

# Early Childhood Special Education Orientation: ECSE 101



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# Introductions

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Amy Murphy

Early Childhood Inclusion

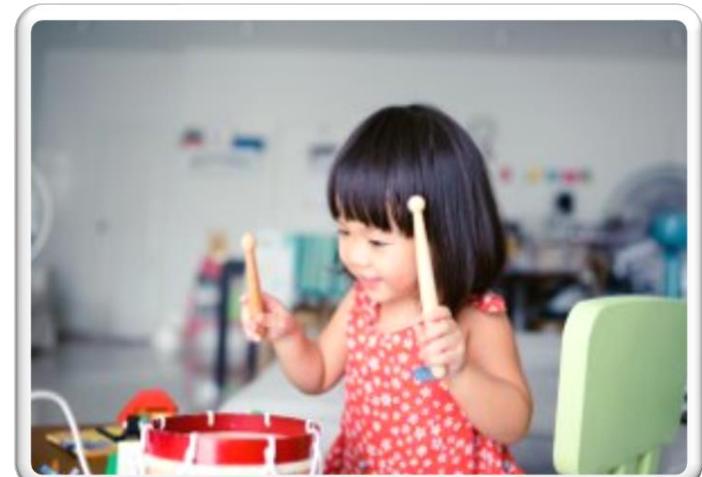
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# Overview of Webinar

- Part C Children's Integrated Services (CIS)/Early Intervention (EI) Overview
- Foundational Documents
- Federal and State: Laws and Special Education Regulations
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Early Childhood Education (ECE) Connections
- ECSE Individual Education Program (IEP) and Developmental Domains
- ECSE Indicators

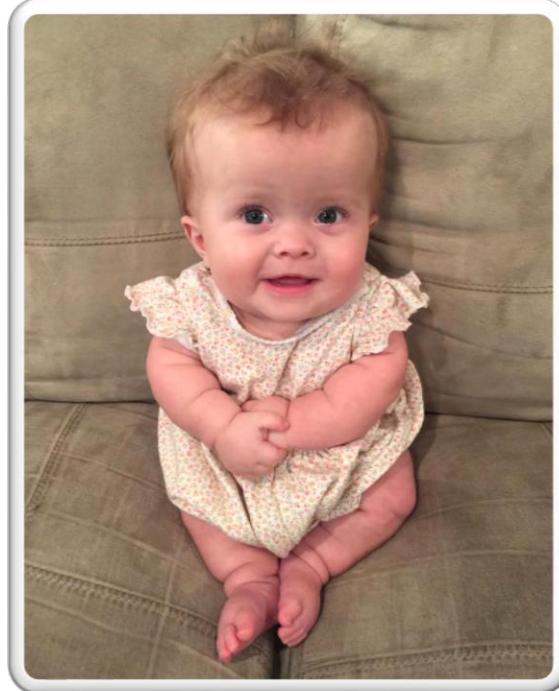


# IDEA Part C: Early Intervention (EI) birth to 3

Early Intervention services are delivered to infants and toddlers (birth to age 3-years-old) with developmental delays or disabilities as part of Vermont's statewide Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Program.

CIS is a statewide health promotion, prevention, and early intervention system of services intended to:

- Promote a child's healthy growth and development
- Support parents/guardians and childcare providers...
- Support families with a child from birth to three...
- Support families prenatally through age six....
- Support families and early care and education...



# Children's Integrated Services (CIS) Ages birth to 3

- The State of Vermont contracts with 12 regional non-profit, community-based organizations to deliver CIS services.
- Early Intervention services are most often provided by regionally based parent-child centers under those contracts.
- Vermont CIS Early Intervention (CIS-EI) provides some form of service to approximately 1,800 children annually.



