

This handout shares the transition planning experience of a toddler named Emma and her family.

Emma is 30 months old and has participated in early intervention services to support her adaptive, communication, and cognitive development for about 14 months. Emma's parents, Leslie and Derek, are pleased with the progress Emma has made in early intervention, but worry about the upcoming transition to preschool when Emma turns three.

During a recent meeting to develop Emma's Individualized Family Service Plan—her IFSP—Emma's team explained that, due to her developmental delay, Emma is likely to be eligible for special education services through the local public school system. The IFSP team discussed the transition process with Leslie and Derek and explained that they would meet again for a transition planning meeting with a representative from the local school.

Chris, the early intervention service coordinator working with Emma and her family, then contacted Leslie and Derek to schedule the transition meeting and explained that they would develop a transition plan at that time. With Leslie and Derek's approval, Chris then sends notification to the school about the transition meeting.

Before the meeting, Leslie and Derek discuss the great support they have received from their local early intervention program and their concerns about the upcoming transition when Emma turns three and is no longer eligible for early intervention and will begin preschool. They wonder what will occur during the transition conference and what options will be available to best support Emma's continued development and progress in a new setting.



Child and Family Study Questions

1. Although Leslie and Derek's concerns are common among families of infants and toddlers with disabilities, what supports can Chris provide during the upcoming transition meeting?

2. Leslie and Derek wonder what options will be available to support Emma in a preschool setting. Whose responsibility is it to discuss preschool services available under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with families?

Responses to Child and Family Study Questions

1. According to IDEA Part C, a transition plan must be in the child's IFSP no fewer than 90 days (and not more than 9 months) before the child's third birthday. During the transition planning meeting Chris will support Leslie and Derek by:
 - a. Including them in the transition planning process
 - b. Explaining program options that may be available
 - c. Letting them know that they are experiencing typical emotions and sharing with them resources such as local support groups for parents of young children with disabilities, parent training and information centers, and online resources related to preschool services for children with disabilities

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- d. Providing information about the transition process from early intervention (Part C) to preschool (Part B) services, resources, and answering questions.
2. As part of the transition planning process, Chris, the family's early intervention service coordinator, will share information about Emma's eligibility for Part B services and the options they have for preschool services. If Leslie and Derek decide to transition Emma to Part B services, specific program options will be discussed at an IEP meeting with the school.

Child and Family Study Concluded

When Chris arrives at Emma's family's home with Stacy, the special education director at the local school district, for the scheduled transition planning meeting, Leslie tells them how happy she and Derek are with Emma's growth and development. Leslie shares their concerns about Emma's upcoming transition to preschool--in particular that Emma may not adjust well to a classroom setting since she does not have much experience with other young children.



Chris shared with Leslie that many families have the same concern, and that they will work together to identify the best option for their family, including supports to make the transition as smooth as possible.

He also told her that IDEA requires that Part C lead agencies inform families of toddlers with disabilities about the availability of preschool services under Part B, and that a transition plan must be in place in the child's IFSP at least 90 days before the child's third birthday. Chris and Stacy explain that, based on Emma's most recent evaluation, she is eligible for special education services through the local public school.

Leslie and Derek decide that this could be a good option, and Stacy tells them that she will call them the following day to schedule an IEP meeting at the school to develop an IEP together that will outline the supports needed for a smooth transition and Emma's continued progress in preschool.