



Department of  
Education

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza



NEW YORK CITY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION (DOE)  
GUIDE TO THE

# Early Intervention - to - Preschool Transition



# Welcome!

Dear Families,

At the New York City Department of Education (DOE), we are working to ensure that our youngest learners with disabilities have access to the services they need, particularly during transition points. We are partnering with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to improve the transition from Early Intervention (EI) to preschool, and have created this Guide with the goal of empowering you with more information about preschool options for your child. We hope that this information is helpful as you make decisions for your child.

We know just how challenging transitions can be for families of children with disabilities. In addition, the transition from EI to preschool is a crucial time when families need clear information and support. As you know, for children with developmental delays and disabilities between the ages of zero and three, services are provided by DOHMH through the Early Intervention Program (EIP). At the age of three, families have the option to join the DOE by submitting a referral to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). Families can also apply for early childhood programs such as 3-K for All and EarlyLearn NYC.

We encourage you to become familiar with the information in this Guide and to discuss it with your child's EI service coordinator, service providers, and teachers. Thank you for your continued commitment to your young child's success and growth.

Sincerely,



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# DOE Guide to the Early Intervention-to-Preschool Transition

The infant, toddler, and early childhood years are a time of incredible development and growth. During this time, many children benefit from additional supports to help them learn and thrive. In New York City, children with developmental delays and disabilities under three may receive these supports through Early Intervention (EI), run by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). For children age three and older with an educational disability, which is a delay or disability that affects learning, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) has a variety of special education programs and services.

When transitioning out of EI, families may refer their child to the DOE's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) if they believe their child may need services after EI. All children turning three may also be eligible for free or reduced cost early childhood education programs such as 3-K and EarlyLearn NYC.

This guide provides information that can help you understand your options as you prepare to transition from EI to preschool. It includes information about DOE early childhood education programs and about the transition process to preschool special education.

## Roadmap to this Guide:

<b>I. Early Childhood Care &amp; Education Options</b>	Information about early childhood options available to all children, regardless of disability . . . . . <b>page 5</b>
<b>II. Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education</b>	Important steps in the transition from Early Intervention to preschool special education and special education programs and services available to children with disabilities . . . . . <b>page 7</b>
<b>III. Differences between Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education</b>	Description of the changes families may experience during the transition from Early Intervention to preschool special education . . . . . <b>page 13</b>
<b>IV. Resources</b>	List of resources and contact information to various organizations that can provide support during the Early Intervention transition. . . . . <b>page 15</b>



# I. Early Childhood Care & Education Options

The City offers several early childhood care and education options for families of three- and four-year-olds, both with and without developmental delays and disabilities.

In order for your child to attend one of these programs, you will need to apply through the 3-K or Pre-K for All applications, or if eligible, directly with the EarlyLearn NYC provider. The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) does not arrange for placement in early childhood *general education programs*, such as 3-K, pre-K, or EarlyLearn NYC. If found eligible for preschool special education services, your child may be able receive preschool special education services in these programs. **To learn more about making a referral to the CPSE for preschool special education programs and services, go to section II on page 7, Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education.**

## 3-K for All

3-K for All programs offer **free**, full-day, high-quality education to three-year-old children in New York City. 3-K programs are available in a growing number of communities. To find out if your school district has 3-K for All, visit [nyc.gov/3k](http://nyc.gov/3k). Applications are typically open in the Spring, for attendance in the Fall.

## Pre-K for All

Pre-K for All programs offer **free**, full-day, high-quality education to four-year-old children in New York City. For information on Pre-K for All, visit [nyc.gov/prek](http://nyc.gov/prek). Applications are typically open in the Spring, for attendance in the Fall.

### 3-K and Pre-K for All are offered in the following settings:

- *District Schools*. Some public elementary schools offer 3-K and pre-K programs. The school's principal oversees these programs.
- *Pre-K Centers*. Pre-K Centers are run by DOE staff but only serve grades before kindergarten.
- *NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEECs)*. Some community-based organizations provide 3-K and pre-K, and are supported by the DOE.



## EarlyLearn NYC

EarlyLearn NYC provides **free or low-cost** child care and education for children from six weeks to four-years-old. EarlyLearn programs have income or other eligibility requirements. If you qualify, your child can begin a program any time during the year, as applications are open year-round.

