

A dark blue silhouette of a child's head and shoulders, facing right, holding an open book. The background is a solid dark blue.

MAINE
DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Child Find in Early Childhood Special Education

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Presented by: Early Childhood Special Education Team



Today's Early Childhood Special Education Presenters



Deputy
Director
Sandy
Flacke



Regional
Coordinator
Jackie
Hersom



Regional
Coordinator
Trisha Kurt



Consultant
Julie
Giaccone



Consultant
Suzanne
Perry



Child Find Presentation Topics

1. Review Child Find Components
 - Identify
 - Locate
 - Evaluate
2. Clarify key differences between 3–5-year-olds and K-12
3. Share documentation and timeline requirements
4. Discuss anticipated needs

Child Find

- Ensures all children aged 3-22 are identified, located, and evaluated.
- Includes children who are:
 - Homeless or in foster care, migrant or highly mobile
 - Wards of the state or agency clients
 - Advancing grade to grade, but still need services
- Public schools are responsible for evaluation at no cost to the parent.

For children age 3-5:

- Cohort SAUs are responsible for Child Find.
- SAUs must identify, locate, and evaluate any child who may need special education.
- This includes finding children who may be attending public preschool, private preschool, childcare, or who are not in any program.



Child Find Components



Locate: Notification of the services to which the family is entitled, the messaging campaign.



Identify: Referrals or other processes that may indicate potential special education needs.



Evaluate: Decision to proceed with evaluation and conduct an evaluation.

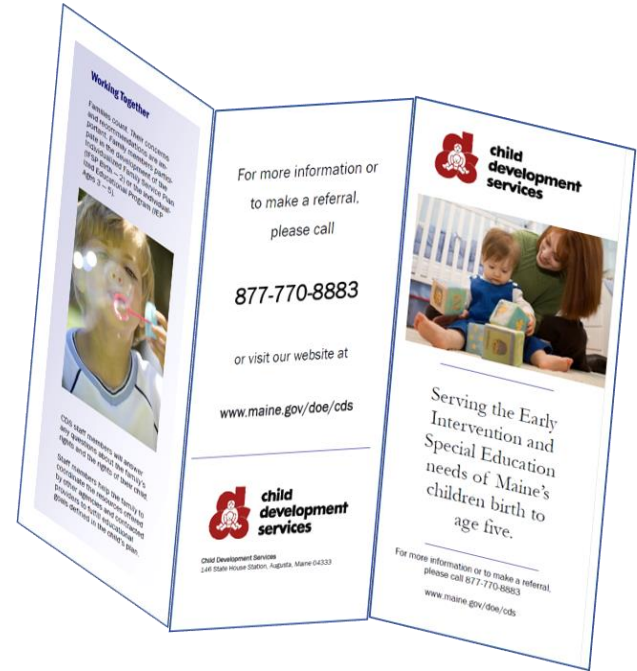


Locate: Procedures to Notify Families of Available Supports

Who: Provide families in your catchment area with information about the supports and services available for delays in development.

How: Information is made available by the SAU through infographics, web outreach, and through parent advocacy and assistance groups.

Where: Post through social media, community bulletin boards, in medical offices, schools, and on web pages.





Identify: Child Find Referrals



Who can refer a child?

- Parents, Doctors/health care providers, public pre-k and Head Start, private childcare, Child Development Services (CDS)



What happens after a referral?

- Parents are sent procedural safeguards and prior written notice of the referral.
- An evaluation is conducted.
- IEP team determines eligibility.

Child Find Documentation

K-12 (School-Aged)

- Referral receipt (date + source)
- Concerns and attempted interventions
- If referred to IEP team:
 - Cumulative record info
 - SAU & coordinator name
 - Child Find activities documented
 - Results and recommendations

Ages 3-5 (Preschool)

- Referral receipt (when & how)
- Parent contacted + initial meeting held
- Consent to evaluate (date sent & date received)
- Evaluation(s) completed (within 60 days)
- Evaluation sources documented (screening, parent input, provider observations)
- Eligibility/IEP meeting date + outcome documented



