



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE INFANTS & TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOL SYSTEMS

Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention programs are governed by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Preschool services are dictated by Part B of IDEA. There are a few key differences between the two parts, which can have great impact on families.

1. **Eligibility:** It is usually easier to obtain services under Part C (Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention). Children are eligible for Part C special education services if they have a developmental delay. Part B (preschool) requires a delay or disability and proof of the need for special education.
2. **Place of Service:** Part C services for Infants and Toddlers are delivered in the “Natural Environment,” typically the home or a daycare. Part B services for preschool students receiving special education are delivered in the “Least Restrictive Environment,” which is frequently classroom or center-based.
3. **School Year:** Part C services are year-round; preschool services may take summers off, although Extended School Year is available for students who qualify.
4. **Focus on Family:** Part C allows services to address the needs of the family, including parent education and training, in addition to the needs of the child; Part B services focus predominantly on the preschool child.
5. **Payment for Services:** Depending on where you live, your state may charge you for Part B services; Part C services for preschoolers are provided at no charge to eligible students.

Federal law recognizes that change is not always beneficial, however. If your child is transitioning from the Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention system, IDEA permits you and the preschool educational agency responsible for children over the age of 3 to agree to allow your child to continue to receive the same services that were provided in the Infants and Toddlers system.

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- [Transitioning from Early Intervention to the Preschool Special Education System](#)
- [Early Intervention Eligibility](#)
- [Preschool Special Education Eligibility Criteria](#)
- [Where Will My Child Receive Early Intervention Services?](#)
- [Where Will My Child Receive Preschool Special Education Services?](#)
- [Extended School Year in Pennsylvania](#)
- [The Importance of Family in the Early Intervention System](#)
- [Is There a Cost for Early Intervention Services?](#)
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