### EarlyLearn NYC is offered in the following settings:

- *Child Care (Children 6 weeks–4 years)*. EarlyLearn NYC Child Care programs provide early care and education services for up to 10 hours a day. These programs are available in two settings:
  - Center-based care for children ages six weeks to four years old.
  - Home-based care for children ages six weeks to three years old through family child care networks.
- *Head Start (Children 3–4 years)*. EarlyLearn NYC Head Start programs provide free early care and education that supports the whole family. Head Start programs provide services for at least eight hours a day. Head Start programs are available in centers for children ages three-to four-years-old. There are also limited spaces available in Early Head Start programs, which serve pregnant mothers, infants, and toddlers. The best way to find out if your family is eligible for Head Start is to contact a program directly. You are automatically eligible if one or more of these categories applies to you:
  - You receive HRA Cash Assistance
  - You live in temporary housing
  - You receive SSI (Supplemental Security Insurance)
  - You are enrolling a child who is in foster care
  - Your income falls below a certain amount

- For more information on available general education programs, and to find contact information, you can visit [MySchools.nyc](https://www.schools.nyc.gov).
- You can also learn more by calling the DOE Outreach team at **212-637-8000**.
- If you have questions or need support transitioning from EI to preschool, you can contact [eitopreschool@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:eitopreschool@schools.nyc.gov).
- For general enrollment support, you can visit a Family Welcome Center (locations available at: [schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers](https://schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers)).

## II. Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education

As your child moves from Early Intervention (EI), it is important to know the following information to ensure a smooth transition.

### Transition Meeting

You will begin talking to your Early Intervention (EI) Service Coordinator about your child's transition at the **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)** closest to your child's second birthday. At the meeting, you, your Early Intervention Official Designee, and your Early Intervention Service Coordinator come up with a Transition Plan together for your child. Additionally, you are entitled to have a **Transition Conference**, which can be arranged by your Early Intervention Service Coordinator who would invite a DOE Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) representative. The purpose of this meeting is to learn more about the preschool special education process.

If you decide you would like your child to be evaluated for preschool special education services, you must submit a letter to your child's CPSE. This letter is called an **"initial referral."** Your EI Service Coordinator can help you write the letter or you can reach out to the CPSE for help in making a referral.



# Preschool Special Education Process

The preschool special education process summarized below is described in detail in the [NYCDOE Family Guide to Preschool Special Education Services](https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/moving-to-preschool) (available at: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/moving-to-preschool>).



**1 Notification.** Your Early Intervention (EI) Service Coordinator will talk with you about notifying the CPSE that your child may continue to need services after leaving EI. **Sending notification to the CPSE does not mean that you are referring your child to the CPSE.** If you decide not to notify the CPSE, you can still decide to refer your child to the CPSE later.

If you consent to notification, your EI Service Coordinator will send the **Notification of Potential Eligibility** form to the CPSE between 120 and 90 days before your child is eligible for referral. If you decide that you do not want the CPSE to be notified, you can check the opt-out option on the notification form.

**2 Referral.** If you think that your child may be eligible for preschool special education services, submit a **referral letter** to the CPSE as early as 120 days before your child first becomes eligible for preschool special education services (see eligibility timeframes below); **and** no later than 90 days before your child’s third birthday.

Birth Date	Earliest Eligibility for CPSE
Turn three between January 1 and June 30	January 2 of the year they turn three
Turn three between July 1 and December 31	July 1 of the year they turn three

Your child’s EI service plan and evaluations may be very helpful as the CPSE is planning for your child’s preschool evaluation. If you consent, your EI Service Coordinator will provide them to the CPSE.

If you do not refer your child to the CPSE, or if your child is not found eligible for CPSE, your child must leave EI on the day before their third birthday.

**For children in foster care,** the referral should be made by the birth or adoptive parent, unless the parents’ rights have been terminated, surrendered or limited; the parents have designated someone else as a “person in parental relation” for education purposes; or the parents’ whereabouts are unknown. If the birth or adoptive parents’ whereabouts are unknown, the DOE may appoint a surrogate parent (typically the foster parent) to make special education decisions for the child, when necessary. The foster care agency can also make a *request for referral*. When the request for a referral is made, the CPSE will review the request and accept or decline the referral.



**3 Evaluation.** After receiving your referral, the CPSE will send you a list of evaluation sites and other important information in the mail. You should review the list of evaluation sites to choose and **schedule an appointment for an evaluation as soon as possible**. Some children require a bilingual evaluation, which is conducted in both English and the child’s home or native language. To help determine if your child needs a bilingual evaluation, a home language survey will be conducted to determine the language of assessment. If you would like help with choosing or contacting an evaluation site, contact your CPSE.

