

Section 6 Early Intervention & Special Education

Early Intervention is a range of services designed to intervene during early stages of an infant and toddlers development to enhance their development to minimize their potential for developmental delays.

In Wyoming, early intervention services are provided through 14 regional child development centers for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. These centers contract with the Wyoming Department of Health, Behavioral Health Division, Developmental Disabilities Early Intervention and Education Program. These programs are designed to help your child and family receive the appropriate, individualized support and services, as needed. For more detailed information on the child developmental centers and early intervention services, call the Child Development Services at (307) 752-0687 or visit their website at www.cds wy.org for a list of the regional development centers in Wyoming. For more information on families' rights and early intervention, call the Parent Information Center (PIC) for a free copy of their parent handbook for infants and toddlers, "*Baby Steps*," also available as a download at www.wpic.org or by calling 1-800-660-9742 or (307) 684-2277.

By the time your child is 6 years old, he or she should have transitioned into school. If they have not been evaluated for services or supports under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and do not have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) you should request an evaluation. This would only be necessary if their special health care need is negatively affecting their opportunity to learn or receive educational benefit. The IEP can address individual needs of your child, and the supports and services the school can provide to help them learn and get more from their education. For more information on parent's rights under IDEA, call the Parent Information Center, (PIC) to request our free handbook, "*Keys to confident and effective parent participation in the special education process*." This easy-to-read handbook is also available on cd, or online as a download. Call 1-800-660-9742 or (307) 684-2277 or go to www.wpic.org.

For students who do not need special education services and supports under the IDEA, an individualized health plan (IHP) can be developed. This plan is a formal written agreement developed by a team of school staff in partnership with the student's family, the student, and the student's health care provider(s). IHP's are important to achieve educational equality with health management needs, and make sure students with special health care needs have access to an education, whether or not the student is eligible for special education supports and services.

Keep copies of information related to your child's education in this section of Packaging Wisdom. This could include your child's school and health plans (IFSP, IEP's, IHP's- see Section 10 Glossary), any informational materials given to school staff, notes from meetings, school communication sheets, Adaptive Physical Education information, examples of your child's work, report cards and psycho-educational evaluations.

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Tips:

- There are many misunderstandings about special education and the services required by law. When you meet with people from the child developmental center or the school district to discuss your child's education, ask them to explain your rights to you. Don't hesitate to ask any questions you may have.
- Take an active part in your child's education. It is as important for you to be an active member of the educational team as it is for you to be an active member of the medical team.

It is usually in your child's best interest to share information about your child's medical condition with the school staff. You may need to help them learn about your child's special health care needs. This record may be very helpful to developmental center staff and school personnel.

- If your child is on medication, try to develop a schedule that will not require your child to take the medication at school. If your child must take medication during the school day, ask the school staff how they will insure the safe administration of that medication- and put it in a written health plan. Be sure they know what the medication is for and its side effects. Check with the developmental center or school staff to see if your child is having any problems with the medication.
- If your child is going to be out of school for medical reasons, be sure to let the center and/or school know. For the developmental center and related services, they will want to make up time lost, and for school, classwork and homework will need to be shared. Plans will need to be made for your child to make up school work and/or if need be, for a teacher to provide instruction in the hospital or in your home until the child can return.

School systems often do not understand the health care system and vice versa. Your child will be receiving services from both systems and you can help bridge the gap by asking.

Ask your child's special education team leader or teacher to explain terms and abbreviations used in describing your child's school program. The words and terms used may mean different things in different school districts. Keep asking until you completely understand your child's school program.

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School Contacts

School District: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Website: _____

Special Education Director: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

504 Plan Coordinator: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

District Head Nurse: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Website: _____

Regular Classroom Teacher: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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Special Education Teacher: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Paraprofessional/Aide: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

School Nurse: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____