First Steps
Summer Third Birthdays

Office of Special Education
First Steps Program
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Missouri
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION™

Missouri
First steps
EARLY INTERVENTION

Topics

This presentation will address the following topics:

- **Parent options** for services over age three
- **Written parental consent** to continue in First Steps over age three
- **Requirements** for a Summer Third Birthday Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Overview of Programs

First Steps (Part C) provides early intervention services to eligible children who are **birth to age three** through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Early Childhood Special Education/ECSE (Part B) provides a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to eligible children **at age three** through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Parent Options for Services After Age Three

A child in First Steps with a summer third birthday of **April 1 through August 15** may:

- **Continue in First Steps** after age three until the day before school starts in the fall if:
  - the child is determined eligible for ECSE before age three; or,
  - the child's eligibility determination is in process before age three (i.e., the Service Coordinator confirmed ECSE received the referral);

OR

- **Transition to ECSE** on the child's third birthday.

Parent Opt Out

If the parent opts out of sending directory information to ECSE, First Steps services after age three **are not** available.

The Service Coordinator informs the parent that First Steps services **will end** on the child's third birthday.

Refer to the **Transition from First Steps to ECSE** training for more information about opt out.

Explaining Parent Options

For children with a summer third birthday, the **Transition Plan/Conference meeting** must include the Service Coordinator providing the parent with the Parent Options Handout and a discussion of:

- **Parent options** for the child to continue in First Steps after age three until school starts in the fall or transition to ECSE on the child's third birthday, and
- The **differences between** First Steps and ECSE services.

Handout:

Parent Options for Summer Third Birthdays

If the Parent Chooses ECSE Services…

The child will transition to the school district on the child's third birthday and receive **FAPE through an IEP**.

Children who receive **services through an IEP** are considered for Extended School Year (ESY).

Parents who choose ECSE services after age three **cannot later choose to return to First Steps** once consent is obtained for ECSE services **and** the child has turned three.

If the Parent Chooses First Steps Services…

The Service Coordinator obtains **written parental consent** documenting the parents decision to continue in First Steps after age three.

Written parental consent may be obtained **as early as** the Transition Plan/Conference meeting but must be obtained **before** the Summer Third Birthday IFSP meeting.

Handout:

Notice of Action/Consent to Continue First Steps for Summer Third Birthday Children

Once Parental Consent is Obtained to Continue in First Steps…

The Service Coordinator **must** hold a Summer Third Birthday IFSP meeting **before** the child's third birthday.

The **required** Summer Third Birthday IFSP meeting participants include:

- First Steps Service Coordinator
- The child's parent
- First Steps providers, as appropriate
- Other individuals, as requested by the parent

The Summer Third Birthday IFSP Meeting

The Summer Third Birthday IFSP meeting is scheduled as an **Annual IFSP meeting**. The IFSP start date is the day of the meeting, not the child's third birthday.

The Summer Third Birthday IFSP must include an **educational component that promotes school readiness** and incorporates pre-literacy, language and numeracy skills.

School Readiness

Missouri's **definition of school readiness** includes:

For children, school readiness means being **prepared** in key areas of early learning and development (social and emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, motor, health and physical well-being, and positive attitudes and behaviors toward learning.)

For families, it means an **understanding** of their child's current level of development and how to encourage their child, as well as a supportive partnership with the school and an understanding of the school system their child will enter.

Source: DESE, Office of Quality Schools, Early Learning

Outcomes and Services

The Service Coordinator **reviews** the current outcomes and early intervention services with the IFSP team as part of the school readiness discussion.

The IFSP team **discusses** how early intervention services will help develop the child's reading, language and counting skills.

The IFSP team **decides** whether the child's current services need to change. If applicable, the Service Coordinator provides the parent with Notice of Action/Consent.

Income and Insurance Information

At the Summer Third Birthday IFSP meeting, the Service Coordinator **collects income and private insurance information** in order to confirm the family's monthly cost participation fee.

Data Entry

The Service Coordinator enters:

- **The school readiness discussion** in the transition section of the Summer Third Birthday IFSP;
- **Any updates** to child outcomes, family outcomes or services;
- **Service authorizations** according to the IFSP team's decision; and,
- **Income and private insurance information** to confirm the monthly fee.

Summer Third Birthday IFSP Services

Early intervention services are delivered in accordance with the Summer Third Birthday IFSP **until the day before school starts** in the fall following the child's third birthday.

However, if the child is determined **ineligible for ECSE** or if the parent is **no longer pursuing ECSE**, then the child is no longer eligible for First Steps after age three. The Service Coordinator confirms the information with ECSE and the parent.

First Steps or ECSE

Parents who choose for their child to continue in First Steps after age three have the right, at any time, for their child to participate in ECSE **instead** of First Steps.

However, a child **cannot** participate in First Steps and ECSE at the same time.

Take-away Points:

Key Point: Summer third birthday is defined as a child who has a third birthday of April 1 through August 15.

Key Point: Parents of children with summer third birthdays may choose to: (1) continue in First Steps until school begins in the fall, or (2) transition to ECSE on the child's third birthday.

Key Point: In order to participate in First Steps after age three, a child with a summer third birthday must be determined eligible for ECSE, or in the process of determining eligibility for ECSE, before the child's third birthday.

Frequently Asked Questions

For First Steps:
sefirststeps@dese.mo.gov

For ECSE:
secompliance@dese.mo.gov

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