

Your Child receiving Early Start (0-3 years) Services is turning 3



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What will happen when your child in Early Start turns 3 years?

Early Start serves eligible children from birth to three years of age. All families will eventually conclude their partnership with Early Start and may transition to other community programs. This process of moving from one program to another is called “transition.” Before your child turns three, you and your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator will need to plan for this transition from Early Start to other programs your family chooses to participate in. The transition process involves several steps designed to ensure a smooth shift to other supportive opportunities. Since every family's transition is unique, the following steps outline the general process.



1

Transition Notification To Family

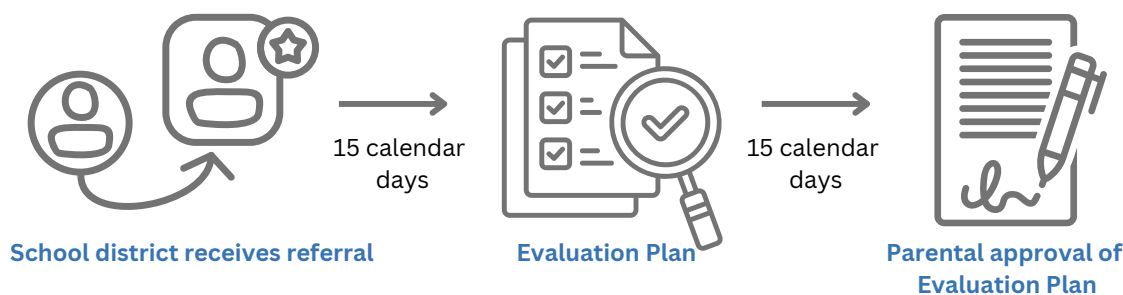
Between 24 and 30 months, the Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator will notify parents about a transition conference at least 90 days before the child turns three. This conference can happen up to nine months before your child's third birthday if everyone agrees.



- California has decided that all children in Early Start may qualify for special education services at age 3. Your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator must refer your child to the local school district for a special education assessment. Your consent is not required for this referral. If you have questions about this process, discuss it with your child's Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator.
- With parent consent, your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator may provide additional information about your child and family, such as the current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), current assessments, and other useful information about your child.

2

Notification Referral Sent To School District

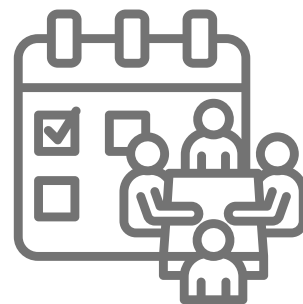


- At least 90 days before the child's third birthday, your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator must send a referral to your school district. If your child has a summer birthday this may happen sooner.
- The school district has 15 calendar days to develop a prior written notice and assessment plan or a prior written notice to deny assessment.
- Once the referral is received and the parent agrees to the assessment plan, the school district must evaluate all areas of suspected disability. For more details on navigating the Special Education eligibility process, please refer to "[How to Access Special Education \(3-5 years\) through Plumas Unified](#)." If the school district representative is unable to attend the transition meeting and schedules an eligibility meeting at a later date, be sure to invite your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator for support during this process.

