

Child Notification Forms
Question and Answer Resource Document
April 2006, Revised March 2009, and September 2010

1. What is the purpose of the Child Notification process?

The West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education Programs and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/WV Birth to Three are jointly implementing the child notification process to meet the Child Find requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and to promote effective transitions for children leaving Part C, WV Birth to Three and their families.

2. How and when will the state WV Birth to Three Office notify the county boards of education?

The Child Notification forms are sent from the WV Birth to Three State Office directly to the county Special Education Director or designee. If the Special Education Director prefers the information be sent to a designee, the Director must contact Ginger Huffman, Coordinator, Office of *Special Programs, Extended and Early Learning* regarding this request. As of September 2005, the state WV Birth to Three Office has been notifying the county boards of education on a monthly basis of any child receiving WV Birth to Three services (Part C, IDEA) on that date, and whose chronological age is 30 months (six months from their third birthday).

3. Does a family have a right to decline the notifications?

Child notification is sent for all children reaching the potential age of eligibility for the purposes of child find. WV Birth to Three does not have a policy that allows families to opt out of this notification process. The notification becomes a referral for eligibility when the family provides consent for evaluation. Each family maintains a right to decline evaluation from the county school system.

4. What information is shared in the Child Notification process?

In accordance with the procedural safeguard and child find requirements of IDEA, the information shared in the Child Notification Form will include only the demographic data needed to meet child find requirements. The data includes the child's name, date of birth, parent name/address/telephone number.

5. Can the Child Notification forms be shared with other community agencies?

No. The Child Notification form meets the child find requirements of IDEA and therefore this information can only be provided to the county boards of education without family consent. Personally identifiable information cannot be shared with other entities at the state or local level without informed written consent from the family.

6. **What is the role of the county boards of education upon receiving the Child Notification forms?**

The county board of education is responsible for contacting each family based on receipt of the Child Notification Form from WV Birth to Three. This initial contact is the county's opportunity to introduce the family to services and supports within the county. The county should send a letter to the family and/or conduct a telephone contact. This contact will inform the family that evaluation for eligibility is available and provide the family with a copy of their procedural safeguards.

7. **Who is responsible for scheduling and attending the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting?**

The 90 day face-to-face transition planning conference is a requirement under Part C of IDEA. The WV Birth to Three service coordinator is responsible for:

- a. facilitating the 90 day face-to-face meeting;
- b. helping the family know about possible agencies/entities who could be invited;
- c. helping the family determine who to invite to the meeting;
- d. coordinating a meeting date and location with the family and invited parties;
- e. sending letters of invitation to everyone that the family chooses to participate in the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting. If the family chooses not to invite any other members, at a minimum the meeting must include the family and their current IFSP team members unless the family chooses not to have a transition meeting;
- f. IDEA also requires that the county board of education representative attend the meeting if invited by the family or the family's service coordinator.

8. **How will information such as the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and assessment report be shared with others?**

WV Birth to Three may not release any additional personally identifiable information without the family's written consent. The WV Birth to Three service coordinator will obtain written consent from those families who wish to share relevant information such as assessment/evaluation reports, current IFSP, and progress reports. These reports should be sent with the notice of the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting to individuals or the county board of education designee for whom the families have given written consent.

9. **How will the county board of education know if the parent chooses not to invite the school system representative to participate in the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting?**

The county will not be directly informed by the WV Birth to Three service coordinator if the family chooses not to invite a county school district representative to the 90 day face-to-face meeting. However, the Child Notification process allows the county the opportunity to contact **all families** to assure they are fully informed regarding evaluation process and potential service availability.

The county board of education should feel reassured that by having the list of children provided through the Child Find notification process, they will know about all the children in the WV

Birth to Three System who are reaching their third birthday. This process provides the county school district with the ability to assure that each family is receiving accurate information about available services in the school system.