# State Approved Evaluation Tools for Ages Birth to 3

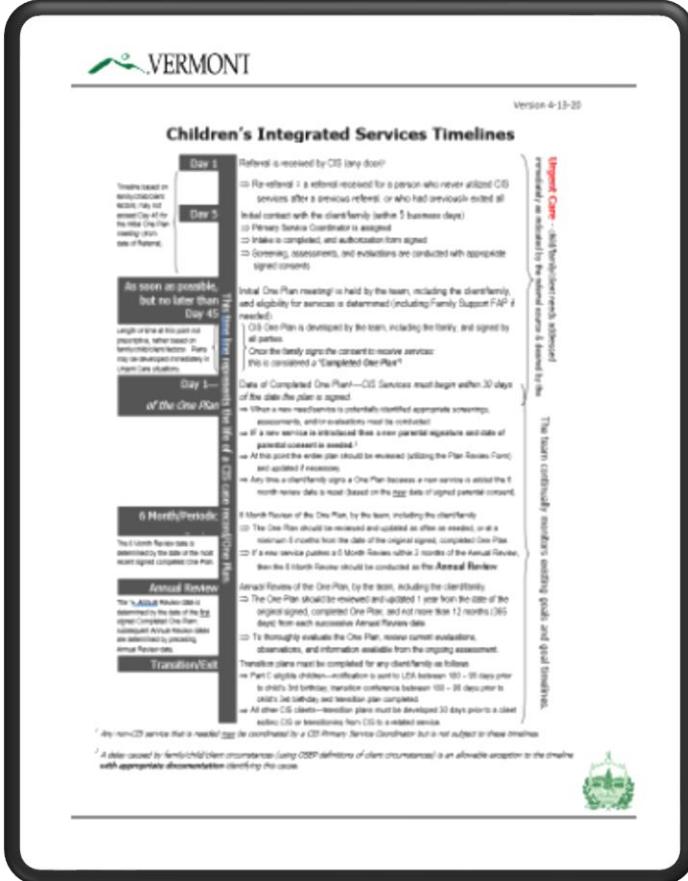
Part C IFSP's are call a One Plan in Vermont.

CIS-EI providers must use one (or a combination) of the State-approved evaluation tools to determine initial and ongoing eligibility for Part C:

Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS)  
Infant Toddler Developmental Assessment (IDA)  
Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)



# CIS/EI Timeline



[https://padlet.com/katie\\_mccarthy1/y9x7nnrh6ws09to5](https://padlet.com/katie_mccarthy1/y9x7nnrh6ws09to5)

# Foundational Documents



# Vermont Guiding Principles: Supporting Each and Every Young Child and Family's Full and Equitable Participation

We believe that each and every child...

- Learns within the context of secure and authentic relationships, play, and interactions within their environments.
- Deserves equitable access to experiences that acknowledge and build on their uniqueness.
- Deserves opportunities to deeply learn and develop to their full potential through joyful interactions in safe, accepting environments.



# Advancing Equity

All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. Thus, all early childhood educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. They can do this best when they are effectively supported by the early learning settings in which they work and when they and their wider communities embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities.

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC Position Statement on Equity, April 2019)



# Considerations for Equity



1. Provide high-quality early education programs that build on each and every child's unique individual and family strengths, cultural background, language(s), abilities, and experiences.
2. Eliminate differences in educational outcomes as a result of who children are, where they live, and what resources their families have.

# DEC Recommended Practices

The purpose of the DEC Recommended Practices is to highlight those practices specifically known to promote the outcomes of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays/disabilities and to support their families in accordance with the DEC/NAEYC (2009) position statement on early childhood inclusion.



Division for  
Early  
Childhood

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Recommended Practices

# Implementation of the DEC Recommended Practices

**We assume that those who implement the practices:**

- Have foundational knowledge of developmentally appropriate early childhood practices.
- Have a basic understanding of relevant professional, legal, and regulatory guidelines for serving each and every child.
- Act in accordance with the principles of the DEC Code of Ethics and in accordance with the principles of access and participation as described in the DEC/NAEYC (2009) position statement on inclusion.
- Engage in ongoing professional development to increase their knowledge, skills, and dispositions for implementing the Recommended Practices as intended

