key to supporting the ultimate goal of active and successful participation of children with disabilities.
- High-quality services allow children with disabilities to move closer to age-expected functioning than they would have been able to without those services.
- Evidence for the effectiveness of early intervention and early childhood special education at national, state, and local levels.

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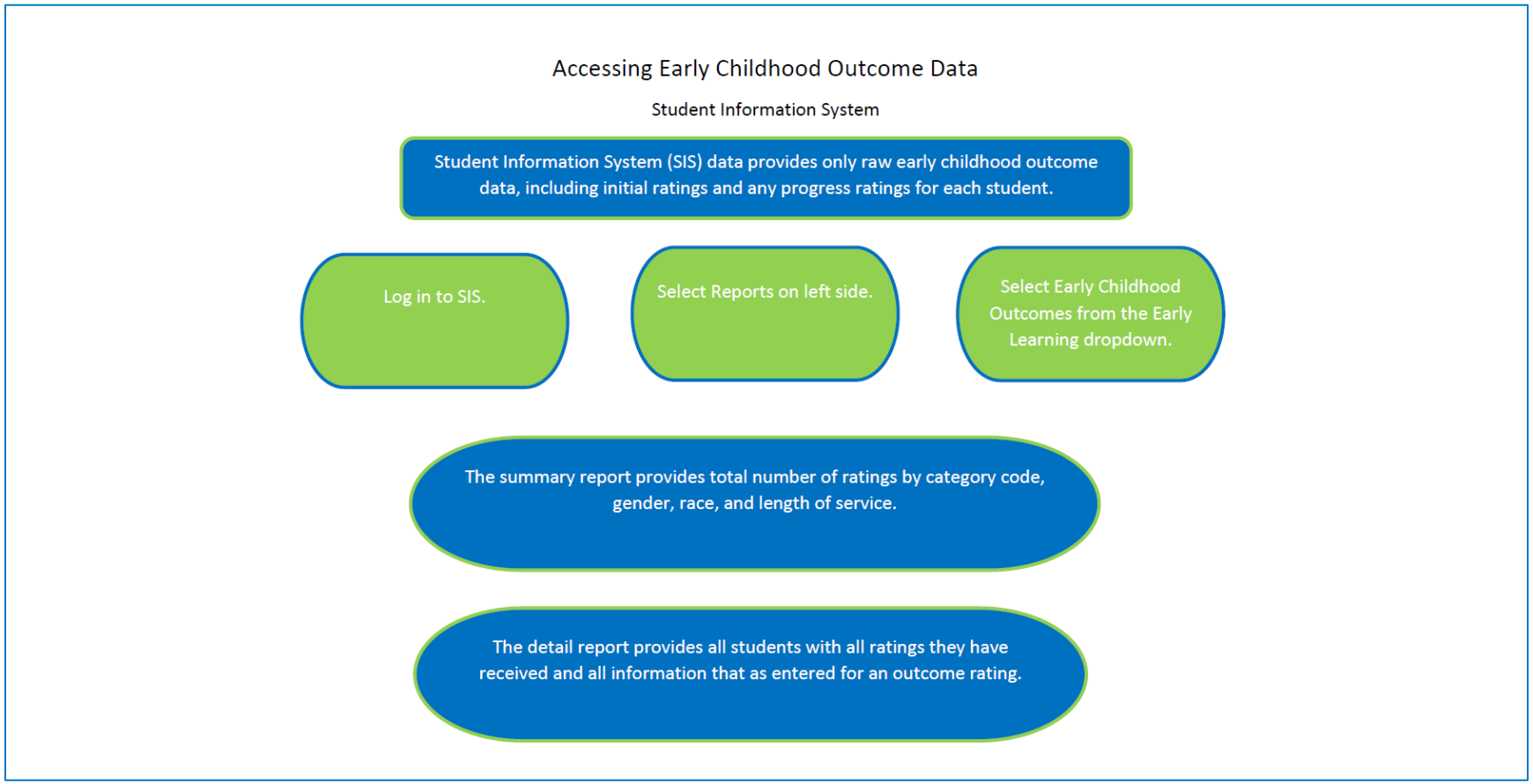
Indicator 7: Illinois Data





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Accessing Early Childhood Outcome Data



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Who is included in ECO?

- EVERY child who receives early childhood special education services with an IEP, including speech only.

