



FAQ: Child Find

What is Child Find?

Child Find is a part of a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that mandates schools to locate and identify children and youth ages 3-21 with suspected disabilities who may be entitled to special education services.

Who is covered by Child Find?

Children with disabilities from birth through age 21 are covered. This includes children who are being homeschooled or who are in private school as well as highly mobile/migrant/ and/or homeless children. Child Find also covers children suspected of having a disability who are advancing from grade to grade.

What help is available?

- A complete evaluation
- If appropriate:
 - An Individualized Education Program (IEP) for children with a disability beginning at age 3,
 - An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for each child with a disability birth through 2, or
 - A referral to other agencies when needed

What does CMS do to locate children with disabilities?

CMS employs two Child Find Coordinators who use a variety of means to notify the public about Child Find, including (a) distribution of flyers to local doctors' offices, daycares and preschools, (b) participation in family-oriented community service activities, (c) regularly scheduled meetings with community agencies to address early identification and intervention, (d) yearly brochures sent to all CMS schools, (e) Child Find telephone line that parents can call to request evaluations, (f) Child Find public notice placed in the local newspaper, and (g) yearly notification and survey mailed to all private and state-approved home school programs which includes an invitation to attend a meeting to discuss the Child Find process and a follow-up overview letter afterwards.

How can CMS staff members assist in the Child Find process?

- If you know of a child in your school that may have a disability and be entitled to receive special education and related services, consult with the compliance facilitator and/or Tier 2 or Tier 3 MTSS Facilitator at your school.
- If you know of a child with disabilities who is not in school or receiving services/assistance you can:
 - Give the parent/guardian a copy of the Project Child Find brochure (each school received 25 of these).
 - Educate the parent/guardian about the referral process and special education and related services that may be offered if the student is found to have a disability.
 - Encourage the parent/guardian to contact the school or EC Department to request an evaluation.

What is a school’s responsibility when a parent/guardian requests an evaluation for a child?

Upon an oral request for an initial evaluation from a parent, the school shall provide assistance, as needed, in completing a written referral. The school must hold a referral meeting within a reasonable time to review existing data and determine whether an evaluation is needed. The date the school receives the written request from the parent is the referral date. If the IEP team chooses to evaluate the child, evaluations must be conducted, eligibility must be determined, and for an eligible child, an IEP must be developed and placement completed within 90 days of receipt of the written referral.

What is the district’s responsibility when someone other than a parent/guardian requests an evaluation for a child?

Within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notification of concerns regarding a child, the school shall issue notify the child’s parent in writing. The notification shall include either an explanation of reasons the LEA will not pursue the evaluation or a date for a meeting in which the LEA and parent will review existing data and determine whether a referral for consideration of eligibility for special education is necessary. Such meeting must be held within a reasonable time.

What are some other resources for parents?

Agency	Phone
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Exceptional Children Division● Office of Early Learning (age 3-5)	919-807-3969 919-807-3946
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Local Children’s Developmental Services Agency Division of Public Health/Early Intervention (birth -2)	919-707-5520
Office of Citizen Services – CARE LINE	1-800-662-7030 (TTY) 1-877-452-2514
Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center – Parent Information Line:	1-800-962-2817
Family Support Network of North Carolina	1-800-852-0042