# DEC Recommended Practices: Eight Topic Areas

Leadership

Assessment

Environment

Family

Instruction

Interaction

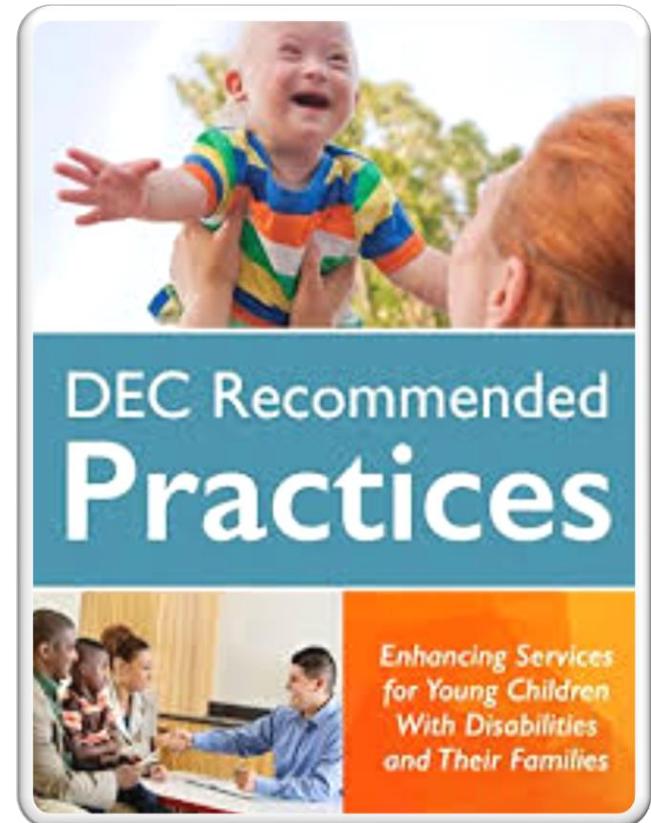
Teaming and  
Collaboration

Transition

# DEC Recommended Practices: Leadership

## Focus on Leadership

L9. Leaders develop and implement an evidence-based professional development system or approach that provides practitioners a variety of supports to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the DEC Recommended Practices.



# Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)

**Vermont Early Learning Standards**

**AN OVERVIEW**

The image shows a collage of children's activities across different age groups. On the left, a baby crawls. Next to it, a young girl walks. In the center, three young girls run together. To the right, a boy runs. Above each group of children, there is a vertical label indicating their age group: "Birth to Three", "Preschool", "Kindergarten", and "Grades 1, 2, & 3". A large, colorful star is positioned in the upper left corner of the collage area.

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VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

# Laws and Rules Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

## **Part C of IDEA: Early Intervention (Birth to age 3)**

Infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families receive early intervention services

## **Part B of IDEA: Special Education (ages 3 through 21)**

Children and youth receive special education and related services



# IDEA B Section 619



Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) authorizes additional preschool formula grants to states that are eligible for grants under Section 611 of Part B. States are eligible if they make free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to all children with disabilities, ages three through five. While not mandatory, all states are currently providing IDEA services to preschool aged children.

# Americans with Disabilities Act 1990



- Public Schools
- Public and Private PreK programs
- Childcare Centers
- Family Childcare homes

**An individual who has a physical or mental impairment which:**

1. substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. has a record of such an impairment
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

# Americans with Disabilities Act 1990: Examples

Reasonable Modifications without causing a “fundamental alteration or “undue burden.”

Accessibility: PreK programs must make their facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

Examples of violations could be:

- Requiring toilet training
- Excluding children with disabilities from enrollment



# Vermont's Universal PreK Definition



*What defines Vermont's Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK) is the implementation of high-quality, effective instruction by licensed educators who use evidence-based practices within intentionally designed early learning environments.*

# Act 166 Universal PreK Basics



All children (including children with disabilities) who are 3, 4 and 5 years old are entitled to:

- A minimum of 10 hours of high quality, publicly funded prekindergarten education
- PreK education must be provided for 35 weeks during the school year

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## Part 1

**Q: Can a child with an IEP enroll in a public or private preschool program after the district's September 1 enrollment date deadline?**

A: **Yes.** A student with a disability who is turning 3 after the UPK enrollment deadline date set by the district can be enrolled in an UPK program as it is the district's responsibility to provide FAPE for that child.

**Q: Are ECSE services limited to the UPK 10 hours?**

A: **No!** ECSE and UPK should be thought of separately. ECSE services should be considered first based on the child's individual needs. The child's "placement" or setting where they will receive early childhood special education services is considered after their services and supports are decided by the IEP team which includes the family. This placement may occur in a public or private UPK, a private PreK program, or a child's home, for example.

# FAQ Part 2

**Q: Can children receive early childhood special education services in an UPK program that resides outside of their home Local Education Agency (LEA) ?**

A: Yes! The IEP team is obligated to consider a full continuum of placement options for the child. **Placement is the provision of special education and related services- not the specific site.** Based on the child's educational needs, the IEP team determines the most least restrictive environment for the child to reap the most educational benefit. If parents request the district to consider a program and that is outside of their jurisdiction, the LEA must consider at their discretion, and determine if this choice of setting would be benefit the child's social, emotional and educational development.

