



Glossary of Terms

Advocate: a person who speaks for the best interests of another person

Adjusted gross annual family income: the total amount of money you (and your spouse) earn before any taxes and after allowed adjustments. IRS allowed adjustments may include certain retirement fund contributions, student loan interest, moving expenses, alimony paid, medical savings account deduction, and others.

Assessment: The initial and ongoing process used by qualified personnel to identify the child's unique strengths and needs and the family's concerns, priorities, and resources in order to plan appropriate supports and services and to track a child's developmental progress.

Assistive technology: devices or services that allow or improve independence in daily activities (for example, a curved handle on a spoon for easier self-feeding; wheelchair; communication board)

Birth to Three program: an agency under contract with the Birth to Three System to provide services and supports that your child and family may use to reach your outcomes

Birth to Three team: people who have specialized knowledge about how to reach developmental goals; always includes your family, and may include one or more therapists, a teacher, and other professionals who match your goals and needs

Confidential: private; cannot be shared without your permission

Consent: the approval that you give for someone to do something that they could not otherwise do; consent is always voluntary and may be canceled at any time

Co-payment: the part of the total cost of a medical bill that you are responsible for paying

Development: the process of learning and mastering new skills over time; includes ability to move, communicate, think, see, hear, and play with toys or other people

Developmental disability: A condition that may prevent physical and/or cognitive development

Deductible: the amount of money that you must pay each year before your health insurance will begin to pay for services

Disabilities: conditions that limit or slow down one or more kinds of development

Due process hearing: the most formal way to resolve a disagreement between an enrolled family and the Birth to Three System; usually used after verbal discussion, written complaint, and/or mediation have not successfully resolved the complaint.

Early intervention: supports and services offered to an eligible child and family, early in the child's life, in order to improve the child's ability to live, learn, and play in their community

Eligible: meeting the requirements to participate

Entitlement: all eligible children will receive services regardless of any other factor (such as family income, birth country, etc.)

Evaluation: having professionals trained in different areas (e.g., a speech pathologist and a physical therapist) use tests to identify your child's eligibility for the Birth to Three System as well as his or her abilities and needs

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act): a federal law that guarantees certain educational rights for all people, including those with disabilities

IEP (Individualized Education Program): a written education plan for each student in special education developed by a team of professionals (teachers, therapists, etc.) and the child's parents

IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan): a written plan describing what goals you have for your child and family, the Birth to Three services and supports used to reach those goals, as well as where and when they take place and who will work with you

LEA (Local Educational Agency): your local public school district

Lead Agency: the state agency that operates or contracts with the programs that are approved to provide Birth to Three services, assures quality, and conducts billing audits in order to maintain compliance with all applicable laws; the Lead Agency in Connecticut is the Department of Developmental Disabilities

LRE (Least Restrictive Environment): a legal term meaning that each child with a disability has a right to be educated with their nondisabled peers when appropriate and should remain in a regular education setting unless it is not appropriate to do so

Mediation: a way to settle a conflict so both sides win. Parents and professionals discuss their differences and, with the help of a trained mediator, reach a settlement that both sides accept.

Multidisciplinary evaluation: having professionals with different kinds of training (e.g., a speech pathologist and a physical therapist) use tests to identify your child's abilities and needs

Natural environments: places where your child normally spends time living, learning and playing

O.T. (occupational therapy): activities designed to improve fine motor skills (finger, hand, or arm movements) and oral- motor (eating, swallowing) abilities

Outcomes: goals or changes that you want to work toward

P.T. (physical therapy): activities designed to improve gross motor skills (leg, back, or whole body movements)

PPT (Planning and Placement Team): a group of professionals from your LEA who will determine your child's eligibility for preschool special education after age three, and help to develop your child's IEP.

Part C: Part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act providing funds to state lead agencies to assist in the provision of early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through two.

"Self-funded" health insurance: insurance coverage in which actual medical bills are paid by an employer who contracts with an agency to manage those payments (rather than the more common type of health

insurance in which an employer pays a flat fee per employee to a health plan). Self-funded health insurance plans are not required to follow the specific terms of Connecticut's Birth to Three law, therefore Birth to Three asks for special permission to bill this type of plan because your annual and lifetime caps are not automatically protected.

Service coordination: a way to bring together the people, information and resources that your child and family may need. Your service coordinator is the person who will help to make these connections and identify resources.

Speech and language services: activities or materials designed to improve your child's ability to understand and express thoughts and information

Special education: programs, services or specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children over three years of age with special needs who are found to be eligible; these include special learning methods or materials in the regular classroom, and special classes and programs if the child requires them

transition: the process or period in which a family and Birth to Three team discuss possible future supports and services a child will need as he leaves Birth to Three services.

transition conference: a meeting with the family, service coordinators and program staff who work with the family to discuss community services and supports that are available for young children and their families. When a child is referred to preschool special education; the meeting will include your family, Birth to Three staff and preschool special education staff. By federal law this meeting can take place up to 9 months before, but no later than 90 days before your child's third birthday.

transition plan: the transition plan outline the steps that your family, your Birth to Three program staff and school district staff will take to address the end of Birth to Three services and the transition to new programs, services and people.