



UNDERSTANDING CHILD FIND

A Guide for School Staff
 Post COVID-19



DID YOU KNOW?

"What is child find?"



Every school district must **actively** and **systematically** seek out children suspected of having a disability

This includes:

- Children birth to 21 years of age
- Children enrolled in a private school located within in your school district or who reside within your school district

WHY?



Ensures children with disabilities receive a **free appropriate public education**



Helps connect families to resources and support



It does not guarantee Special Education or Section 504 eligibility
 It is only meant to find children who **MAY** be eligible for services

WHAT SHOULD I BE LOOKING FOR?



Pattern of low classroom performance prior to school closures



Grade changes (Sudden or gradual decline)



Failing statewide tests



Delayed developmental milestones



Attendance issues



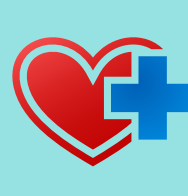
Increased discipline challenges



Low or lack of motivation to do things previously enjoyed



Poor peer interactions



Health concerns

THINGS TO CONSIDER

"In what general education interventions have they participated? Did they make progress?"

"Do they need special education services in order to make progress?"

"Might they have a disability that affects their ability to make progress?"

"What do previous school years look like for them? Is this an ongoing concern?"



COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS



Many children are likely to show some regression due to recent school closures. This does not mean they are disabled. Consider the child's progress and patterns before school closures. Are difficulties short-lived or chronic? A thorough review of school records may help answer these questions. Consider the home environment and the potential lack of access to technology or assistance completing their work and how that may have contributed to any learning/behavioral challenges you are noticing now. Also consider their ability to recoup what they have lost during closures within a reasonable time period when school resumes.

I SUSPECT A CHILD MAY HAVE A DISABILITY. WHAT DO I DO NOW?



Review existing or new data you have collected that support your concerns. If you have not yet attempted an intervention, consult with your grade-level team to develop strategies to try. Data is your friend. Collect it.



Consult with your school's student problem solving team. Most schools have a dedicated team that reviews cases and problem solves to provide intervention support. Encourage parent involvement and obtain their feedback on the problem.



In most cases, it is important to attempt general education interventions before making a request for assessment; however, your team can help guide you on how and when to make a request. Every student is different and situations vary. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.



RED FLAGS

Child find is triggered and districts are deemed to have knowledge that a child may be a child with a disability when:

- Parent requests an assessment
- Parent expresses written concern that their child needs special education services
- Teacher or other district personnel expresses specific concerns about a pattern of behavior or academic concern demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education or other district supervisory personnel

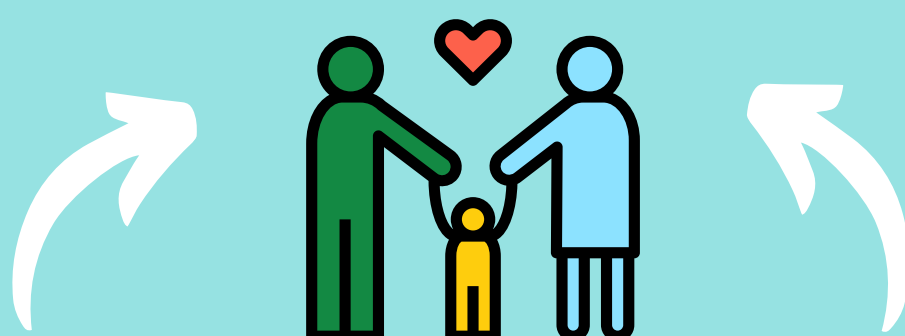


Recommended practice would be to convene a school team meeting with collaboration of the parent to determine the next steps as soon as possible.



Beware of assessment plan timelines. Meeting with parents will not delay the timelines.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



For more information related to Child Find, Birth to 5 resources and general education interventions, click the image above.

We are here for you and want to help!

#UnifiedAtHome