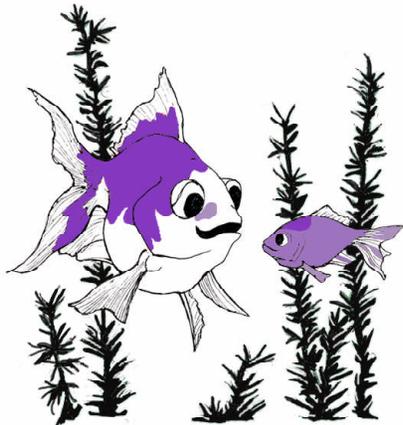


For more information about prevention and early intervention services in Florida, call the Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services.

Central Directory

1-800-654-4440

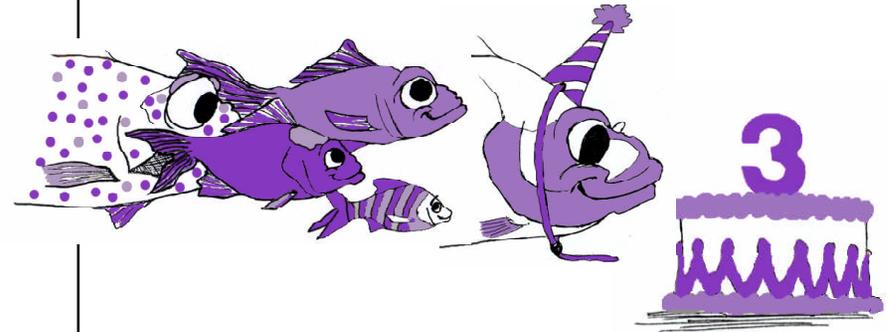


www.centraldirectory.org

The Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services provides information and referral on disabilities and special health care needs for families, service coordinators, and other professionals who work with children with special needs. It can provide information on a wide range of services available in local communities.

311662

TRANSITION



*A Booklet to Help Children and Families
in Moving from Early Steps at Age
Three to Other Community Programs*

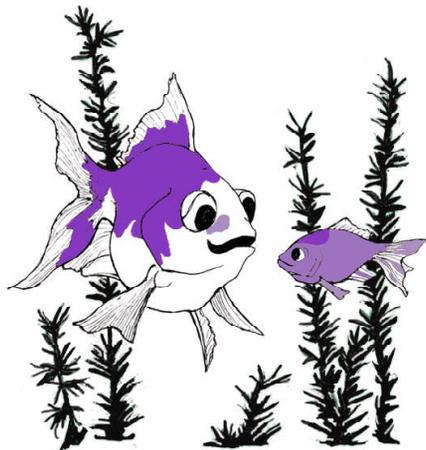
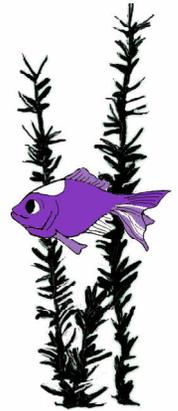


Florida Department of Education
Revised 2005

More Notes

This publication is one of many available through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, designed to assist school districts, state agencies which support educational programs, and parents in the provision of special programs.

For additional information on this publication, or a list of available publications, contact the Clearinghouse Information Center, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, Turlington Building, Room 628, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400. Telephone: 850/ 245-0477; FAX: 850/ 245-0987; Suncom: 205-0477; Email: cicbiscs@FLDOE.org; Website: <http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/commhome/>

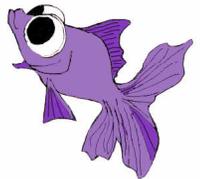
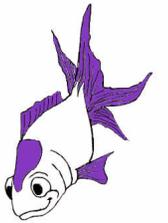


*Booklet design by Bettianne S. Ford
Graphics by Michael Sudal*

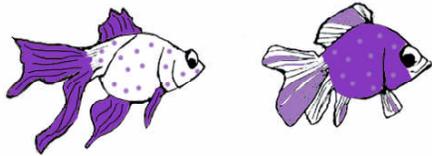
Notes

Table of Contents

Purpose of This Booklet	2
Questions and Answers	3
Helpful Hints	9
Resources	10
Alphabet Soup of Acronyms	13
Helpful Websites	16
Books to Read to Your Child	18
Important Names and Numbers	19
Notes	20



This publication was developed by Florida's Transition Project for Infants, Young Children and Their Families, a special project funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B.