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When are Ratings Completed?

- Entry ratings within 45 days of enrolling in the program.
- Progress ratings annually between February 1 and July 31.
- Within six months of exit.

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The Question at Entry

- For each of the three outcome areas: To what extent does this child show age-appropriate functioning -- across a variety of settings and situations -- on this outcome?

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The Questions at Progress Ratings

- In each of the three outcome areas: To what extend does this child show age-appropriate functioning -- across a variety of settings and situations -- for this outcome?
- Has the child shown ANY new skills or behaviors related to this outcome since the last outcome rating?

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Primary Assessments

- Assessment and Evaluation Programming System (AEPS)
- High Scope Child Observation Record
- The Work Sampling System
- Teaching Strategies GOLD
- Early Learning Scales (ELS)
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (Speech Only)
- Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)/Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS)

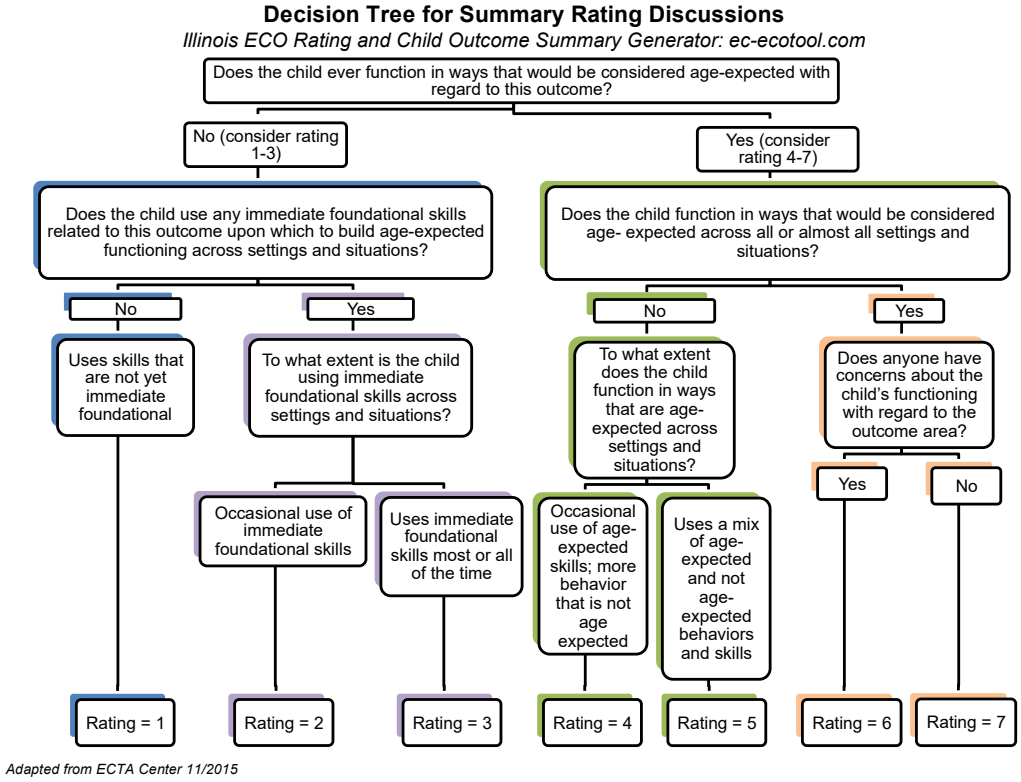
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Using Data for Program Improvement

- Does your program serve some children more effectively than others?
- Does your program serve children in families with specific characteristics more effectively than others?
- Do child outcomes differ across local programs?
- Do child outcomes differ across programs with specific intervention approaches or service features?
- Do child outcomes differ across settings?
- Are trends over time showing gradual increases in rate of child progress and levels of achievement?

