

What to Expect in a Preschool IEP (Ages 3–5)

What is a Preschool IEP?

A **Preschool IEP** is an **Individualized Education Program** for children ages 3 to 5 who qualify for special education under Part B of IDEA. It is a written plan developed by a team that outlines your child’s learning goals and the services they will receive through the school district.

This plan builds on what your child received through Early Intervention (Tiny-K), but it becomes more focused on **school-readiness skills** like communication, behavior, learning, and social interaction.

If your child is new to special education, they will first go through a preschool evaluation to see if they qualify. This is explained in our separate guide: *Understanding Eligibility for Preschool Special Education*.

◆ **Key Points Parents Should Know**

- **Eligibility is required.** Your child must go through an evaluation process to qualify for services under one of the disability categories.
 - **The plan is individualized.** It will address your child’s unique needs and strengths.
 - **Services can look different.** Some children attend a special education preschool classroom, while others receive services in a community preschool or daycare.
 - **The IEP is a legal document.** It guarantees the supports and services your child needs will be provided.
 - **You are an equal part of the team.** Your voice matters in deciding goals, placements, and services.
 - **You must give written consent.** Services cannot begin until you agree to the plan.
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What Will the IEP Include?

- Your child's present levels of performance (what they can do now)
 - Measurable annual goals (skills they will work toward)
 - How progress will be measured and reported to you
 - What special education and related services they will receive
 - Where services will happen (location and setting)
 - Start dates and how often services will be provided
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Common Services for Preschoolers

- **Speech-language therapy**
 - **Occupational therapy** (fine motor skills, daily tasks)
 - **Physical therapy** (gross motor and movement)
 - **Special education instruction** in small group or inclusive settings
 - **Behavioral or social skills support**
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What Other Parents Wish They Knew

- "I didn't know I could ask for my child to receive services in their daycare."
 - "The first meeting felt overwhelming, but it helped when I brought someone with me."
 - "I learned that goals should be specific, not just 'improve communication.'"
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Parent Reflection Space

Use this space to think about your child's next stage of growth and learning.

- What strengths does my child show every day?
 - What do I hope preschool services will help them with?
 - What concerns or fears do I have about entering a school setting?
 - Who could I invite to support me at the IEP meeting?
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Sources

- Kansas State Department of Education. (2023). *Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ksde.org/>

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B. (2004). Retrieved from <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (2022). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice Guidelines*.
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Important Reminder

This handout reflects Kansas-specific preschool special education guidance. Always check with your local school district or the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) for the most accurate and updated information.