Purpose of This Booklet

Florida’s Transition Project focuses on assisting communities in developing smooth systems to help families with young children who have disabilities and special health care needs move from one agency or program to another.

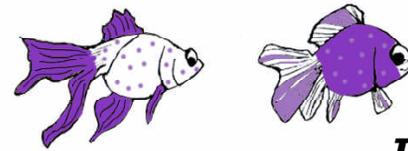
Families, and professionals working with families, have frequently asked project staff for a booklet that provides an overview of what occurs when a child turns three years old and leaves Early Steps (formerly called the Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program, also known as Part C) to attend other programs in the community.

This booklet includes questions family members have frequently asked about transition. It also includes descriptions of many statewide programs that may be available in your own community.

The back cover of this booklet features the Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services Central Directory, which provides information about national, state, and local organizations and programs for families who have children with disabilities and special health care needs.

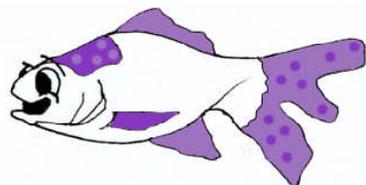
Pages 16 and 17 provide a list of websites and other resources where you may find information not only about transition, but other topics as well.

Visit the website at www.floridatransitionproject.com to download a copy of this booklet.



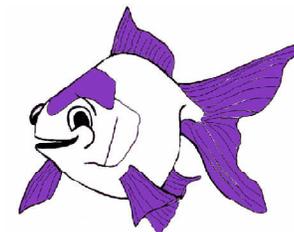
Important Names and Numbers

Books to Read to Your Child



The books listed below are about going to school or starting something new, and may be found in your community library or bookstore.

- ***Bernard Goes to School***, by Joan Elizabeth Goodman
- ***Billy and the Big New School***, by Laurence Anholt
- ***Busy at Day Care***, by Patricia DeMuth
- ***Countdown to Kindergarten***, by Alison McGhee
- ***Emily's First Day of School***, by Fran Schiller
- ***First Day Jitters***, by Julie Danneberg
- ***Froggy Goes to School***, by Jonathan London
- ***Hello School***, by Dee Lillegard
- ***I'll Go To School If...***, by Bo Flood
- ***Little Bear Goes to Kindergarten***, by Jutta Langreute
- ***Little Cliff's First Day at School***, Clifton L. Taulbert
- ***Little Monster Goes to School***, by Alison Inches
- ***Look Out Kindergarten Here I Come***, by Nancy Carlson McQuade and Vera Sobat
- ***Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten***, by Joseph Slate
- ***Miss Bindergarten Takes A Field Trip With Kindergarten***, by Joseph Slate
- ***Moses Goes to School***, by Isaac Millman
- ***Off to School Baby Duck***, by Amy Hest
- ***Special People, Special Ways***, by Arlene Maguire
- ***Susan Laughs***, by Jeanne Willis
- ***The Night Before Kindergarten***, by Natasha Wing
- ***Timothy Goes to School***, by Rosemary Wells
- ***Tom Goes to Kindergarten***, by Margaret Wild
- ***Vera's First Day of School***, by Vera Rosenberry



Questions and Answers

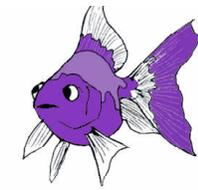
Q: What is transition?

A: Transition is change or movement from one program or service to another. If your child has been receiving services from Early Steps and is turning 3 years old, he or she is ready to transition to another program.

Q: What can I expect when my child is nearing 3 years old and ready to move from Early Steps to other programs?

A: The following guidelines should help you plan for your child's transition.

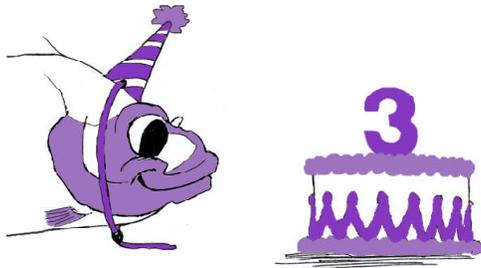
- Your Service Coordinator will begin to discuss transition when your child is 2 years old. These first plans will be written on your individualized family support plan.
- By the time your child is 2 years and 6 months, there will be a transition planning meeting. The purpose of the meeting is for you and the other team members to determine which program will be best for your child and family, after looking at all the possibilities.
- A formal transition meeting will be held with you and representatives of the local school system and other community programs.



More Helpful Websites

Q: Why must my child transition on his or her 3rd birthday?