**4 CPSE Meeting.** After the evaluation results are complete, the CPSE will schedule a meeting with you. It is very important that you attend CPSE meetings so you can work together with the CPSE to make decisions about your child. At the meeting, the team will review the evaluation results, share and learn more about your child, and determine if your child is eligible for preschool special education services.

To be found eligible, the CPSE must determine that your child is a “**preschool student with a disability**.” This determination is based on evaluations showing that your child has a significant delay in development or an educational disability, which is a delay or disability that affects learning.

If your child is found eligible, the CPSE will work with you to develop an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. An IEP is a plan that discusses your child’s abilities and outlines the services that the New York City Department of Education (DOE) will provide free of charge to meet your child’s educational needs.

The IEP will recommend an education program that is appropriate to meet your child’s needs in the **least restrictive environment (LRE)**. Less restrictive environments allow children to receive services alongside general education students without IEPs to the greatest extent appropriate.

If the CPSE holds a meeting before your child’s third birthday and finds your child eligible for services, you can choose either: (a) to end EI services and begin preschool special education services as soon as your child is eligible for preschool special education services; or (b) to extend your child’s EI services depending on your child’s birth date.

Birth Date	Last Date for Extended EI Services
Turn three between Jan 1 and Aug 31	Aug 31 of the year they turn three
Turn three between Sept 1 and Dec 31	Dec 31 of the year they turn three

**5 Services.** The CPSE Administrator will arrange for the programs, services, and supports recommended on your child’s IEP. **See the next section on page 10 for more information about preschool special education programs and services.**

## Programs and Services Available to Preschool Students with IEPs

There is a range of programs and services available to support preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Preschool special education services fall along a continuum from less restrictive to more restrictive.

Less restrictive environments allow children to receive services alongside general education students without IEPs. More restrictive programs and services are available to children who require more specialized supports and services, in classrooms that only serve students with IEPs.

The most common programs and services are outlined below. For more detailed descriptions and for other programs and services, please see the [NYCDOE Family Guide to Preschool Special Education Services](https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/moving-to-preschool) (available at: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/preschool-to-age-21/moving-to-preschool>), starting on page 21.

Programs and Services	Description
Related Services*	Related services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy and others.
Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT)*	A SEIT is a special education teacher who works closely with a student on academic, emotional, and social skills. This service can be delivered in small groups or one-on-one at your child’s early childhood program, at another child care location identified by you, or at your family’s home in certain situations.
Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS)	This is a classroom in which students with and without IEPs are educated together.
Special Class	This is a classroom that only serves students with IEPs whose needs cannot be met within the general education setting or SCIS classroom.

**\*Note:** Your child can also receive related services and/or SEIT at a private preschool or other non-public child care setting where you enroll and pay tuition for your child, or at home in some circumstances.

## Arranging Programs & Services

After your child’s IEP is developed, the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will ask you, the parent, for written permission to start services. This is called “**informed consent**” for services. After receiving your written consent, the CPSE will arrange for services to be provided. The CPSE is responsible for arranging all programs and services recommended on your child’s IEP. If you do not respond to the request for consent or if you deny consent, the CPSE will not arrange for services to be provided, and no further action will be taken.

If your child’s IEP recommends

SEIT and/or Related Services Only	A “Special Class in an Integrated Setting” or a “Special Class”
<p>These services can be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>At all preschool or child care settings (public and private), or</b></li> <li>■ <b>At home under certain circumstances.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>The CPSE does not arrange for placement in early childhood <b>general education</b> programs. If you are interested in applying to DOE early childhood programs, see the previous section on pages 2–3. If your child attends one of these programs, your child’s related services and/or SEIT will be provided at the program.</i></p>	<p><b>The CPSE will arrange for an appropriate placement in a preschool special education program.</b> These classes are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>At community-based special education programs, and</b></li> <li>■ <b>At some Pre-K Centers and district schools.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>All of your child’s IEP-recommended services will be provided at the preschool special education program.</i></p>





## Support Available in 3-K for All, Pre-K for All, or EarlyLearn NYC

If you choose not to make a referral to Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), or if you make a referral to the CPSE and your child is found not to be eligible for preschool special education, your child can still access supports in general education.