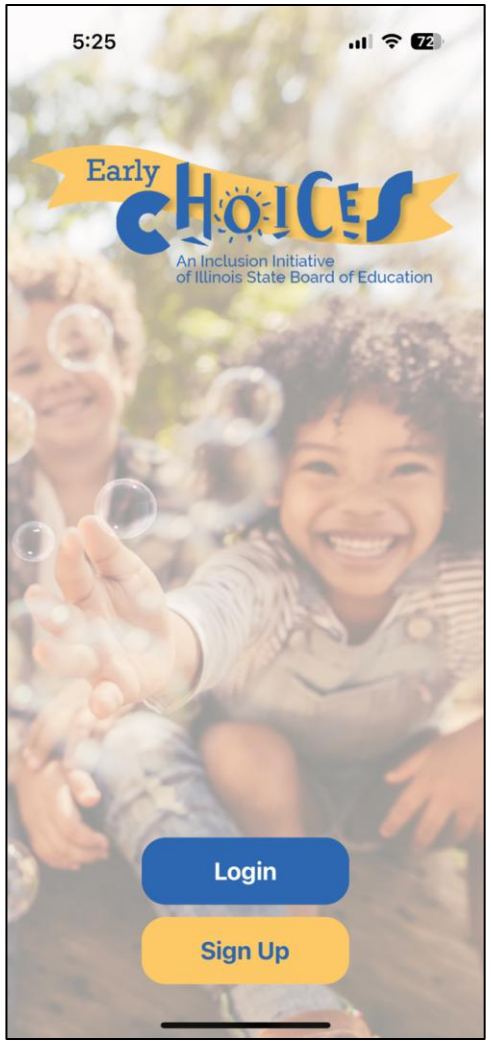
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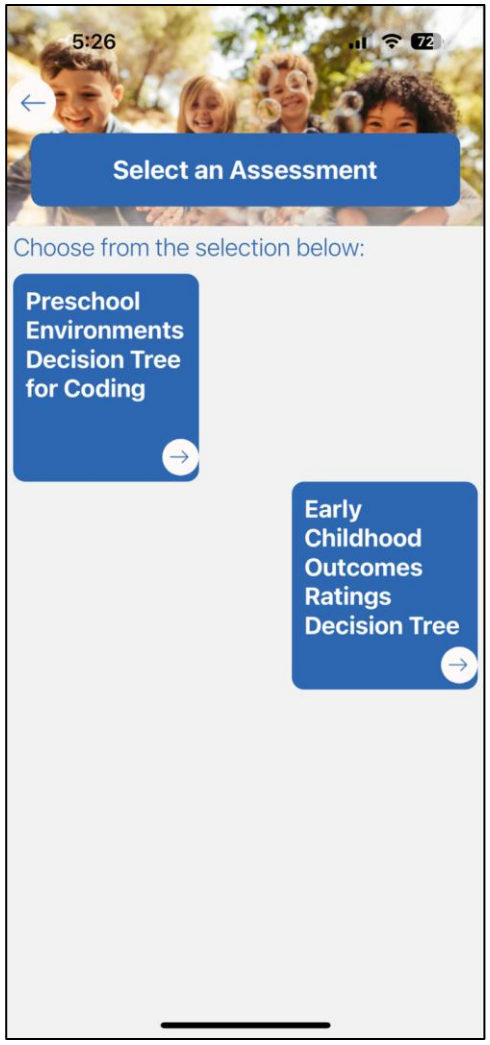
Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions



Adapted from ECTA Center 11/2015

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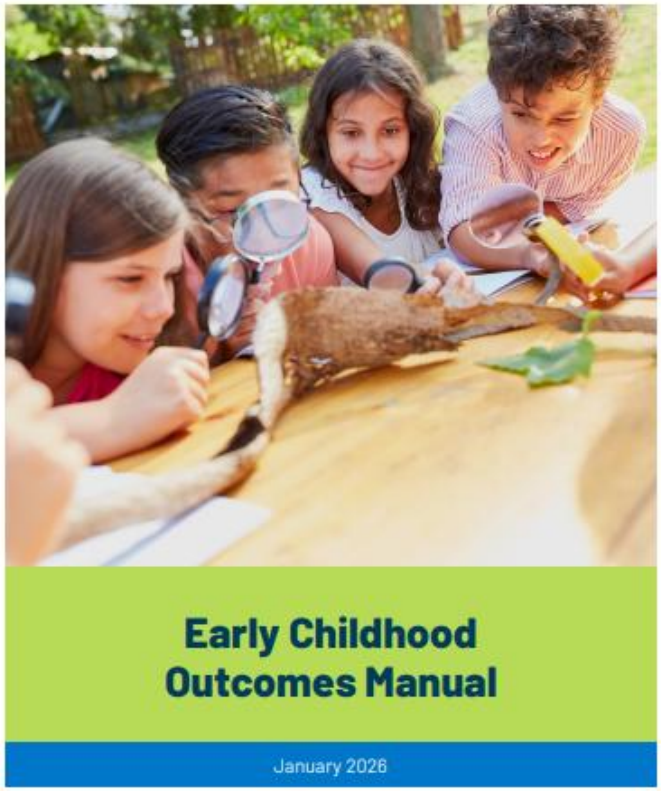


There's an App to support you!