A: After age 36 months, your child is no longer eligible for Early Steps according to the federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C. However, your child may be eligible for services under IDEA, Part B, or for other preschool services in your community.



Q: What are some of the questions I should be asking at the transition meetings?

A: You might want to ask questions such as those listed below:

- What is the difference between an individualized family support plan and an individual educational plan?
- How many teachers and aides will be in the classroom?
- How many children will be in the classroom?
- How will my child participate with children who do not have a disability?
- What social skills will my child be expected to have?
- Will my child be expected to work on his or her own?
- How long is the school day or class, and what is the daily routine of the class/program?

- ✍ Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
www.fdlrs.com/
- ✍ Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services
www.centraldirectory.org
- ✍ Florida's Transition Project for Infants, Young Children and Their Families
www.floridatransitionproject.com
- ✍ National Association for the Education of Young Children
www.naeyc.org
- ✍ National Child Care Information Center
www.nccic.org
- ✍ National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
www.nectac.org
- ✍ Office of Early Learning
www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/index.html
- ✍ SERVE/Transition
www.terrifictransitions.org
- ✍ State of Florida
www.myflorida.com
- ✍ Technical Assistance and Training System
www.tats.ucf.edu
- ✍ Voluntary Prekindergarten
www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning/
- ✍ Zero to Three/National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families
www.zerotothree.org



Helpful Websites

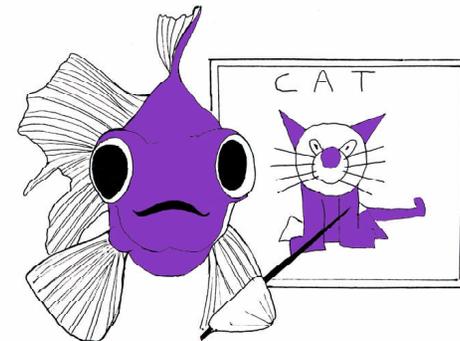
- ✂ Agency for Persons with Disabilities
<http://apd.myflorida.com/>
- ✂ Americans with Disabilities Act
www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm
- ✂ Center for Florida's Children
www.floridakids.com
- ✂ Circle of Inclusion
www.circleofinclusion.org
- ✂ Child Care Law Center
www.childcarelaw.org
- ✂ Council for Exceptional Children, Division for Early Childhood
www.dec-sped.org
- ✂ Division of Blind Services
www.state.fl.us/dba
- ✂ Early Steps
www.cms-kids.com/EarlyStepsHome.htm
- ✂ ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary & Early Childhood Education
<http://ericece.org>
- ✂ Family Network on Disabilities of Florida, Inc.
www.fndfl.org
- ✂ Family Source of Florida
www.familysource.org
- ✂ Federal Resource Center for Special Education
www.dssc.org
- ✂ Florida Department of Education
www.myfloridaeducation.com

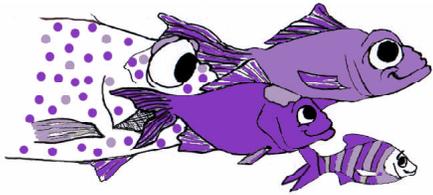
Q: What choices do I have for my child after his or her 3rd birthday?

A: There may be many settings in your community that will meet your child's needs, such as

- public and private child care centers/preschools, or a variety of school readiness settings
- family child care homes
- school district prekindergarten programs
- other programs available in your community.

These programs may include new policies, procedures, and rules for both your child and your family. They may also involve differences in eligibility. For instance, your child may not qualify for the same services from the school system that he or she received in Early Steps because of different eligibility requirements. In addition, there may be different staff, schedules, and expectations for both you and your child. Finding out about these differences in advance and asking questions about how they will affect your child and family will help you and your child have a smoother transition experience.





Q: Can you give me some information about these other programs?

A: There are programs in your community that may not have eligibility requirements. For more information about these programs, you may want to contact the Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services – Central Directory, listed on the back of this booklet. The programs described below have eligibility requirements and may be available to provide services in your community once your child has turned 3 years old.

Agency for Persons with Disabilities

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), formerly known as the Developmental Disabilities Program within the Department of Children and Families, assists people who have developmental disabilities and their families or guardians. "Developmental Disability" is a broad term that refers to a variety of conditions that interfere with a person's ability to function in everyday activities. Chapter 393, Florida Statutes (F.S.), defines developmental disabilities as spina bifida, autism, cerebral palsy, Prader-Willi syndrome and mental retardation. In addition, the APD serves children in the high risk category who are four and five years of age. High risk is also defined in Chapter 393 and includes developmental delay. Chapter 393.064 (2)(a), F.S. limits eligibility to children three years of age and older.

