

Maryland Preschool Special Education Services Program

Children Ages 3 through 5

What are Preschool Services and where are they located?

Maryland Preschool Services include special instruction and related services provided to young children, ages three through five, who qualify under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA, Part B, Section 619). Through its twenty-four local school systems (23 counties and Baltimore City), Maryland's Preschool Services program ensures the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all eligible children at no cost to their families, and in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE means that young children with disabilities should receive services in typical community-based early childhood settings and programs whenever possible, and only go to more restrictive or specialized settings when their individual needs require it.

Who is eligible?

Young children ages 3 through 5 who have a disability as defined by one of the categories listed below are eligible for preschool services provided through the local school system. In some local school systems preschool children may also be eligible if they meet the criteria of Developmental Delay (please contact the **Child Find Coordinator** in your local school system to find out if the Developmental Delay criteria are used- see the listing provided). Children must be Maryland residents but do not have to be legal U.S. residents. In Maryland, the categories of disability include:

- Autism
- Emotional Disturbance
- Deaf
- Multiple Disabilities
- Other Health Impairment
- Speech/Language Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Hearing Impairment
- Mental Retardation
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Developmental Delay

How does a child become eligible?

Starting with the local school system Child Find office, children can receive screening services to identify any areas of concern for further assessment by a multidisciplinary team. Following completion of assessments, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team, of which parents are essential members, meets to review and discuss findings in order to make a determination of eligibility under one of the established disability categories.

What happens next?

Once a child is determined to have a disability, the IEP Team works together to develop the IEP, a written document identifying the special education and related services necessary to support the child's development and educational program. The IEP allows everyone with a role in teaching and nurturing the child to understand what the child will need to grow and prosper, and the particular role they can play as a supportive member of the child's team.

Services identified on an IEP might include special instruction, speech and language therapy, physical and occupational therapy, assistive technology devices and services, psychological services, and other services identified by the IEP Team as necessary for the child to benefit from participating in an educational program.

Where can services be provided?

After the IEP is developed and agreed upon by the IEP Team, the next important step in the process is to identify the setting, or Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), in which the child's special education and related services needs can be met. Appropriate LRE settings for preschool children can include a preschool special education class in (or closest to) the neighborhood school, a general education preschool program, local Head Start program, approved private preschool, child care center, or another early childhood setting available within the community.

Special Note for parents of children enrolled in HealthChoice: Services provided by the Maryland Preschool Services Program are not a substitute for medical care received from your child's MCO including care from your child's pediatrician and specialists. Your child's MCO will also pay for any needed medical equipment and supplies. Also, keep in mind that mental health care (for behavioral or other mental health problems) from a psychiatrist or psychologist through Maryland Health Partners may still be needed. Finally, parents should be aware that they can access additional speech and language, occupational, and physical therapy services along with audiology services directly by calling and scheduling an appointment with a participating medical assistance provider. A referral is not needed for these services.

For more information about Maryland Preschool Services, contact the local school system Child Find office, or the Maryland State Department of Education, Preschool Services Section at (410) 767-0261, or the toll free number, (800) 535-0182.

Child Find Contact Information

State of Maryland

Marjorie Shulbank (410) 767-0261
Division of Special Education/
Early Intervention Services
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street,
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Allegany County

Tim Miller (301) 759-2066
Allegany County Board of Education
108 Washington Street
Cumberland, Maryland 21502
Fax: (301) 722-7631

Anne Arundel County

5 years of age through 5th grade
Preschool/Elementary/Speech & Language:
Tom Conner (410) 222-5470
Secondary Education:
James Walsh (410) 222-5297
Non-Public
Margie Kerman (410) 222-5479

Anne Arundel County Public Schools
2644 Riva Road
Annapolis, MD 21401
Fax: (410) 222-5607

Baltimore City

Rodney Gittings (410) 396-7107
Baltimore City Public Schools
2500 E. Northern Parkway, Rm 26
Baltimore, MD 21214
Fax: (410) 254-2165

Baltimore County

Marisa Conner (410) 887-3017
Baltimore County Public Schools
Office of Special Education
Greenwood/ESS Building
6901 Charles Street
Towson, MD 21204
Fax: (410) 583-8736

Calvert County

Donna Young (410) 535-7380
Calvert County Public Schools
4105 Old Town Road
Huntingtown, MD 20639
Fax: (410) 535-7383

Caroline County

Rosemary Thayer (410) 479-3246
Caroline County Board of Education
Law Building, 112 Market Street
Denton, MD 21629
Fax: (410) 479-0108

Carroll County

Joyce Bessey (410) 751-3033
Carroll County Public Schools
55 N. Court Street
Westminster, MD 21157
Fax: (410) 751-3003

Cecil County

Richard Wilkinson (410) 996-5444
Cecil County Public Schools
201 Booth Street
Elkton, MD 21921
Fax: (410) 996-5454

Charles County

Nancy Marth (301) 753-1745
Charles County Public Schools
F. B. Gwynn Educational Center
5998 Radio Station Road
LaPlata, MD 20646-0646
Fax: (301) 934-3692

Dorchester County

Anne Thomas (410) 228-4747
Dorchester County Board of Education
Infants & Toddlers Program
Box 619, 700 Glasgow Street
Cambridge, MD 21613
Fax: (410) 228-1847

Frederick County

Dede Bowman (301) 644-5292
Frederick County Public Schools
7630 Hayward Road
Frederick, MD 21702
Fax: (301) 698-2736

Garrett County

Jennifer Kotulak (301) 334-5002
Garrett County Board of Education
P.O. Box 59
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Fax: (301) 334-8916

Harford County

Eileen Knotts (410) 638-4386/87
Forest Lakes Elementary School
100 Osborne parkway
Forest Hill, MD 21050-1650
Fax: (410) 638-4265

Howard County

Linda Flanagan (410) 313-7046
County Diagnostic Center
5451 Beaverkill Road
Columbia, MD 21044
Fax: (410) 730-7049
lflanagan@mail.howard.k12.md.us

Kent County

Benjamin Hirsh (410) 778-7130
Kent County Board of Education
Infants & Toddlers Program.
215 Washington Avenue
Chestertown, MD 21620
Fax: (410) 778-6193

Montgomery County

Julie Bader (301) 279-3462/63
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
Fax: (301) 279-3318

Prince George's County

Preschool: Carol Dunn (301) 952-6347
School Age: Carol Reed (301) 952-6346
Prince George's County Public Schools
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Fax: (301) 574-9838

Queen Anne's County

Kim Tucker (410) 758-2403
Queen Anne's County Board of Ed.
202 Chesterfield Avenue
Centreville, MD 21617
Fax: (410) 758-8206

Somerset County

Herman Riggan (410) 651-1485
Somerset County Public Schools
30411 Mt. Vernon Road
Princess Anne, MD 21853
Fax: (410) 651-2931

St. Mary's County

Marilyn Beach (301) 475-5636
St. Mary's County Public Schools
P.O. Box 1410
Leonardtown, MD 20650
Fax: (301) 475-2469

Talbot County

Jennifer Spurry (410) 820-8263
Easton Elementary School, Dobson Building
305 Glenwood Avenue
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Washington County

Cheryl Strong (301) 766-2970
Washington County Board of Education
P.O. Box 730, 820 Commonwealth Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21741
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Wicomico County

Jocelyn Williams (410) 543-4238
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Worcester County

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This information has been compiled from State sources with editing and other information provided by Baltimore HealthCare Access, focus on children with special health care needs program. Visit us on the web at <http://www.bhca.org> for more information about our program and resources.



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