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New Early Childhood Outcomes Manual

- Link to the new Early Childhood Outcomes Manual

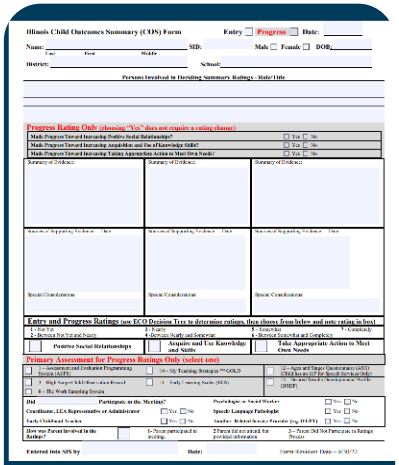


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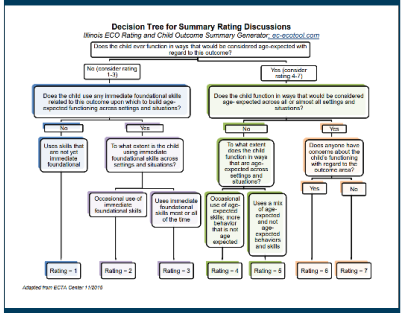
Outcomes Resources

Modules created by Early CHOICES provide an overview of outcomes and how to capture them, and how to use tools in the decision-making process.

Answers to the most commonly received questions about Early Childhood Outcomes are available on the ISBE Early Childhood Outcomes resource webpage


Illinois Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Form

Use this form to provide all of the information that must be submitted each year to ISBE. Located on the ISBE Early Childhood Outcomes resource webpage.



The decision tree helps the team determine what rating is appropriate for the student in each area. Located on the ISBE Early Childhood Outcomes resource webpage. Early CHOICES also has an app available.

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Indicator 12

Early Intervention to Early Childhood Special Education Transition

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Transition from EI to ECSE

- Percentage of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday.

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Extended Early Intervention

- Illinois Early Intervention Extended Services (EI/ES) offers parents of eligible children the choice to continue Early Intervention (EI) services beyond their child's third birthday until the start of the school year following their third birthday.
  - Must be currently enrolled in Early Intervention.
  - Birthday between May 1 and August 31.
  - Found eligible for early childhood special education under IDEA and Section 14-8.02 of Public Act 102-0209 (Section 11h) and have created an Individualized Education Program.
- Have the option to continue with their EI services until the beginning of the next school year following their third birthday OR exit Early Intervention and begin early childhood special education services through their local school district as of the IEP implementation date.
- The Early Intervention Training Program developed an interactive tool to help determine if a child is eligible for Extended Services in Illinois.
- Students potentially eligible for EI/ES are noted on the transition system.

