



DEPARTMENT OF  
ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*



**Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)**

**Transition Guide for Families:  
What You Need to Know Before  
Your Child's Third Birthday**





Your child's third birthday is an important day. Aside from being a time to celebrate, it also marks the transition from AzEIP. This brochure provides information to guide you through the transition from AzEIP, helps answer your questions, and prepares you for the next steps.



## What is Transition?

Soon your child will be turning 3, and the early intervention services your child currently receives will end. A formal transition process has been established to help you plan for early childhood services, preschool, or other community programs for your child beginning at age 3.

At every Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting, you will talk about transition with your early intervention team. However, the transition process officially begins when your child is 2 years, 6 months of age. Throughout the transition process, there will be supports, services, and meetings available to you. Your team will help you make the transition successful for your child. Before your child exits AzEIP, you will have an IFSP meeting to discuss your child's current services and supports and services that are available after exiting.

Transition is a natural part of life. AzEIP transitions are individualized to meet your family's priorities and needs. A successful transition means that a child and family is matched with supports and services for the future based on their needs. These supports may be a local early childhood program or developmental resources.

# Transition Timeline

## 27 – 30 Months

By the time your child reaches **2 years 6 months**, a transition planning meeting will be scheduled to discuss transition activities.

During your transition planning meeting your service coordinator and you will:

- ▶ Review your child's current development.
- ▶ Discuss your child's needs and how he or she learns.
- ▶ Discuss any concerns you may have.
- ▶ Identify potential options for services after age 3.

Your service coordinator will share information about your child with the local school district unless you opt-out by the end of the transition planning meeting.

## 30 – 33 Months

Before **2 years 9 months**, your service coordinator will schedule a transition conference meeting with the team, the local school district, and other potential programs, to discuss moving out of early intervention.

Prior to your child's transition conference, your service coordinator will send invitations to potential programs and people you would like to attend this meeting.

During the conference meeting, you and your team will:

- ▶ Discuss options for your child, such as community-based programs and special education.
- ▶ Identify activities to support a smooth transition.
- ▶ Discuss the difference between AZEIP and preschool services.
- ▶ Discuss your child and family's rights.

The local school district will:

- ▶ Explain the evaluation process to you.
- ▶ Explain how eligibility is determined.
- ▶ Explain the timelines for eligibility and services to begin.

## 36 Months

By your child's **3<sup>rd</sup> birthday**, the school district will conduct an evaluation and

- ▶ If your child is eligible for services under IDEA Part B, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed as the plan for your child's services and supports in preschool.
- ▶ If your child is not eligible for services under IDEA Part B, your service coordinator will ensure you have been given resources for community-based programs to meet your child and family needs.
- ▶ Review all your questions and activities that should be completed before your child leaves AZEIP.



## Things to Consider

- ▶ **What dates and timelines should I be aware of/prepared for?**
- ▶ **What are the differences between early intervention and preschool or early childhood special education services?**
- ▶ **How much does it cost for early childhood services? Who pays for these services?**
- ▶ **How can I prepare my child for the preschool setting?**
- ▶ **Who can I contact if I have questions about my child's development after my child exits from AzEIP?**
- ▶ **Will there be an opportunity to meet my child's new providers?**
- ▶ **Does my child need to be potty trained?**
- ▶ **What if something changes between now and when my child transitions from AzEIP or I change my mind? What should I do?**



## Family Responsibilities

You are an important part of the transition process. No one knows your child better than you do. There are many ways to be involved and help make the transition process go smoothly, such as:

- ▶ Gather important papers, such as medical records and current IFSPs, and provide all relevant information to your team.
- ▶ Attend and participate in the scheduled meetings.
- ▶ Ask questions if you do not understand something. Your service coordinator will help answer your questions and navigate you through the transition process.
- ▶ Have an open mind. Know it is okay to change your mind. Talk with your service coordinator.
- ▶ If you need support, do not hesitate to ask for it. Your service coordinator is here to support you.

### **What if your child is not eligible for Part B (preschool special education services)?**

Your child may still be eligible for other programs in your community. Your service coordinator will work with you to identify available options for you and your family.

# Resources

## **Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS)**

<https://www.azahcccs.gov/members/ALTCSlocations.html>

ALTCS is the State of Arizona's Medicaid program that provides long term care services, at little or no cost, to financially and medically eligible Arizona residents who are aged, blind, disabled, or have a developmental disability.

## **Arizona Department of Education (ADE)**

<https://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/>

ADE ensures that public education agencies in Arizona have special education programs, policies, and procedures that comply with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B and that eligible children and youth with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

## **Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)**

<https://des.az.gov/services/disabilities/early-intervention/resources-families>

AzEIP provides team-based services for children birth to three to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C with significant developmental delays or established conditions.

## **Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)**

<https://des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-disabilities>

DDD provides supports and services to individuals diagnosed with one of the following developmental disabilities: autism, epilepsy, cognitive/intellectual disability or cerebral palsy.



## **Head Start**

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs>

Head Start Birth to Five Program provides comprehensive early childhood development and family support services to income-eligible families with children ages 0-5 and at-risk pregnant women. The program has an emphasis on school readiness through early learning opportunities that promote strong child outcomes in the areas of social and emotional development, language, cognitive, early reading, science, math, and physical development.

## **Raising Special Kids (RSK)**

<https://raisingspecialkids.org/> | 1-800-237-3007

Raising Special Kids is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization that provides support and information for parents of children, from birth to age 26, with a full range of disabilities and special health care needs, including parent training classes. Programs are offered at no cost to families and are available in English and Spanish.

## **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Parents and Families**

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/parents-families/>

Parents and families want the best for their family members. The Parents and Families Resource page from the Office of Special Education brings together U.S. Department of Education-funded centers, department programs, and additional information/resources of interest for parents and families.

# Definitions

## IDEA

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities and ensures special education and related services for those children.

- **Part C Services (AzEIP)**

Home and Community based services provided to infants and toddlers (birth-3 years) who have a significant developmental delay or disability.

- **Part B Services (Early Childhood Special Education)**

Special Education Services provided to children ages 3-21 by a local school district.

## IEP

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a plan developed for children ages 3-21 who qualify for special education and related services through their local school.

## IFSP

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a plan developed for infants and toddlers ages 0-3 who qualify for early intervention services through AzEIP.

## Transition Planning Meeting (TPM)

The Transition Planning Meeting (TPM) is included as part of the IFSP and will map out the transition activities for your child to ensure a smooth transition from AzEIP.

## Transition Conference

The Transition Conference is a meeting that occurs with the family, the AzEIP team, and others who were identified during the TPM and invited to attend (e.g., Head Start, local school district, private preschool).





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