



Early Childhood Developmental Screening and Referral Quick Guide

The Early Childhood Developmental Screening and Referral Quick Guide provides educators with a clear, step-by-step process for identifying, referring, and supporting young children who may have developmental delays or disabilities. The guide outlines best practices for developmental monitoring, screening, family engagement, referral to appropriate early intervention or special education services, and ongoing collaboration to ensure children receive timely, individualized supports that promote positive developmental and learning outcomes.

Before Screening

Before conducting a developmental screening, educators should establish strong partnerships with families, observe children's development during daily routines and instruction, and collect ongoing formative assessment data. Developmental monitoring is a continuous process that helps educators identify potential concerns, inform instruction, and determine when a formal developmental screening is needed. Family observations and concerns should be considered throughout this process.

Developmental Screening and Referral Process

Step 1: Screen Every Child

Administer a validated developmental screening tool, such as the ASQ-3® or ASQ® Online upon entry into the program and at recommended developmental intervals. Ensure families participate in completing the screening and use fidelity according to publisher guidelines.

Remember: Developmental screening is NOT a diagnosis. It is an early identification tool used to determine whether a child may benefit from additional evaluation.

Step 2: Review Multiple Sources of Information Alongside Screening Results

It's important to consider multiple sources of information alongside screening results to have the most accurate picture of the child's development. Other resources may include:

- Teacher observations
- Ongoing formative assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold®)
- Family input
- Health or developmental information provided by the family

*Use all available information to determine the most appropriate next steps.

Step 3: Determine Next Steps

The ASQ-3® provides recommendations based on the outcomes to guide the Early Childhood Special Education referral process:

Low/No Risk

- Continue high-quality instruction
- Continue developmental monitoring (TSG)
- Share results with families
- Schedule the next developmental screening

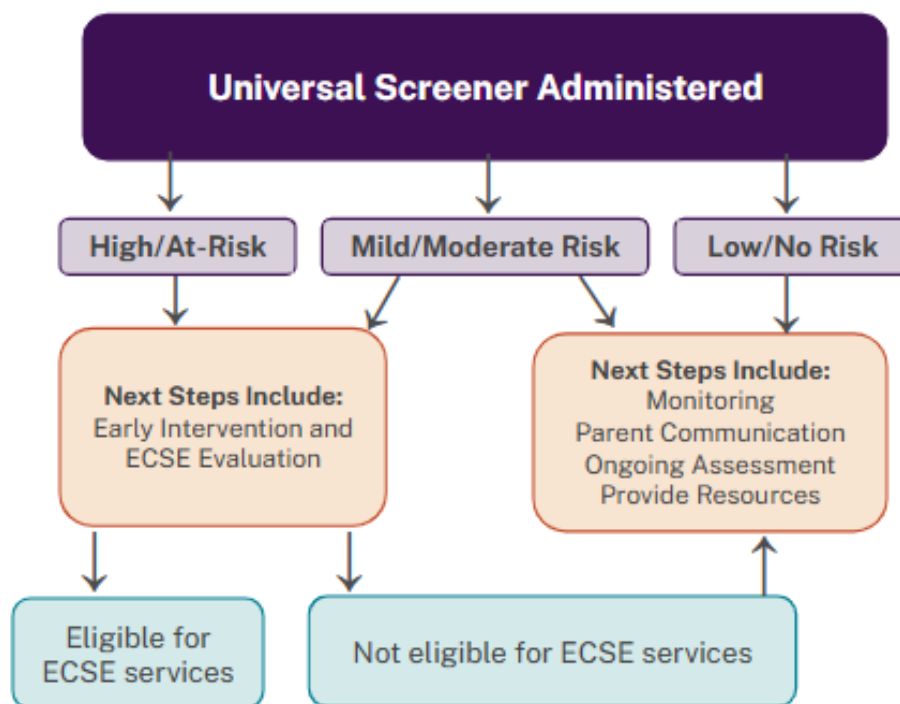
Mild/Moderate Risk (Monitoring Zone)

- Provide targeted classroom supports
- Continue ongoing assessment
- Collaborate with families on activities to support development
- Monitor progress and rescreen according to program guidance.