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Summer Birthdays

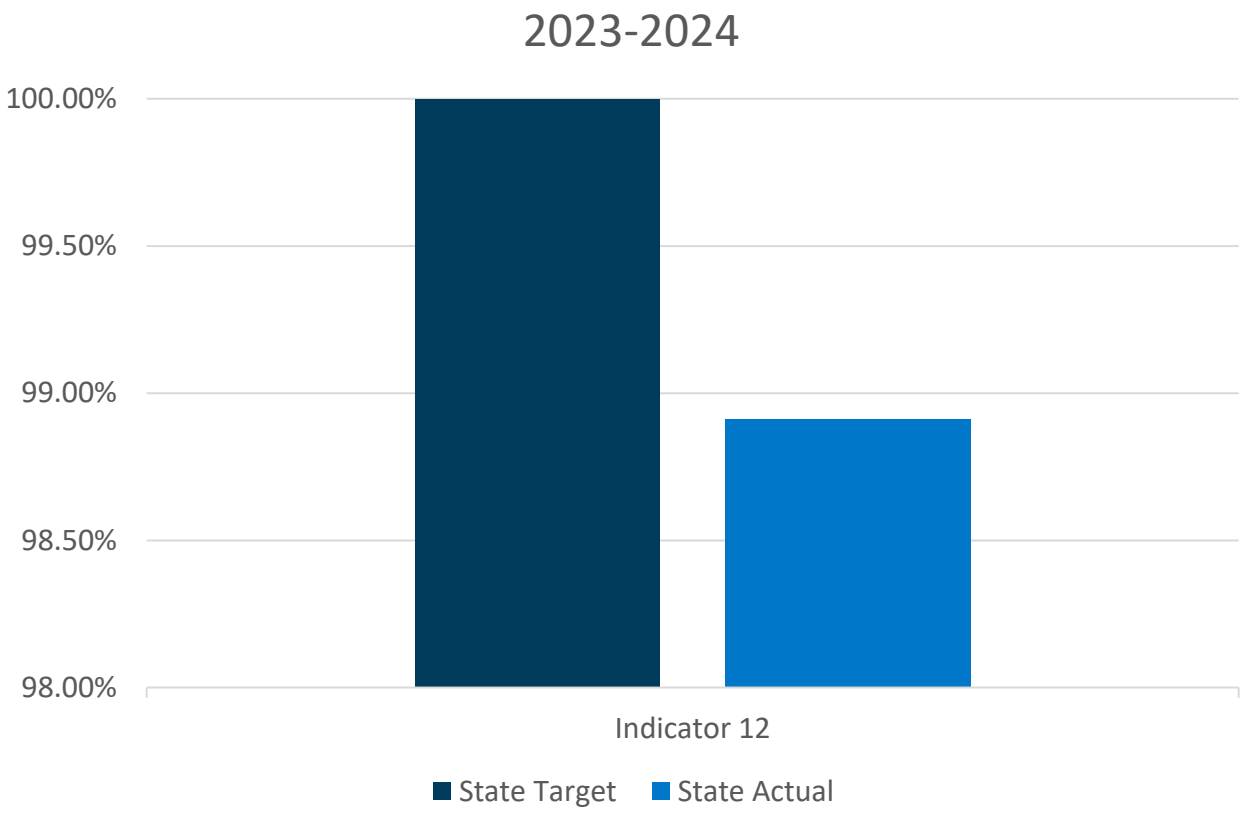
- The requirement is still in place.
- Make plans to evaluate the child before the school year ends.
- Make plans for an evaluation team over the summer.

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State Target for Indicator 12



Illinois Indicator 12 Data



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Early Childhood Transition System

- Information Provided
  - EI Number
  - CFC ID
  - Child Name
  - Date of Birth
  - Parent/Guardian Name
  - Address
  - Phone
- Updated monthly

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1. What if …

- The child is on transition list, but the CFC does not contact the district about a transition planning conference or send a referral packet?
  - Verify data with CFC.
  - Contact the family regarding programs and services.
  - Document parental contacts.

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2. What if ...

- The child isn't in the transition system?
  - Search for the student in the "Student Not Assigned to a District" category.
    - Must enter first name, last name, and date of birth.
    - Select “District Responsible for Student.”

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3. What if ...

- The child doesn't qualify or enroll in an early childhood program so there is no SIS number?
  - Create an evaluation only record.
    - Select "Request SID number."
    - Enter requested information.
    - Select "Evaluation Only" for grade level.
    - List start date as first day of the school year.

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4. What if ...

- Our program is full?
  - State and federal regulations require school districts to serve children who are transitioning from early intervention and who are eligible for ECSE on or before their third birthdays.
  - The LEA must provide services and the placement option listed in the IEP.

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Transition Planning Conference

- Early Intervention responsible for setting up and facilitating.
- Attended by parent, service coordinator, representative of district.
- Required that an LEA participate.
- Must be completed by 2 years, 9 months.
- Describe school district evaluation and IEP process.
- Discuss potential education program and services.

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Evaluation Process

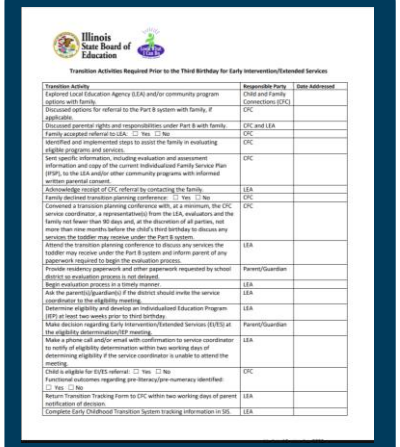
- Screenings are not required.
- The team could decide to use Early Intervention reports and not conduct separate evaluations to determine eligibility.