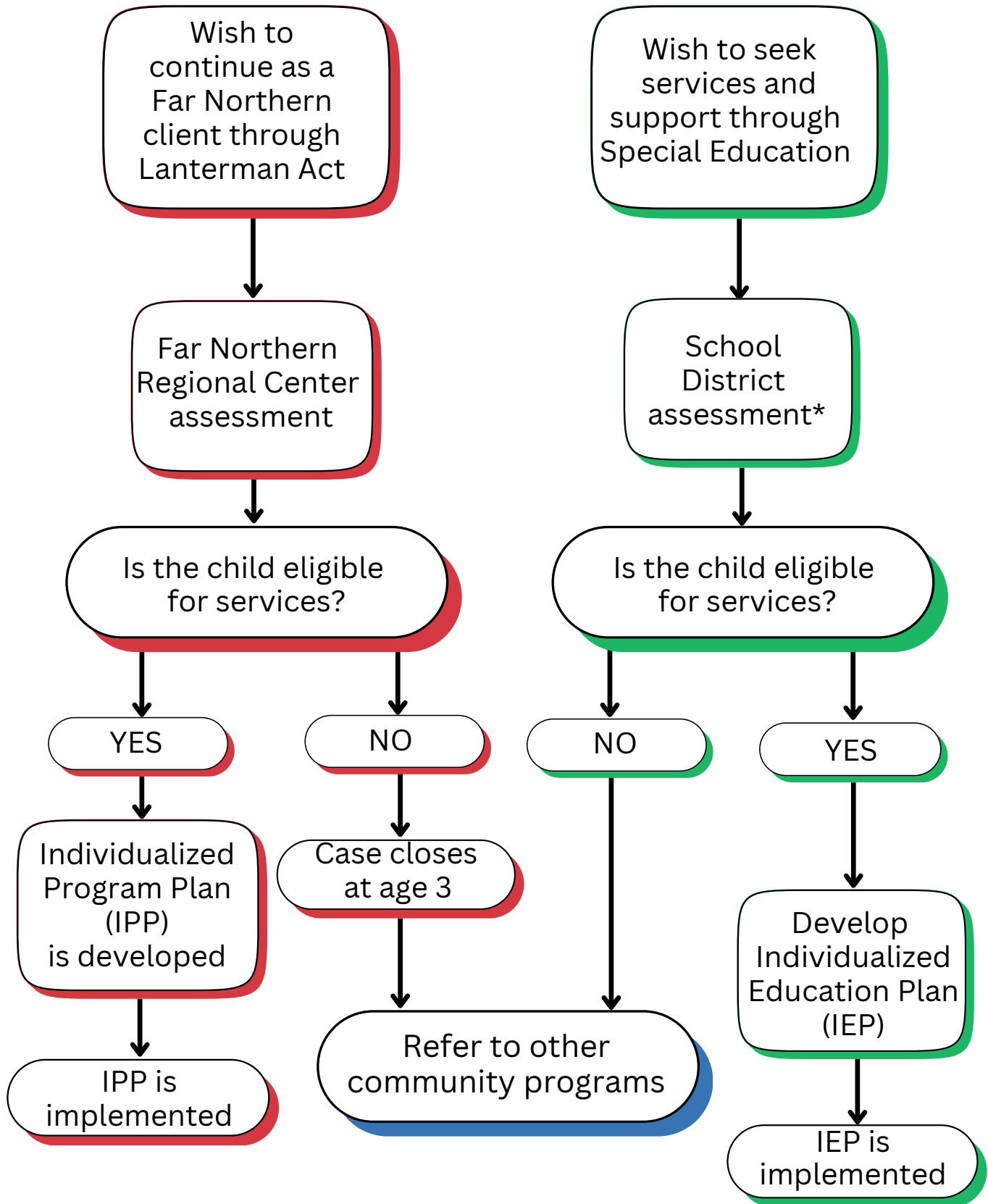
3

Transition Conference Invitation

- Your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator will set up the meeting, choosing a date, time, and location that works for the family and the other agencies involved.
- A written invitation is sent as soon as possible, but **no later than two days before the meeting**, to the family, the School District representative (if parents agree), Early Start providers, and any other members the family wants present.
- The transition conference should occur no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday.
- If your child may be eligible for special education services and the representative from the school district is unable to attend, the Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator may still conduct the transition meeting as scheduled, unless you opt to reschedule the meeting. The meeting must occur no later than when your child is 2 years and 9 months old.

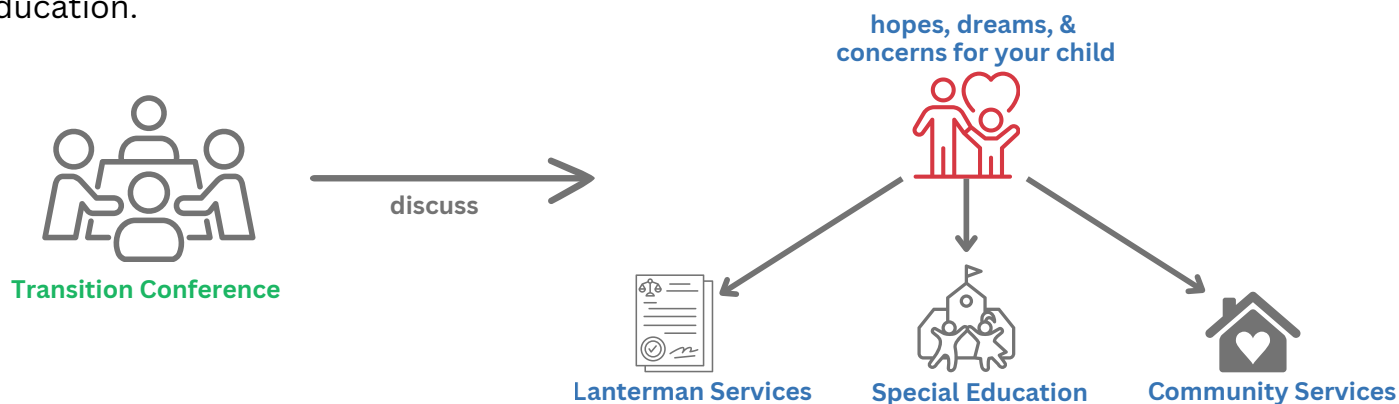


Does your family want to continue services after age 3?



*If your child is a Far Northern Regional Center client, the school district will review available assessments provided by Far Northern. If their assessments are found to be appropriate and current, your school district has the option, with parent consent, to accept any or all of the assessments for the purpose of determining eligibility.