High/At-Risk

- Meet with family to review results and explain the referral process
- Initiate the appropriate referral immediately to begin the ECSE Evaluation process
- Continue providing classroom supports while the evaluation process occurs

*Do not delay referral while implementing interventions for preschool aged children.

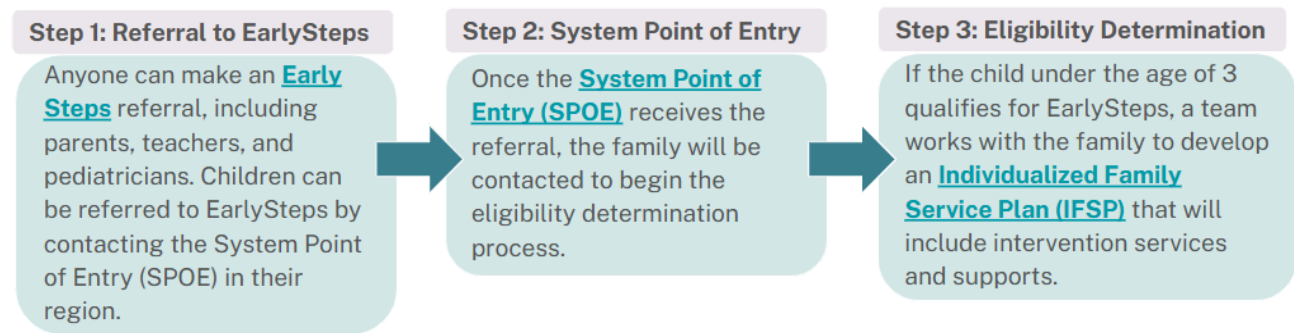


Step 4: Refer for Evaluation

A referral is made to determine if the child is eligible for services.

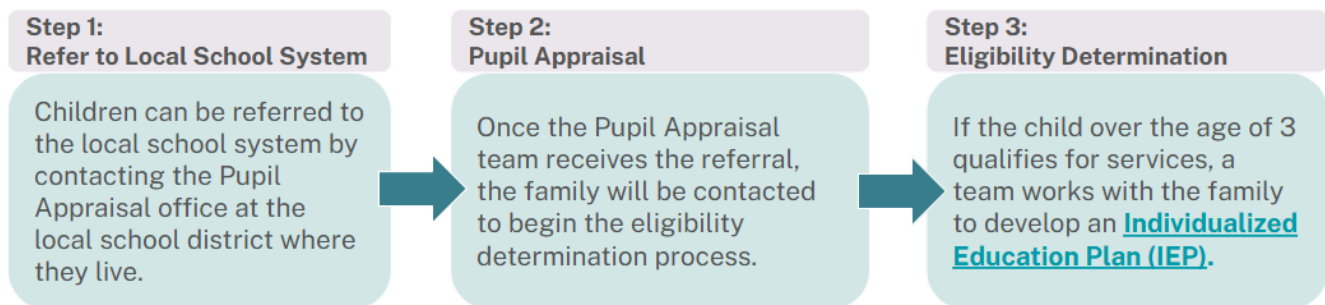
Birth to Age 3

Children from birth up to their third birthday should be referred to Early Steps.



Ages 3-5

Children ages 3-5 should be referred to the local school district's Pupil Appraisal/Child Find office.



While the evaluation is underway, the child should continue to receive support:

- Continue providing high-quality instruction and individualized classroom support.
- Maintain ongoing communication with families.
- Document progress and observations.
- Collaborate with service providers and specialists.

Step 5: Collaborate After Eligibility

When a child is eligible for services:

- Participate in IRSP or IEP implementation
- Collaborate with therapists, EarlySteps providers, and special educators.
- Support service delivery within the child's natural learning environment whenever possible.
- Continue ongoing progress monitoring and family communication

LDOE Early Childhood Best Practices

Screen every child upon entry and at recommended intervals (ASQ-3)

Monitor development continuously using ongoing assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold)

Engage families throughout every step of the process

LDOE Early Childhood Best Practices
Use multiple sources of information when making decisions
Refer children promptly when concerns are identified
Collaborate with community partners and service providers
Continue supporting every child before, during, and after the referral process.