Early childhood education settings such as 3-K, Pre-K for All, or EarlyLearn NYC offer a variety of supports. These programs have early childhood teachers that focus on developing children's motor, language and literacy, and social-emotional skills. In a typical day, children will learn through large and small group activities, choice time, and play. Teachers adjust these learning experiences throughout the day, observing their children's development over time. Programs also have access to resources such as early childhood Social Workers and Instructional Coordinators, who are available to assist programs with family engagement, social-emotional learning, and instruction.

- For more information on available general education programs, and to find contact information, you can visit [MySchools.nyc](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov).
- You can also learn more by calling the DOE Outreach team at **212-637-8000**.
- If you have questions or need support transitioning from EI to preschool, you can contact [eitopreschool@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:eitopreschool@schools.nyc.gov).
- For general enrollment support, you can visit a Family Welcome Center (locations available at: [schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers](https://schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers))

### III. Differences between Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education

Moving from Early Intervention (EI) to preschool special education may require an adjustment for you and your child. Preschool special education programs and services are different from EI services.

One major change is that your family will no longer have an Early Intervention Service Coordinator. Instead, you will work with a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) Administrator to develop your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and the CPSE Administrator will be the primary point of contact through the CPSE process.

Additionally, your child may no longer receive their services in the same location as they did while in EI. Preschool special education services are most commonly provided in early childhood programs. Children with more significant needs may need a preschool special education class.



You can read a summary of the differences in the following table:

	New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Early Intervention Programs & Services	New York City Department of Education (DOE) Preschool Special Education Programs & Services
<b>Age of children served</b>	Children ages <b>birth to 3</b> with disabilities or delays in development.	Children ages <b>3 to 5</b> with disabilities or delays in development that affect learning.
<b>Location of services</b>	Services are most commonly provided in the <b>natural environment</b> , which can be at home or at your child’s early childhood program.	Services are most commonly <b>center-based</b> , and may be provided at a childcare or preschool program, or at home in certain circumstances. Children with more significant needs may be recommended to be in a preschool special education class.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Eligibility for EI is determined by an evaluation. EI evaluations are focused on <b>child’s development</b> .  An Early Intervention Service Coordinator may help your family schedule the evaluation, if needed.	Eligibility for preschool special education is determined by an evaluation. Preschool evaluations are focused on <b>child’s learning and development</b> .  Parents must select an approved evaluation site from the list provided in the initial referral packet. Parents must schedule the evaluation with the evaluation site. Upon request, the CPSE will help the family contact evaluation sites.
<b>Service plans</b>	If found eligible, an <b>Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)</b> is developed for a child that states the services they will receive. This happens at a meeting led by the Early Intervention Official Designee.	If found eligible, an <b>Individualized Education Program (IEP)</b> is developed at a CPSE meeting, led by the CPSE Administrator. The IEP is the plan that discusses the child’s abilities and outlines the services that will be provided to meet the child’s education needs.
<b>Classification of eligible children</b>	Children are classified as <b>eligible for Early Intervention services</b> . This means they have a medical diagnosis or developmental delay.	Children are classified on their IEPs as a <b>Preschool Student with a Disability</b> . This means they have a delay or disability that affects learning.
<b>Arranging services</b>	The <b>Early Intervention Official Designee (EIOD)</b> and <b>Early Intervention Service Coordinator (EISC)</b> create the IFSP with the family, work with the family throughout EI services, and assist with transition planning.	A <b>CPSE Administrator</b> arranges for the programs & services on your child’s IEP.
<b>Cost</b>	All Early Intervention services are provided <b>free of charge</b> to eligible children. However, Early Intervention will ask for family insurance and Medicaid information.	All preschool special education services are provided <b>free of charge</b> to eligible children.

## IV. Resources

For more information about transitioning from Early Intervention (EI), refer to the resources below:

### 3-K for All, Pre-K for All or EarlyLearn NYC:

- Program information and contacts, and the 3-K and Pre-K for All applications can be found on [MySchools.nyc](https://www.schools.nyc.gov/my-schools).
- For application support, contact the Outreach Team at: **212-637-8000**.
- For general questions about admissions and enrollment, reach out to the Office of Student Enrollment at [ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov).
- You can also visit a Family Welcome Center (locations available at: [schools.nyc.gov/FamilyWelcomeCenters](https://schools.nyc.gov/FamilyWelcomeCenters)).