- Together, you and the team will address a variety of topics, such as the need for an evaluation to determine eligibility for Special Education and/or Lanterman Services or provisional regional center eligibility; goals, timelines, and team members' responsibilities; your hopes, dreams, and concerns about your child; services and programs available. Based on those discussions, you'll develop a transition plan. The Transition Plan will document steps and services to support a smooth transition when your child turns three.
- To assist with a discussion about special education, a representative from your local school district will be invited to the transition conference to explain the various options and eligibility criteria.
- Your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator will explain to you how services and eligibility through the regional center will change at age 3. Your child may qualify for continued regional center services under two different categories. 1) Provisional eligibility: your child has significant limitations in two areas of life activities. 2) Lanterman eligibility: your child has a diagnosed developmental disability and substantial difficulty in at least 3 areas of functioning. Provisional eligibility supports your child until they turn 5. Lanterman eligibility supports your child throughout their life. Please refer to "[How to Access Lifelong Lanterman Services through Far Northern Regional Center](#)"
- Community Resources- Your Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator will be able to assist you in finding local resources to meet your child's needs. Examples of such community programs are: local libraries, home visiting programs, playgroups, preschool options, First 5 Plumas programs, access to health services, dental treatment, mental health services, and parent education.



- A transition conference is part of an IFSP meeting so all IFSP requirements must be followed, including a review of information about your child and family, current assessment, a review of services, progress toward meeting outcomes, and revision of any outcomes or services as needed.
- IFSP team members who are required to attend the meeting include the parent, Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator, school district representative (with parent approval), service providers, and family members or others invited by the parent.
- The transition conference should take place no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday or as early as nine months before, if all parties agree.
- The transition plan created during the IFSP conference should outline the steps and services needed to help your child transition smoothly to service delivery models at age three.

- The Transition Plan will spell out the necessary assessments to be completed prior to age 3 to determine if your child will be eligible for continued services through Far Northern Regional Center and/ or special education services through the school district.
- The school district may need other assessments to determine eligibility for special education services. The assessment process begins when the district receives a referral from FNRC at age 2 years 9 months. This may happen earlier if your child has a summer birthday.
- Your written consent is required for all assessments.
- Reports for assessments conducted by the school district will be presented at the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Meeting. Please refer to [“How to Access Special Education \(3-5 years\) through Plumas Unified”](#) for more information about this process.

- If your child does not qualify for specialized services after age 3, the final IFSP will identify other community services that may potentially meet the ongoing needs of your child
- If your child is found eligible for continuing services, you will attend eligibility meetings where assessment results will be presented. The eligibility meeting for the Far Northern Regional Center is called an Individualized Program Plan (IPP). The eligibility meeting for special education is called an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- The teams will write an action plans and consider services based upon your child’s needs. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the different agencies to write plans for their services. You are a part of the team and your input is very important in determining your child’s needs.

Late Referrals to Early Start



In the case a child is referred to Early Start after they are two years six months of age, the initial IFSP will also serve as the transition conference.



If the child is referred to Early Start between 45 and 90 days prior to their third birthday, the Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator is required to:

- Conduct the initial evaluation and assessment.
- Conduct the initial IFSP meeting if eligible.
- Develop a transition plan with appropriate transition steps and services.
- Refer the child to the School District representative



For a child referred to Early Start between one and 44 days prior to the child’s third birthday, the Far Northern Regional Center service coordinator may, but is not required to:

- Conduct the initial evaluation and assessment.
- Conduct the initial IFSP meeting if eligible.
- Develop a transition plan.
- Provide the School District representative notification of referral. Early Start is required to make a referral to the School District or assist the family in initiating contact with the School

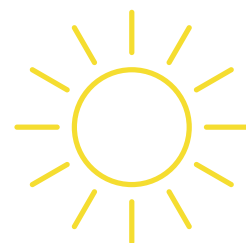


The School District's responsibility for a child referred to Early Start less than 90 days prior to their third birthday includes:

- Ensure that an initial evaluation for Special Education Services and Supports is completed.
- Develop an individualized education program (IEP) by the child's third birthday if the child is determined eligible, even if the 60 day timeline for assessment expires after the child's third birthday.

Summer Birthdays

- The School District is responsible for holding an IEP to offer services before the child's third birthday even if the program is not in session, this includes summer breaks, mid-winter breaks, and other non- instructional days.
- The recommendation is to hold the transition conference early enough to ensure that all evaluations and assessments are complete and the final IFSP and initial IEP meetings are held by the child's third birthday. The date to implement the preschool services will be determined during the IEP meeting.



Additional Resources

[Far Northern Regional Center](#) the local provider of Early Start & Lanterman Services
[A Guide for Transition at Age 3](#), California Department of Developmental Services & California Department of Education
[A Guide to California's Regional Services System](#), Department of Developmental Services
[Early Start Handbook](#), Department of Developmental Services
[Early Start FAQs](#), Department of Developmental Services
[Early Start Family Resource Center](#), Plumas Rural Services
[Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund](#)
[Special Education Local Plan Area \(SELPA\)](#), Plumas Unified



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