Many SU/SDs have become creative with contracting with other LEAs , staff visiting programs nearby, swapping services, virtual services, etc.

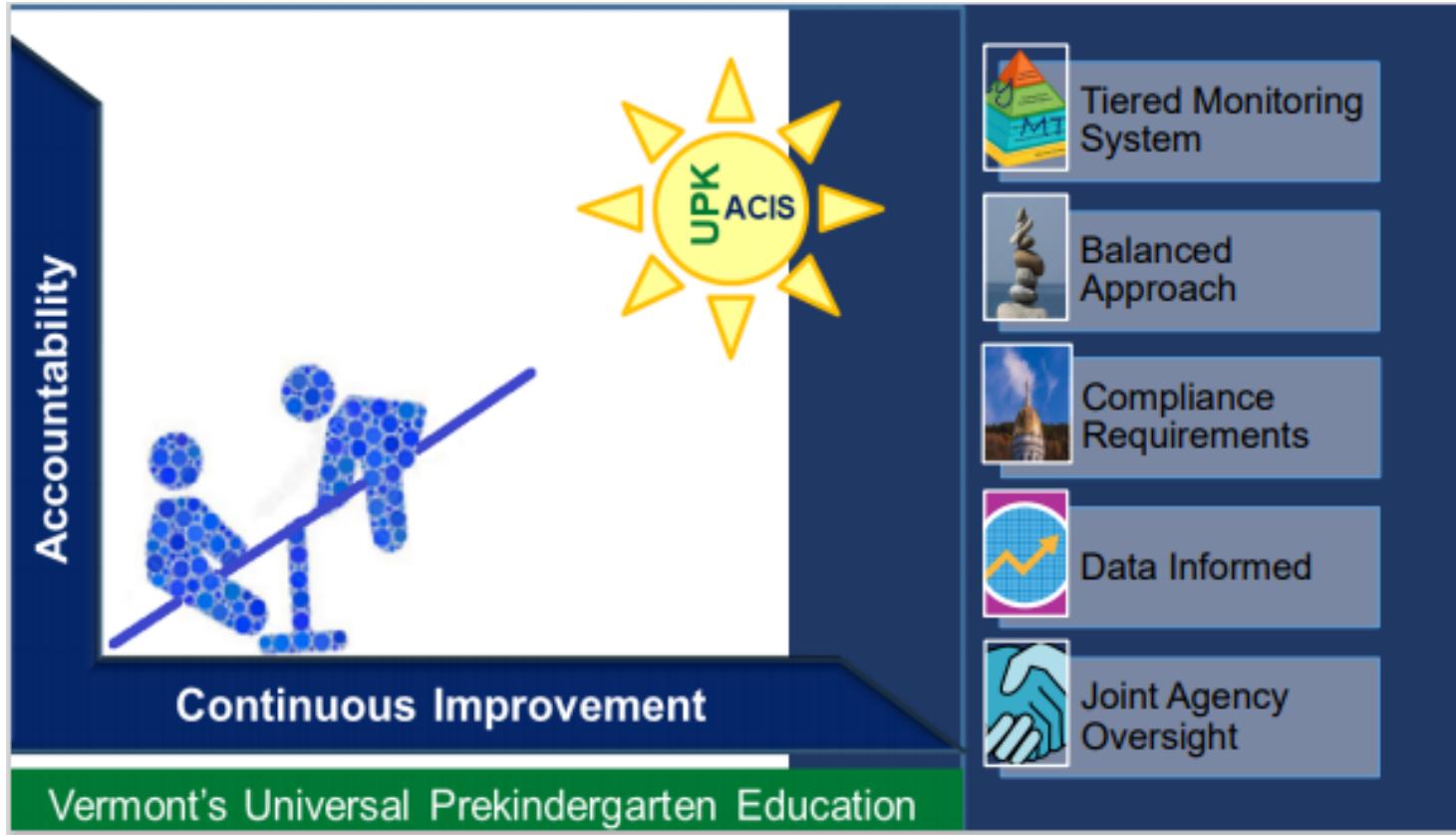
# FAQ Part 3

**Q: What happens if the parents and LEA cannot come to an agreement on the placement?**

A: The LEA is obligated to offer FAPE. The family has the option to accept or decline services. The LEA needs to execute due diligence in explaining to the family what declining FAPE would mean for the child. Families also have the option to enter the dispute resolution process.



