

Special Education Assessment for Preschool-Aged Children: Reviewing Results and Next Steps

When a child is assessed for special education services, first the assessment is conducted and then a meeting is held to review the assessment report results. There are typically two possible conclusions. One is that your child qualifies for special education services and an IEP (Individualized Education Program) is created. The other is that your child does not qualify for special education services. In this case, your LEA may suggest other ways to support your child.



Reviewing the assessment results report

- Your local education agency (LEA), such as a school district, will schedule a meeting to review the assessment report.
- You will receive a copy of the report at the meeting or before the meeting. If you want to review the report before the meeting, let the LEA know in advance.
- As you review the report, note errors or questions. Sometimes miscommunication can lead to inaccurate information within the report. For example, if you told them your child said their first word at 16 months but later remembered it was actually 14 months, you can ask for that to be corrected.

How can I advocate for my child during the assessment report meeting?

- **Support yourself first.** Consider bringing a trusted person to the meeting; it helps to have someone else hear the information with you. You may want to record the meeting; if so, let the meeting organizer know in advance. During the meeting, if you feel overwhelmed or frustrated, ask to take a break.
- **Communicate with the assessment team.** You are a vital member of your child's educational team. Share your family's goals, values, and expectations for your child. If you are unsure of a term or acronym, ask for clarification. When asking questions, be clear and specific, listen to the response, and ask follow-up questions. If you don't understand something, ask for it to be stated in a different way or ask for an example.
- **Learn about your child's team.** If roles and responsibilities are not explained, ask about each person's role with your child. Request business cards or a contact list.
- **Review the draft documents.** Be sure that any important ideas discussed during the assessment meeting, such as services or strategies the team will use with your child, have been noted. If you would like something clarified, reach out to team members after the meeting to make sure that you understand what you are signing.
- **Ask for next steps.** A timeline of what will follow will help you understand what happens next and set your expectations for school services and supports. If your child is eligible for special education services, obtain information about when and where those services will begin. If your child is not eligible, obtain information about other types of programs that may meet their needs.

 For related Web resources, see “Special Education Assessment for Preschool-Aged Children: Reviewing Results and Next Steps” at <https://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



13 Children's Research Center
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
51 Gerty Dr. • Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 217-333-1386
Toll-free: 877-275-3227
E-mail: iel@illinois.edu
<https://illinoisearlylearning.org>



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