Child Find: Evaluate

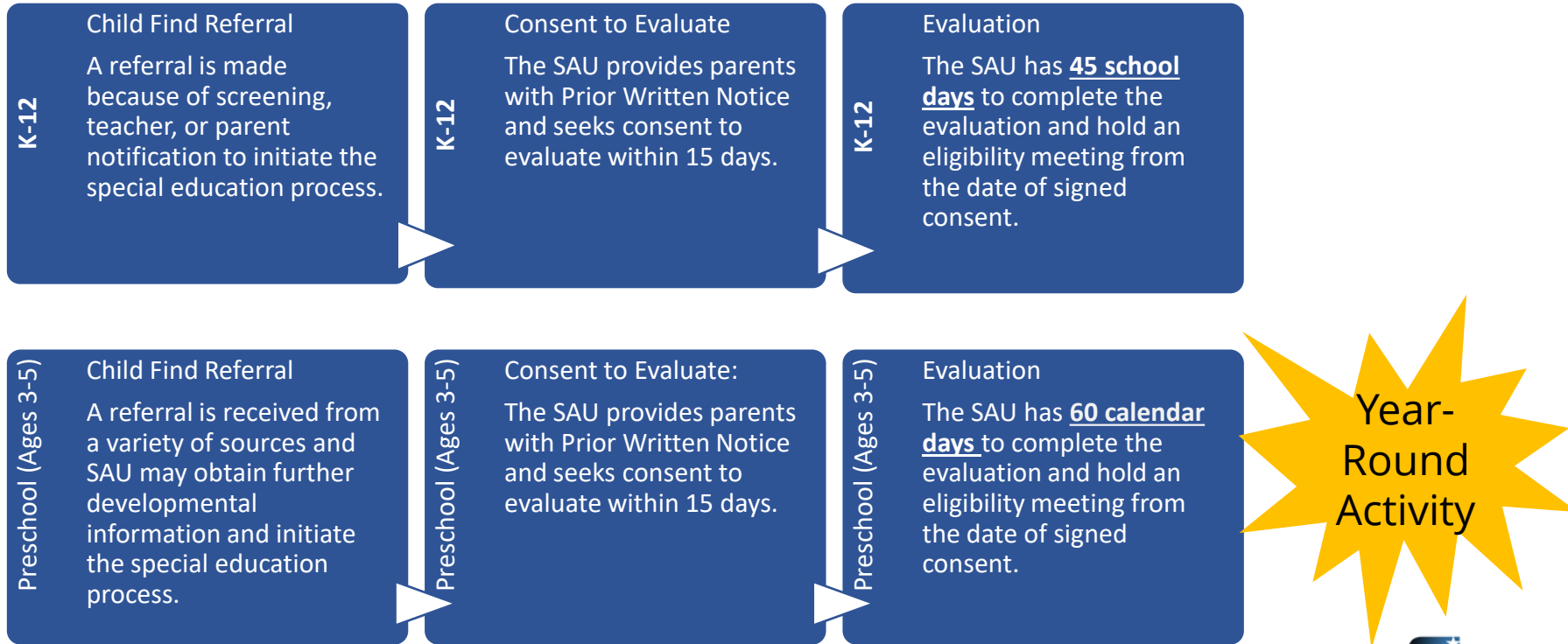
Sources of Information:

- Screening and direct assessments, parent input and observations, teacher/early childhood provider input

Developmental areas included:

- Learning and school readiness, communication and language, motor development (gross and fine motor), social-emotional development, adaptive development

Child Find: Timeline Comparison



When Child Find Takes Place

K-12 students:

- Each SAU must conduct Child Find during the **first 30 days of the school year** or the **first 30 days of enrollment** for transfer students.
- If evidence of prior Child Find activities and results are already in a child's cumulative record (e.g. from another SAU in Maine or out-of-state), repeating Child Find is **not necessary**.

Preschool-aged Children (ages 3-5, not yet in compulsory school):

- Child Find is **an ongoing process** for children who have not previously been identified with a disability.
- Applies to children in community preschool, Head Start, childcare or at home.
- Identification can occur anytime, not only at the start of a school year.

Child Find

Locate

Messaging campaign

Concern identified

Identify

Receive referral

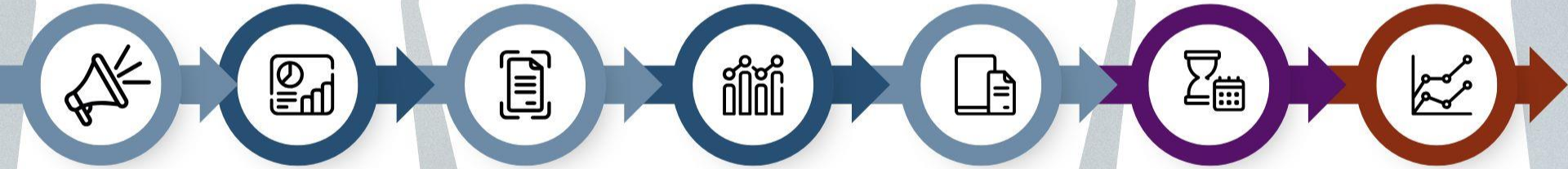
Collect information

Refer to IEP team

Evaluate

Obtain consent

Evaluate for eligibility



A Zoom Poll for Child Find Needs

1. Would you or anyone on your team benefit from additional technical assistance about Child Find?
2. If yes, would you like TA/PD in the form of:
 - Additional presentations/PD
 - Guidance Documents
 - Open office time for Q&A
3. If so, on which Child Find topics:
 - Child Find information campaigns
 - Referrals process
 - Screening—what is it, who does it, what tools
 - Child Find data and tracking systems
 - Evaluation tools, procedures, and timelines
 - Other



Resources and References

- Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age Twenty-Two (MUSER) [Administrative Code](#)
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) [Child Find Self Assessment](#)
- ECTA Best Practices for Part B 619 Child Find [Infographic](#)
- [CDS to SAU Resource Folder - Google Drive](#)

Contact Our Department

If you need assistance or have questions, contact Jennifer Hopkins, Assistant Transition Coordinator of FAPE Services for Early Childhood Special Education



Jennifer.L.Hopkins@maine.gov

Our Web Site



[Early Childhood Special Education | Department of Education](http://www.maine.gov/education/earlychildhoodspecial)