# ACIS Monitoring and Special Education Monitoring



# Interagency Agreement and Regional Agreements

## State and Regional IAA

- coadministrations of Part C
- collaboration
- data sharing
- communication
- Part C to Part B transitions



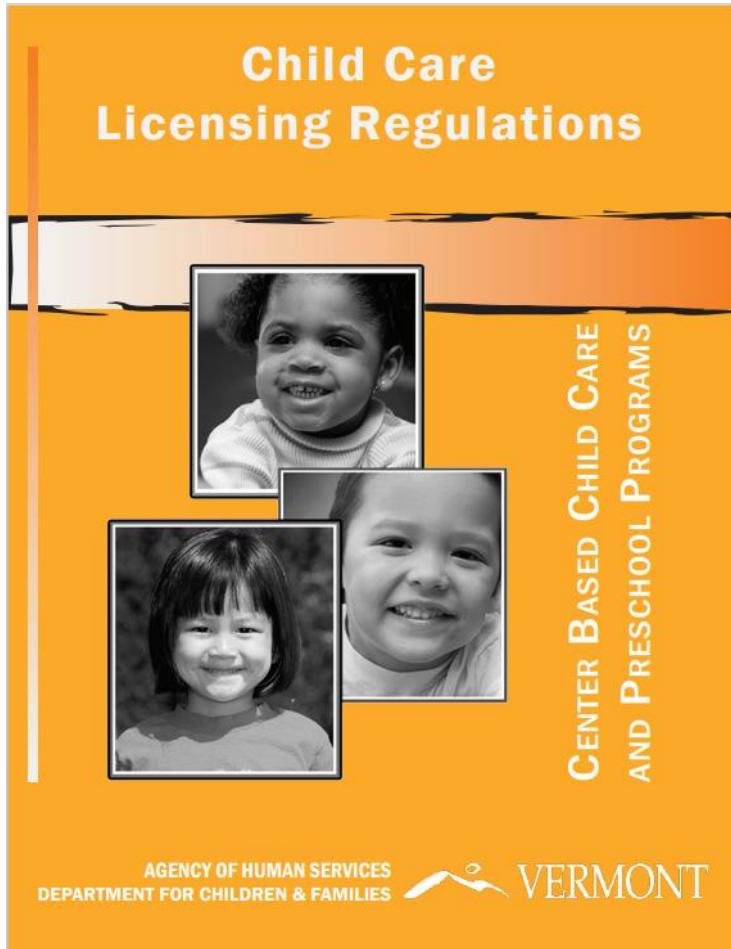
# Act 166 UPK Partnership Agreements

## Local Partnership Agreements

- inclusion statements
- suspension and expulsion
- professional development
- family communication
- expectations for early childhood special education and related services



# Childcare Licensing Regulations



4.7 Communicating CBCCPP Policies and procedures

5.9 Children with Special Health Care Needs and Disabilities

6.3 Supporting Children with Special Needs

# Act 35 (2021)



**Children under 8 shall not be suspended or expelled.**

# Public and Private UPK Program Responsibilities

- Bi-directional communication between partner programs and with families
- Partners and family meet BEFORE any exclusionary discipline takes place.
- If a child is suspended or expelled, an Incident Report must be submitted to the LEA and to the Early Education ACIS Monitoring Team within 5 school calendar days.
- If a child is suspended or expelled for more than 10 days (consecutive or cumulative) the LEA must convene a manifestation determination hearing to determine if the removal is considered a change of placement for the child.