The APD operates the Developmental Disabilities Home and Community-Based (DD/HCBS) waiver, the Family and Supported Living (FSL) waiver, and the Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) program. Services within these programs are subject to the availability of funding and may include consumable medical supplies and respite care. For further information on these programs, families should contact their local APD area office. Information about the APD can be found on the website listed on page 16.

- NICU Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- NORD National Organization for Rare Disorders
- NPND National Parent Network on Disabilities
- OEL Office of Early Learning, AWI
- OEL Office of Early Learning, DOE
- OHI Other Health Impaired
- OI Orthopedically Impaired
- OI Osteogenesis Imperfecta
- OSEP Office of Special Education Programs (U.S. Department of Education)
- OT Occupational Therapy/Therapist
- PSC Primary Service Coordinator
- PH Physically Handicapped
- PI Physically Impaired
- PMH Profoundly Mentally Handicapped
- PPEC Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care
- PRO Parent Resource Organization
- PT Physical Therapy/Therapist
- PreK Prekindergarten

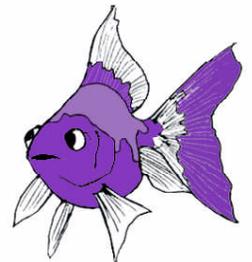
R and S

- RPC Regional Policy Council
- RPICC Regional Perinatal Intensive Care Center
- R&R Resource and Referral
- SBAA Spina Bifida Association of America
- SEA State Education Agency
- SED Severely Emotionally Disturbed
- SEDNET .. Multi-Agency Service Network for Students with Severe Emotional Disturbance
- SIB Self-Injurious Behavior
- SLD Specific Learning Disabilities
- S/LI Speech/Language Impaired
- SSA Social Security Administration
- SSI Supplemental Security Income
- S/L Speech/Language

T, U, V, and W

- TBI Traumatic Brain Injury
- TMH Trainable Mentally Handicapped
- UCP United Cerebral Palsy
- VE Varying Exceptionalities
- VI Visually Impaired
- VPK Voluntary Prekindergarten
- WIC Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program

Adapted from "Alphabet Soup," published in 2000 by the Parent Resource Organization



F

- FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education
- FAS Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- FCC Family Care Councils
- FDLRS Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
- FICCIT Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers
- FL ARF Florida Association for Rehabilitation Facilities
- FLAC Florida Local Advocacy Council
- FND Family Network on Disabilities
- FPSR Florida Partnership for School Readiness
- FRS Family Resource Specialist
- FSAC Florida Statewide Advocacy Council
- FSDB Florida School for the Deaf and Blind
- FTE Full Time Equivalency

H and I

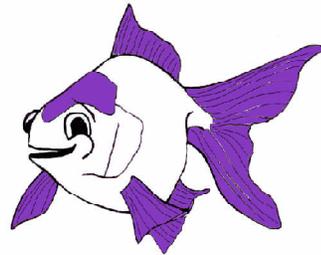
- H/H Hard-of-Hearing
- H/H Homebound/Hospitalized
- HI Hearing Impaired
- HMO Health Maintenance Organization
- ICC Interagency Coordinating Council
- ICF Intermediate Care Facility
- IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- IEP Individual Educational Plan
- IFSP Individualized Family Support Plan
- I&R Information and Referral
- ITP Individualized Transition Plan

L and M

- LEA Local Education Agency
- LICC Local Interagency Community Collaboration
- LRE Least Restrictive Environment
- MCH Maternal and Child Health
- MD Muscular Dystrophy
- MH Mentally Handicapped
- MH Mental Health
- MR Mental Retardation
- MS Multiple Sclerosis

N, O, and P

- NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children
- NDSS National Down Syndrome Society
- NECTAC.. National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
- NICHCY... National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities



Department of Education /Division of Blind Services - Children and Families Program

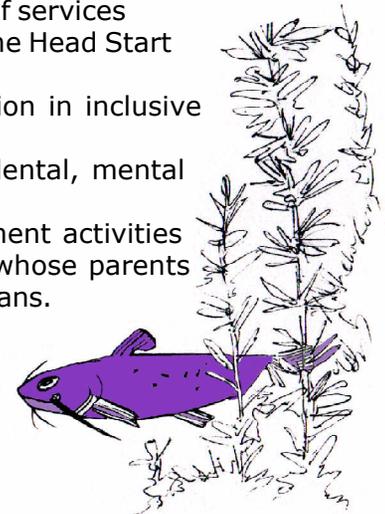
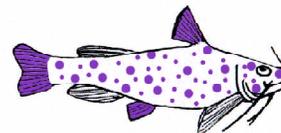
The mission of this program is to facilitate the fullest participation of children who are blind and visually impaired within the family, community and educational settings. Children and Families Program Specialists serve eligible children so that they may reach educational and independent living goals. Successful outcomes enable children to transition from preschool to school or other appropriate community programs.