10. What is the purpose of the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting?

There are three purposes for the transition face-to-face meeting:

- to prepare the child for transition – including discussing ways to prepare and support the child before and during the transition process;
- to prepare the family for transition – including providing them with information about: potential services/options for the child at his/her third birthday; ways the family can be involved and participate in the child’s new setting; and information about other types of resources that the child/family may need after transition; and
- to identify additional information that needs to be gathered and/or shared to facilitate a smooth transition for the child and family.

The meeting provides an opportunity for all of the invited parties to work together to support the family and child in order to have a successful transition. It is important that the meeting is scheduled in a manner that allows sufficient time to carry out the activities and protect the confidentiality of families. It is not permissible in the WV Birth to Three System to have the 90 day face-to-face transition planning meeting without the family.

11. When is the Transition Summary Update completed?

The Transition Summary Update form is designed to provide an overview of the child’s functional development and potential issues for consideration during transition planning including determining the need for extended school year services for children who will be eligible for Part B services. As originally designed, the form was to be completed by WV Birth to Three IFSP team members and others in attendance during the transition planning meeting. Based on feedback from collaborative team members, some counties may prefer that this form is completed prior to the face-to-face transition planning meeting. If this is the preference, the Part C to Part B transition procedures for the county should identify this as an option. When appropriate, WV Birth to Three teams may then choose to have this form completed prior to the face-to-face meeting, and simply review during the meeting for any additional information that may be needed.

12. When should consent for evaluation for Part B services be requested from families?

Inviting the county board of education to a face-to-face transition planning meeting is to be recognized as the family’s desire to seek information about their options for Part B preschool special education services (families may express this desire in other ways also, such as in response to contact from county boards of education via the Child Notification process). Following timelines and compliance requirements, county boards of education will provide the family with an opportunity to sign the WV Department of Education, Consent for Evaluation for Services form. Once consent is obtained the school district will provide Prior Written Notice (PWN) to family. When the county board representative attends the meeting, he/she will coordinate obtaining the family’s consent for evaluation. When the county board representative is not able to attend the face-to-face meeting, the WV Birth to Three service coordinator will assist the family, if they desire, to complete a letter of request for evaluation and will forward that request to the county board of education within one week of the transition meeting.

13. What happens when a child turns three during the summer or fall?

The child's face-to-face transition planning conference must be held at least 90 days, or up to nine months, before the child's third birthday. If a child's birthday occurs during spring months such as March, April, or May, the child's IEP must still be implemented by the child's third birthday and services will be initiated as soon as possible following the completion of the IEP. It is not acceptable to wait to initiate services because the child is turning three towards the end of the school year.

School system (Part B) evaluations cannot be delayed because the child is turning three during the summer. When the child's third birthday occurs during the summer and/or early fall, the child's eligibility/ IEP team must have conducted a meeting to determine eligibility and if eligible, to implement the IEP before the third birthday and to determine the date when Part B services will begin. It is not acceptable to wait until the first week of school in the fall to conduct the IEP meeting if the child's third birthday occurs earlier.

If the IEP Team determines the child needs extended school year and/or other services during the summer, these services must be provided once the child turns three years of age, otherwise the implementation of the IEP will begin in the fall. Extended School Year (EYS) cannot be denied solely because a child has not yet attended school. WV Birth to Three IFSP team members can provide information to assist with the determination of possible need for ESY services.

Documentation must be maintained to reflect the efforts of the county to assure that any child referred from Part C, and determined eligible for Part B, has his/her IEP in place by the child's third birthday. The county and the respective WV Birth to Three Regional Administrative Unit may want to reconsider the timelines established in the 'Transition Procedures from Part C to Part B' document, in order to allow sufficient time for completing evaluations for children with summer birthdays. The current version of these procedures for each county is posted on the WV Birth to Three website at http://www.wvdhhr.org/birth23/trans_proc/

14. What do you do with the Child Notification forms once completed?

The county boards of education must return the completed forms to Ginger Huffman, Coordinator, Office of Special Education, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., Building 6 Room 304, Charleston, WV 25305. The form may be faxed to 304-558-3741.

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