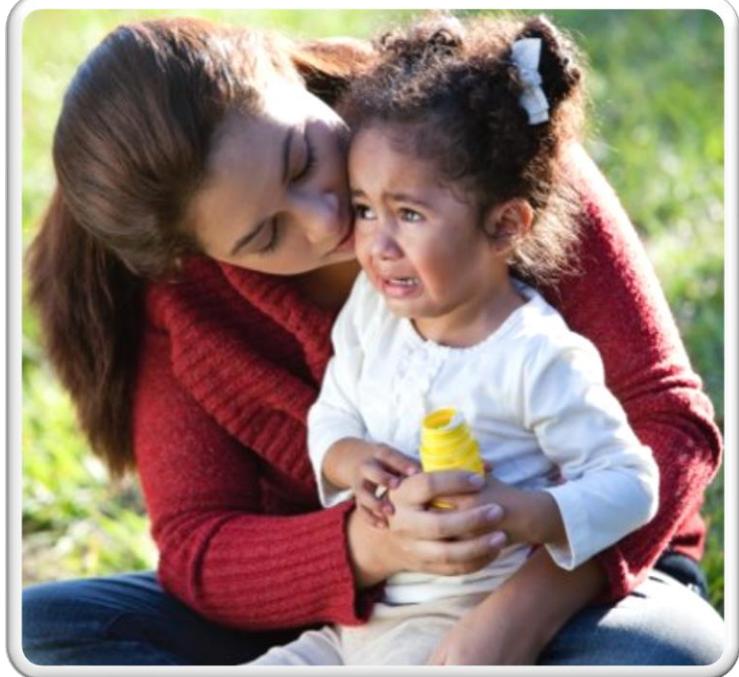
The form is titled "Public/Private UPK Suspension and Expulsion Incident Report". It includes fields for "Name/Address/Phone Number", "Child's Last Name", "First Name", "Middle Name", "Date of Birth", "Gender", "Race", "Ethnicity", and "Is the child an English Language Learner?". There are checkboxes for "Suspension Date(s)" (e.g., 01/01/2017, 01/02/2017), "Expulsion Date(s)" (e.g., 01/03/2017, 01/04/2017), and "Total Days Suspended". A section for "Location of Incident" lists 25 possible scenarios, each with a checkbox, such as "Inappropriate Dress", "Disruptive Behavior", and "Violent Behavior".

# Suspension and Expulsion Required Reporting

All prequalified private and public PreK programs must complete a *Public/Private PreK Suspension and Expulsion Incident Form* for each child whenever a child is:

- 1) Requested to permanently leave (expulsion) or removed (suspension) from a PreK regular classroom program. This applies regardless if the suspension or expulsion has taken place during UPK hours and **does** affect the family's Act 166 tuition.

Programs must also comply with Child Care Licensing Regulations under 6.2.8.4



# Vermont Special Education Rules:

## *2361.2 ECSE Eligibility of Children Age Three up to the Sixth Birthday*

Eligible for ECSE services if the child meets at least one of the following:

1. The child meets criteria set forth in Part C rule 2360.5.10;
  - Received consistent intervention, specialized instruction, or therapy/speech services through an IFSP/One Plan;
  - CIS/EI One Plan team has determined the child as 'potentially eligible' or ECSE services within six months of the child's third birthday
  - The child has a medical condition which may result in significant delays by the child's sixth birthday, and the school based Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) has determined that the child is in need of Part B ECSE services; OR



# Vermont Special Education Rules:

## *2361.2 ECSE Eligibility of Children Age Three up to the Sixth Birthday (cont.)*

2. After the Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) reviews the results of the comprehensive evaluation and concludes that the child has a disability caused by a developmental delay and the child is in need of early childhood special education services; **OR**
3. The child has a medical condition which may result in significant delays, and the child is in need of early childhood special education services;
4. For a child enrolled in kindergarten, EPT may consider using eligibility criteria for children ages 6 through 21 (school age) pursuant to Rule 2362.



# Determining Eligibility

According to 2361.2(c), *developmental delay is determined through a comprehensive evaluation as measured by at least two appropriate measures, one of which must be a standardized diagnostic instrument.*

Other measures may include: observation, interview, review of TSG

To meet DD criteria a child must demonstrate at least one of the following:

- A 2.0 standard deviation at or below the mean (2nd percentile) in one or more developmental domains
- A 1.5 standard deviation at or below the mean (7th percentile) in two or more developmental domains



# Compliance Timelines and Content



2361.2(g) If the team has determined a child eligible to receive special education and related services, the IEP shall be written within 30 days of the eligibility determination.

2361.2(h)

The IEP shall address Rule 2363.7 (Content of IEP) as well as how the child's disability affects their access to and participation in age-appropriate activities.

# Vermont Special Education Rules:

2361.3 *Educational Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)*

2364.2 *General LRE Requirements (34 CFR 300.114)*



**Each IEP team shall consider the full continuum of placement options and ensure that:**

(1) A student eligible for special education services shall be educated with their non-disabled same age peers, to the maximum extent in the school/program they would attend if they did not have a disability.