The program provides services for children from birth to 21 years of age, who have a diagnosed bilateral visual impairment which will affect the child’s ability to learn, or to function independently in the home or school. Parents, friends, teachers or anyone concerned with the child’s development may refer children. To refer a child, call your local office of the Division of Blind Services.

Head Start

This is a federally funded child development program for children from age three to mandatory school age. Of the participating families, 90% must be at or below the national poverty guidelines. Head Start is also mandated to provide 10% of its enrollment slots to children with disabilities. The full range of services provided to all children participating in the Head Start program includes

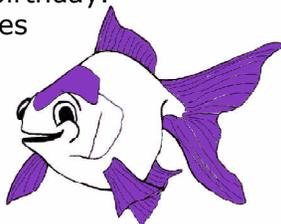
- high-quality early childhood education in inclusive settings
- health services including medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition
- family services and parent involvement activities
- special programs to serve children whose parents are migrant workers or Native Americans.



Prekindergarten Program for Children with Disabilities

Specially designed instruction and related services for prekindergarten children with disabilities, 3 through 5 years of age, is part of the exceptional student education program offered through the local school district. Once a child is determined to be eligible, services must begin on the child's 3rd birthday.

Based on the needs of the child, related services may include, but are not limited to, assistive technology, audiology, counseling, early identification and assessment, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, and school health services.



Agency for Workforce Innovation - Office of Early Learning

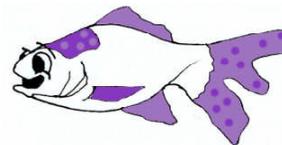
The school readiness program serves children, ages birth to 5 years, whose family income does not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level. The local early learning coalitions may accommodate the needs of children for extended-day and extended-year services, pending available funding. The program must prepare preschool children to enter kindergarten ready to learn by implementing a program of services that enhance the cognitive, social, and physical development of children. The program is required to serve the following two priority categories:

- 1) children at risk of welfare dependency, including economically disadvantaged children, children of participants in the program Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency (WAGES), children of participants in the welfare transition program, and children of teen parents; and
- 2) children at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and who are currently being served by the Department of Children and Families, Family Safety Program office.

Other children who may be served include:

- Children of migrant farm workers
- Children birth to 5 years old, at risk of future school failure
- Economically disadvantaged children, birth to 5 years old
- Children with disabilities, birth to 5 years old, who may not be economically disadvantaged
- Noneconomically disadvantaged birth to 5 year old children of migrant families.

The Office of Early Learning is a state office that provides statewide assistance to the early learning coalitions in their administration of the programs at the local level. Parents are encouraged to become involved with the local coalitions and to participate in making decisions.



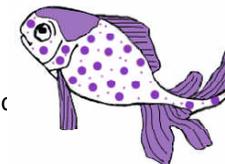
ALPHABET SOUP OF ACRONYMS

A, B, and C

- ADA Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AHCA Agency for Health Care Administration
APD Agency for Persons with Disabilities
ARC Association for Retarded Citizens
ASA Autism Society of America
ASD Autism Spectrum Disorders
ASHA American Speech/Language Hearing Association
AWI Agency for Workforce Innovation
BEESS..... Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CARD Center for Autism and Related Disabilities
CEC Council for Exceptional Children
CHRIS Children's Registry and Information System
CHS Children's Home Society
CMS Children's Medical Services
CP Cerebral Palsy
CHD County Health Department
CSW Clinical Social Worker

D and E

- DB Deaf/Blind
DBS Division of Blind Services
DCF Florida Department of Children and Families
DD Developmental Disabilities
DDC Developmental Disabilities Council
DEI Developmental Evaluation and Intervention
DOE Florida Department of Education
DOH Florida Department of Health
DSI Dual Sensory Impaired
EH Emotionally Handicapped
EMH Educable Mentally Handicapped
ES Early Steps
ESE Exceptional Student Education