## DOE Contacts for Preschool Special Education Support:

Topic	Contact Information
DOE Special Education Hotline	718-935-2007
Early Intervention (EI) Transition	<a href="mailto:EltoPreschool@schools.nyc.gov">EltoPreschool@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Related Services	<a href="mailto:RelatedServices@schools.nyc.gov">RelatedServices@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Special Education	<a href="mailto:SpecialEducation@schools.nyc.gov">SpecialEducation@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Students in Temporary Housing	<a href="mailto:STHinfo@schools.nyc.gov">STHinfo@schools.nyc.gov</a>

Resources, including the [NYCDOE Family Guide to Preschool Special Education Services](#), are available on the DOE's preschool special education webpage: [schools.nyc.gov/SpecialEducation](https://schools.nyc.gov/SpecialEducation).

For additional information, dial **311** or visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation>.





## Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE):

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for coordinating the special education process for preschool children ages three to kindergarten (the year your child turns five). CPSEs work with families in the district where a family lives, regardless of where children receive services or go to preschool.

There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. A chairperson oversees the office, including the CPSE in it. If you do not know what school district you live in, call 311 or use [MySchools.nyc](https://www.schools.nyc.gov) to look up your district.

**Each CPSE covers several school districts. You can find the contact information for your district's CPSE in the table below or online at [schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/committees-on-special-education](https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/committees-on-special-education).**

CPSE	District	Address	Phone	Fax
1	7, 9, 10	One Fordham Plaza, 7th Floor Bronx, NY 10458	718-329-8000	718-741-7928/7929
2	8, 11, 12	3450 East Tremont Avenue, 2nd Floor Bronx, NY 10465	718-794-7420 Español: 718-794-7490	718-794-7445
3	25, 26	30-48 Linden Place Flushing, NY 11354	718-281-3461	718-281-3478
3	28, 29	90-27 Sutphin Boulevard Jamaica, NY 11435	718-557-2553	718-557-2620/2510
4	24, 30	28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5th Floor Long Island City, NY 11101	718-391-8405	718-391-8556
4	27	82-01 Rockaway Boulevard, 2nd Floor Ozone Park, NY 11416	718-642-5715	718-642-5891
5	19, 23, 32	1665 St. Marks Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11233	718-240-3557 or 718-240-3558	718-240-3555
6	17, 18, 22	5619 Flatlands Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11234	718-968-6200	718-968-6253
7	20, 21	415 89th Street Brooklyn, NY 11209	718-759-4900	718-759-4970
7	31	715 Ocean Terrace, Building A Staten Island, NY 10301	718-420-5790	718-420-5787
8	13, 14, 15, 16	131 Livingston Street, 4th Floor Brooklyn, NY 11201	718-935-4900	718-935-5167
9	1, 2, 4	333 7th Avenue, 4th Floor New York, NY 10001	917-339-1600	917-339-1450
10	3, 5, 6	388 West 125th Street New York, NY 1002	212-342-8300	212-342-8427

## Additional Resources:

These are additional community-based organizations that may be helpful and have additional resources for you.

Organization	Phone	Email	Website
Advocates for Children of New York	866-427-6033 (Mon–Thurs, 10am to 4pm)	<a href="mailto:info@advocatesforchildren.org">info@advocatesforchildren.org</a>	<a href="http://www.advocatesforchildren.org">www.advocatesforchildren.org</a>
INCLUDEnyc	212-677-4650 Español: 212-677-4688	<a href="mailto:info@INCLUDEnyc.org">info@INCLUDEnyc.org</a>	<a href="http://www.includenyc.org">www.includenyc.org</a> Español: <a href="http://www.incluyenyc.org">www.incluyenyc.org</a>
Parent to Parent of New York State	518-381-4350 1-800-305-8817	<a href="mailto:mfegeley@ptopnys.org">mfegeley@ptopnys.org</a>	<a href="http://www.parenttoparentnys.org">www.parenttoparentnys.org</a>
Sinergia / Metropolitan Parent Center	212-643-2840 866-867-9665	<a href="mailto:information@sinergiany.org">information@sinergiany.org</a>	<a href="http://www.sinergiany.org">www.sinergiany.org</a>
United We Stand of New York	718-302-4313	<a href="http://www.uwsofny.org/contact-us/">http://www.uwsofny.org/ contact-us/</a>	<a href="http://www.uwsofny.org">www.uwsofny.org</a>





