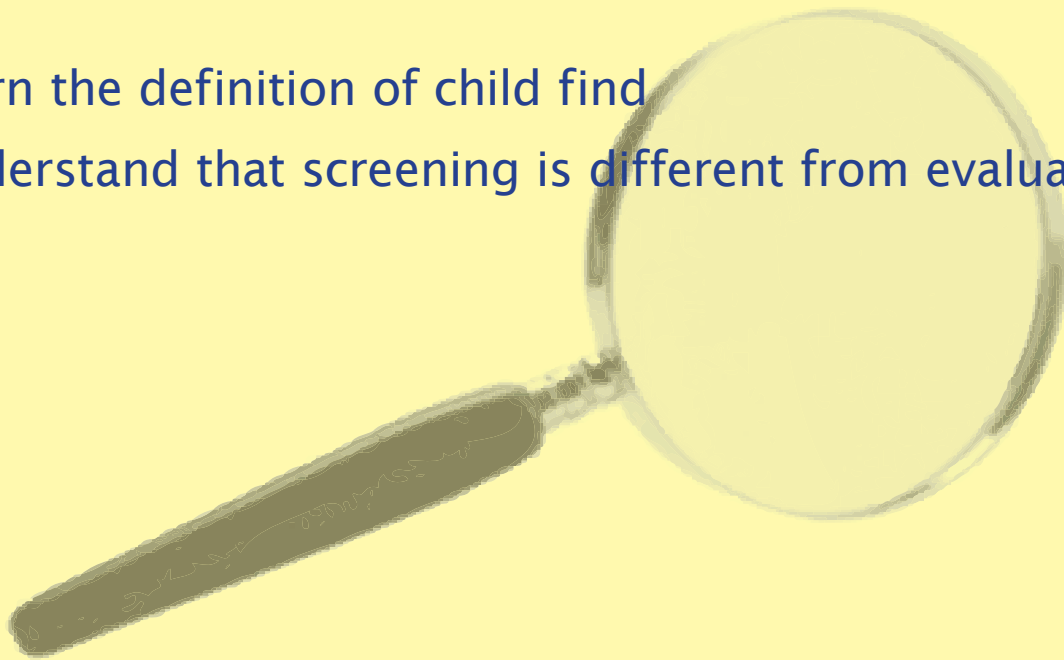


Chapter 1: Child Find

In this chapter you will:

- learn the definition of child find
- understand that screening is different from evaluation



Overview

Child Find is an ongoing process through which all children, from birth through 21 (i.e., through the day before the student's 22nd birthday), or who may be eligible for early intervention, or who may be in need of special education services are identified, located and evaluated.

Each school district is responsible for actively locating, identifying and evaluating all children who live within the district boundaries who may qualify to receive special education and/or related services. All school districts must have written procedures for child find activities for all school children, including those attending private, charter, and/or religiously affiliated schools. These procedures must describe activities for:

Worth a Look

The main legal provisions that address Child Find are:

20 USC Sec. 1412(a)(3)
34 CFR Sec. 300.111
23 IAC 226.100

- » annual screening of children under the age of five to identify those who may need early intervention or special education services;
- » ongoing review of all children in general education classes;
- » ongoing coordination with early intervention programs like Child and Family Connections, Head Start, local preschools and daycare facilities;
- » coordination and consultation with nonpublic schools located within the district; and
- » referrals of children who might require evaluation for special education from parents, school staff, and representatives from community agencies.

Screening

Screening is the process of reviewing **all** children in a given group with a **set of criteria** for the purpose of identifying certain individuals for evaluations who may be in need of special education. One purpose of screening is to locate children, birth through age 21, (i.e., through the day before the student's 22nd birthday) who may benefit from special education services to maintain satisfactory educational

performance. No child can be determined eligible to receive early intervention/special education and related services based only on the results of a screening procedure.

Screening is different from evaluation. Screening generally means reviewing all children in a given group (all kindergartners, all students who are new to the school district, all 3-year-old children in the community, etc.). It is not specific to an individual child except where it is used by a school district to determine whether a child that has been referred for evaluation is in need of evaluation. All children in the group must be screened with the same assessment process. Screening does not involve administration of assessment instruments which would be used in an evaluation. The district must inform the public of the process for conducting group screenings through school handbooks, newsletters, child find activities, letters, or similar methods. Written parent/guardian permission is not required for this type of screening. Screening results should be shared with the parents/guardians. Screenings are done to determine which students are in need of evaluation. Screening may also occur when a particular child is referred for evaluation for special education in order for the school district to determine if evaluation is necessary.

Special education instruction and related services are available for children with special needs from birth to age 21 (i.e., through the day before the student's 22nd birthday).

Special needs may be in the areas of:

- » Vision
- » Hearing
- » Health
- » Behavior

Or involve skills in:

- » Fine or gross motor
- » Speech/Language
- » Cognitive or learning

Tips for Parents

Here are some suggestions for how you can best make use of the Screening process for your child:

- Ask your child's daycare or preschool teacher if they have concerns about your child
- Ask your child's doctor if they have any concerns about your child
- Consider the advice of friends and family when they have worries about your child
- Call your local school principal or local school district office and ask about having your child attend a School Child Find Screening
- Bring any papers from teachers, doctors or others to the Child Find screening.

Important Reminder

Please share this information with your relatives, friends and neighbors. It is important that parents of young children are aware of the availability of services before school enrollment age.

- » Social and emotional
- » Adaptive or self-help

It is important to locate children with disabilities at a young age so that early help and support can be provided. Studies show that students learn and grow more successfully when they receive help early in their lives. Referrals for evaluation may be made by a parent, community agency, physician, day care provider, teacher or private school employee.

Screening and evaluation, as appropriate, are available at *no cost* to the family.