(2) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the general education shall occur only if the nature or severity of the child's disability is such that education in general classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

# Early MTSS

## Vermont's Early Multi-tiered System of Supports

Promoting a Statewide Birth to Five (Early MTSS) and PreK-3 MTSS Sustainable System



### Components of Early MTSS

- Strong System Support and Leadership Team
- Partnership and Collaboration
- High Quality Responsive Learning Environments
- Comprehensive Assessment Data Feedback loops
- Well-designed Professional Learning Opportunities



### Birth to Five

Early MTSS balances building a system of supports for Universal PreK programs, PreK-3rd grade, center-based childcare, home-based childcare, Head Start and community partners in order to promote implementation of evidence-based practices to improve social, emotional and behavioral skills for each and every child

### Early MTSS Embedded into State Policy and Practices!



### Sustaining Pyramid Practices

- Established Leadership Teams
- Developed Systems Inventory of Practice + External Systems Coach Support
- Built a State Cadre of Pyramid Model Trainers and Practice Base Coaches
- Identified Measures: TPOT, ASQ-SE- TS GOLD, CLASS, BIR and Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP)
- Early MTSS Practice and Implementation Manual (coming soon)

### PreK-3rd Grade

# Early Childhood Special Education Individualized Education Program ECSE IEP

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Form 5: Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Ages Three Through Five  
Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Important Dates and School District Information:  
School District of Residence: A-G [ ] H-O [ ] P-Z [ ]  
IEP Case Manager [ ] Annual Meeting Date [ ] Next Annual Review Date [ ]  
Next 3 Year Evaluation Date [ ] Effective Date of Revision [ ]

Child Information:  
Child's Name [ ] Gender [ ] Date of Birth [ ]  
Primary Disability Category: Developmental Delay in the following areas: [ ] Communication [ ] Fine/Gross Motor [ ] Social/Emotional [ ]  
Adaptive [ ] Cognitive Skills [ ] School or Program [ ] Grade Assigned: [ ]  
Child Count ID: [ ] Current Age: [ ] Is this student an English Learner? [ ] Y [ ] N [ ] If yes, what is the child's home or native language? [ ]

Family Contact Information:  
Parent(s)/Guardian(s): [ ] (Cell): [ ] (Work): [ ]  
Telephone # (Home): [ ] Address: [ ] If yes, what language? [ ]  
Is an interpreter needed? [ ] Y [ ] N [ ]

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Form 5: ECSE Ages Three Through Five IEP  
(Revised: October 1, 2020)



PreK students eligible for ECSE services and those with special health and educational needs are **general education students first**.

# Five Developmental Domains

**2361.2(d) Developmental Domains are defined as:**

- Speech and language development including receptive and/or expressive communication, articulation, fluency and/or voice;
- Adaptive development (self-help skills);
- Social or Emotional development;
- Physical development including gross or fine motor skills; and/or
- Cognitive skills such as perception, memory, processing, and reasoning.



# FAQ 4

*Q: Can a child be under the category of Developmental Delay after age 5? What if they are in Kindergarten?*

A: **YES.** If a child (up to the age of 5 years and 11 months) is evaluated and determined eligible for special education under the Developmentally Delayed (DD) category, the child may continue their eligibility under the DD category until their next triennial evaluation.

- The next triennial evaluation could be as late as when the child is 8 years and 11 months old.
- For a child who is 6 years or older with a DD category eligibility at their triennial evaluation:
  - DD can no longer be an eligible category **AND**
  - the EPT is required to seek continued eligibility under the categories of disability listed in 2362.1 of the Vermont Special Education Rules
- If the evaluation report is signed when the child is 5 and the EPT concludes DD is appropriate category for the child, the child can proceed even if the child turns 6 during the IEP planning process.

# FAQ 5

Q: How do I determine the Annual and Triennial dates?

A: The Annual and/or Triennial dates are determined by using the date the child was determined eligible for Part C- not the evaluation date. This date of eligibility can be found on the top of the front page of the child's IFSP/One Plan.

Q: Can ECSE IEPs be consult only ?

A: **No.** There needs to be specialized instruction provided by a qualified special educator. An ECSE IEP cannot be related services only.