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Transition Resources

Each STAR NET region hosts a training at least once a year on the transition process. It partners with Early Intervention.

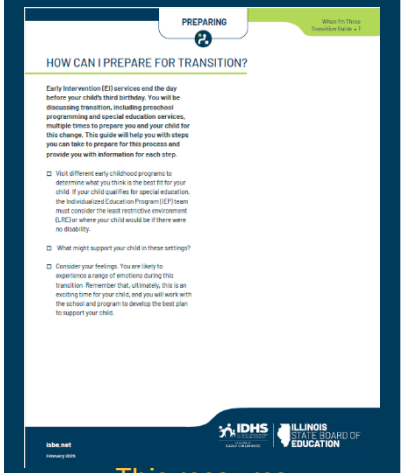
Answers to the most commonly received questions about early childhood transition are available on the ISBE Early Childhood Transition resource webpage.


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Transition Activities Required Prior to the Third Birthday for Early Intervention/Extended Services

Transition Activity	Responsible Party	Date Addressed
Explored Local Education Agency (LEA) and/or community program options with family.	Child and Family Connections (CFC)	
Discussed options for referral to the Part B system with family, if applicable.	CFC	
Discussed parental rights and responsibilities under Part B with family.	CFC and LEA	
Family accepted referral to LEA. ☐ Yes ☐ No	CFC	
Identified and implemented steps to assist the family in evaluating eligible programs and services.	CFC	
Sent specific information, including evaluation and assessment information and copy of the current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), to the LEA and/or other community programs with informed written parental consent.	CFC	
Acknowledge receipt of CFC referral by contacting the family.	LEA	
Family declined transition planning conference: ☐ Yes ☐ No	CFC	
Convened a transition planning conference with, at a minimum, the CFC service coordinator, a representative(s) from the LEA, evaluators and the family not fewer than 90 days and, at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months before the child's third birthday to discuss any services the toddler may receive under the Part B system.	CFC	
Attend the transition planning conference to discuss any services the toddler may receive under the Part B system and inform parent of any paperwork required to begin the evaluation process.	LEA	
Provide residency paperwork and other paperwork requested by school district so evaluation process is not delayed.	Parent/Guardian	
Begin evaluation process in a timely manner.	LEA	
Ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) if the district should invite the service coordinator to the eligibility meeting.	LEA	
Determine eligibility and develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) at least two weeks prior to third birthday.	LEA	
Make decision regarding Early Intervention/Extended Services (EI/ES) at the eligibility determination/IEP meeting.	Parent/Guardian	
Make a phone call and/or email with confirmation to service coordinator to notify of eligibility determination within two working days of determining eligibility if the service coordinator is unable to attend the meeting.	LEA	
Child is eligible for EI/ES referral: ☐ Yes ☐ No Functional outcomes regarding pre-literacy/pre-numeracy identified: ☐ Yes ☐ No	CFC	
Return Transition Tracking Form to CFC within two working days of parent notification of decision.	LEA	
Complete Early Childhood Transition System tracking information in SIS.	LEA	

Find information about EI/ES requirements on the Early Childhood Transition resource webpage.


PREPARING

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR TRANSITION?

Early Intervention (EI) services end the day before your child's third birthday. You will be discussing transition, including preschool programming and special education services, multiple times to prepare you and your child for this change. This guide will help you with steps you can take to prepare for this process and provide you with information for each step.

- Visit different early childhood programs to determine what you think is the best fit for your child. If your child qualifies for special education, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must consider the least restrictive environment (LRE) or where your child would be if there were no disability.
- What might support your child in these settings?
- Consider your feelings. You are likely to experience a range of emotions during this transition. Remember that, ultimately, this is an exciting time for your child, and you will work with the school and program to develop the best plan to support your child.

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This resource explains the transition process for parents and provides a guide for what to expect. Families receive this resource from the EI service coordinator.

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Professional Development

- STAR NET Technical Assistance Webpage
- Early CHOICES Technical Assistance Webpage

Resources

- Illinois State Board of Education Website
- Child Find Resources (IDHS)Early CHOICES

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Questions?

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