OTHER RESOURCES continued

- **The Children’s Registry and Information System (CHRIS)** – The CHRIS system is the way that FDLRS keeps track of information about children who have been referred to them who might need special education services in the school system. No one is allowed to see the information that is kept in the system unless you give written permission for the information to be shared. The reports provided through the system give parents a record of what services their child has received.
- **Florida Kidcare** – This is a health insurance program for low-income children. Children are enrolled in one of four programs: Medikids, Healthy Kids, Children’s Medical Services Network, or Medicaid. Children are enrolled depending on their income, age, and special needs.
- **Medicaid** – Medicaid is a federal health care program. Children and families may qualify for this or other programs.
 - Child Health Check-Up – This program includes a physical exam, immunizations (shots), vision and hearing check, and other important tests and services to help keep your child healthy. Regular check-ups help find health problems before they become serious.



Helpful Hints

The following tips may help you and your child prepare for transition:

- Talk about the new setting in positive ways with your child and other family members.
- Contact the teacher in the new setting and arrange to meet to discuss daily routines, schedules, curriculum, and any medical needs your child may have while participating in the program.
- Ask questions about transportation such as riding on a school bus, about playground participation, options for part-time participation, how therapies will be provided, any requirements about potty training, and nap time rules.
- Visit the new setting several times to talk with the teacher and see the room.
- Talk with your child about the things that are the same and the things that are different about the current program and the new one.
- Read story books in which a child starts a new program for the first time. (*See the list of suggestions on page 18 of this booklet.*)
- Involve your child in group experiences, such as going to story hour at your local library.
- Encourage your child to talk to you and tell you what he or she is thinking about the new setting.

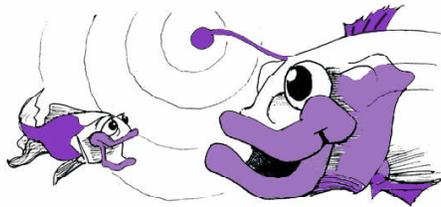
Procedural Safeguards

Families/caregivers must receive a copy of their procedural safeguards at transition meetings. These are the rights and responsibilities of both the family/caregiver and the service providers.

Families should have this important information explained to them by someone who is familiar with the information.

- **Voluntary Prekindergarten**

The Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is the result of legislation enacted by the Florida Legislature in 2004. The program is designed to prepare 4 year old children in the State of Florida for kindergarten and lay the foundation for their educational success. The program allows a parent to enroll his or her child in a free prekindergarten (PreK) program offered during the year before the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten. There are two program options available to parents: the 540 hour school year program and the 300 hour summer program. The program is offered by private providers, non-public schools, faith-based providers and public schools. The Department of Education, Department of Children and Families, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation work together to provide leadership and support to the local early learning coalitions, school districts, and providers to ensure successful implementation of effective prekindergarten education programs. Families may contact their local early learning coalition or visit the website to apply for services. Further information about the VPK program can be found on the website listed on page 17.



RESOURCES

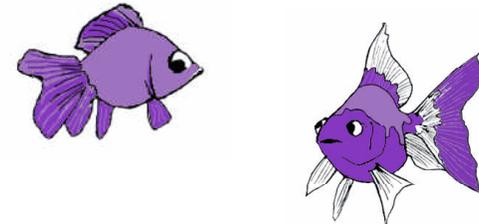
- **Central Directory** – The Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services (Central Directory) program provides information and referral on disabilities and special health care needs for families, service coordinators, and other professionals who work with children with special needs. The Directory can provide information about a wide variety of services available in your community.

For more information, call the Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services - Central Directory at 1-800-654-4440, or visit www.centraldirectory.org.

- **Family Support Systems**

Children and their families/caregivers have several options for receiving parent-to-parent support during the transition process. Listed below are some programs that provide support for families.

- **Family Resource Specialists (FRS)** are employed by the local Early Steps to assist families with all areas of early intervention services, including transition.
- **Local Support Networks** [Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD), Parent-To-Parent, Family Network on Disabilities, Parent Resource Organization Network (PRO Network), etc.] are available to provide assistance, support, and information regarding transition. Contact the Central Directory for information about these organizations.



- **Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS** – pronounced “Fiddlers”) Nineteen FDLRS centers throughout the state provide free screening for children who might be lagging behind other children their age in walking, talking, hearing, seeing, understanding, or behaving.

FDLRS also helps provide evaluations for individual children who are nearing age three and must leave Early Steps and who might enter school system programs for children with disabilities.