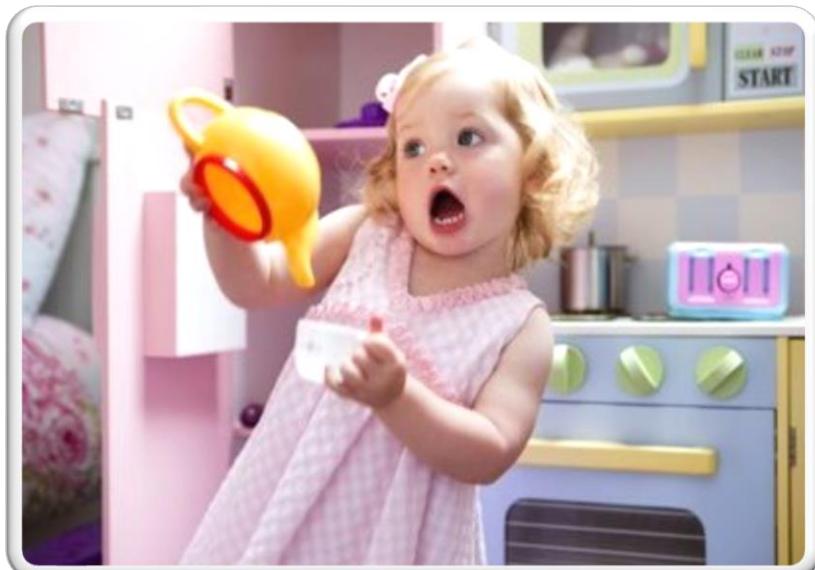


# ECSE Indicators



# Overview of Indicators

*Compliance vs. Performance*



Indicator 6: Early Childhood Educational Environment

Indicator 7: Early Child Outcomes

Indicator 8: Family Engagement

Indicator 12: IDEA Part C to Part B Transition

# Least Restrictive Environment (Indicator 6)

A.% attending regular early childhood program & receiving special education & related services in a regular early childhood program

B.% attending separate special education class, separate school or residential facility

**C: % receiving special education & related services in a home setting**



# Early Child Outcomes (Indicator 7)

**Outcome A:** Positive social and emotional skills

**Outcome B:** Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills

**Outcome C:** Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs

**Summary Statement 1-** 1% of preschool children entering ECSE functioning below age expectations, who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned six years of age or exited the program.

**Summary Statement 2-** 2% of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they turned six years of age or exited the program



# Part C to Part B Transition

## Indicator 12



% 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.

# Upcoming Webinars

October- ECO (Indicator 7) 10/15

November- C to B Transition (Indicator 12) 11/12

December- LRE (Indicator 6) 12/17

January- Writing Functional IEP Goals 1/14

February- Creating Inclusive Environments 2/11

March- Early MTSS

April, May, and June TBD

## Community of Practice Calls:

- Following each webinar
- Will not be recorded
- Questions and answers will be distributed.
- [https://padlet.com/katie\\_mccarthy/1/y9x7nnrh6ws09to5](https://padlet.com/katie_mccarthy/1/y9x7nnrh6ws09to5)

# Jamboards and Padlet



## Teams Meeting Links for October and November

### Early Childhood Special Education Virtual Webinars and Communities of Practice 2021-2022

**Purpose:** The Early Education Team is providing free virtual webinars and communities of practice on early childhood special education topics throughout the 2021-2022 School Year. Webinars will be recorded and posted for asynchronous viewing. Community of practice calls on the topic will not be recorded.

**Audience:** Early Childhood (ages 3 through 5) Special Educators, Administrators, Special Education Directors and Coordinators, Related Service Providers, and public PreK general Education new to their position in the last 2 years.

**Format:** Each interactive session will include information and discussion on specific early childhood special education topics and accompanying resources. Webinars will typically occur the second Friday of each month. The agenda and a Teams link will be sent via list serve the week prior to the session.

DOCX

ECSE List of Dates for Webinars and  
CoP links 2021-2022

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# Resources

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs , 2015.](#)

[IDEA Part C - Early Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[Children's Integrated Services \(CIS\) | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[Vermont Guiding Principles: Supporting Each and Every Young Child and Family's Full and Equitable Participation](#)

[Culture, Diversity, and Equity & Expression Resources \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[Equity and Inclusion \(vermont.gov\), 2019](#)

[DEC Recommended Practices](#)

[VT's Universal PreK Professional Learning Module Series: The ADA PowerPoint Presentation \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[VT's Universal PreK Professional Learning Module Series: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 PowerPoint Presentation \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[Vermont Early Learning Standards](#)

[Early Childhood Special Education \(ECSE\) Ages Three Through Five - Individualized Education Program \(IEP\)](#)

[State of Vermont Special Education Rules](#)

[CBCCPP\\_Regulations\\_FINAL.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)

[National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)