



Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Conversation Checklist for People Who Work With Children

This checklist will help you answer questions about early intervention and the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program supports and services. Talk with the child's family about the [Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#) if **any** of the following apply:

- You have identified possible developmental delays for a child.
- You have concerns about a child's development.
- A child's family has expressed concerns about the child's development.



What does "early intervention" mean?

"Early intervention" describes the services and supports for babies and young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. It is important to act early when delays or disabilities are identified in young children. The [Birth to 3 Program brochure](#) has more information for families on why early intervention is key to a child's development.



How can early intervention help a child?

Early intervention helps children improve their abilities, helps them learn new skills, and positively impacts their overall development.



What is the Birth to 3 Program?

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention program. It provides special education and therapy services to babies and toddlers with delays and disabilities. The [Birth to 3 Program brochure](#) gives an overview of the program that may be helpful to families.



What are the eligibility requirements for the Birth to 3 Program?

Children under 3 years old who qualify include:

- Children with a 25 percent delay in one or more areas of development in:
 - Cognitive or learning development
 - Physical or motor development
 - Speech and language development
 - Social emotional development
 - Adaptive development or daily living needs
- Children with atypical development
- Children with specific diagnoses associated with significant developmental delays



What services does the Birth to 3 Program provide?

Services provided by the Birth to 3 Program support the child's family in meeting the child's unique developmental needs. Supports and services may help some children move, play, and learn like infants or toddlers their age without a developmental delay. For other children, services and supports may help their development and lessen the impact of their developmental delay on how they grow, learn, move, and play.

Birth to 3 Program services include, but are not limited to:

- Service coordination
- Special education or instruction
- Speech therapy
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Other types of services, depending on the child's and family's needs

The [Services at a Glance](#) resource has more information for families about Birth to 3 Program services.



Where are Birth to 3 Program services provided?

Services are provided in natural environments. Natural environments include the family's home, places where they spend time, and in settings typical for an infant or toddler their age without a disability.



How are Birth to 3 Program services provided?

The Birth to 3 Program approach to early intervention incorporates the following key elements to comprehensively support the child's development:

- **Family-centered:** Families are part of the early intervention team and at the center of the plan of supports and services. Families contribute their knowledge and expertise regarding the child and are included in decision making.
- **Teaming:** Families are supported by a team of professional service providers who work together to integrate strategies and communicate with the family.
- **Natural learning environments:** Supports and services are provided in the family's home or community to support child development. This approach lets the child learn in different ways during their day.

Birth to 3 Program services are based on the family's and child's unique needs. The frequency and type of services that a family receives can be adapted to the individualized needs.



Why do Birth to 3 Program services incorporate the family and child's interests and typical routines?

Children learn best from their families and during their everyday activities and routines with people they know and trust. The Birth to 3 Program provides services in natural environments and during everyday activities. If a child's interests are the basis for their involvement in an activity, they become more engaged by playing and participating.

When children are engaged in an activity, they can practice existing skills and learn new ones. They can also explore and discover how their own behaviors make things happen. This leads to continued interest and participation in the activity.



What is the cost to the family for Birth to 3 Program services?

There is a sliding scale cost share system for families with incomes at or more than 300 percent of the [federal poverty level](#). Families contribute the cost of the services listed on their own individual plan in the program. The maximum family cost share payment is \$150 per month. More information can be found in the [Introduction to Parental Cost Share brochure](#) and in the [cost share tables](#) resource.



Can children receive outpatient therapy services through the Birth to 3 Program?

Yes. Children and families in the Birth to 3 Program can receive outpatient therapy services while participating in the program. Children may also be eligible for other [services for children with delays or disabilities](#) through the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. The Birth to 3 Program refers families to other services that may also be helpful.



How does the Birth to 3 Program support families during transitions?

The program supports families by helping them plan and work through changes, such as starting a job or caring for a new baby. The program also connects families with other programs during and after early intervention.



Making Referrals to the Birth to 3 Program

If you notice a child showing signs of developmental delays or disabilities or has atypical development, you can refer the child. You do not have to assess the child yourself to refer them to the Birth to 3 Program. A screening can be valuable to understanding a child's development, but it is not required for a referral to the Birth to 3 Program. The [Tips for Birth to 3 Program Referrals](#) resource has more information about how to make referrals.

When the Birth to 3 Program receives a referral, the local program will contact the family. Then the family can learn more about the program and ask questions. The program may offer a screening or suggest an evaluation to determine if the child is eligible for the program. If the family is found eligible, they can choose whether or not to enroll.

A developmental delay may occur for children who have or may have experienced abuse or neglect. If you suspect abuse or neglect, contact your local child protective services agency to [make a report](#). You can then also make a referral to the Birth to 3 Program to help the child with the developmental impacts of experiencing abuse, neglect, and trauma. Referring the child to the Birth to 3 Program does not replace the need to report potential abuse or neglect to your local child protective services agency.

For tips on how to talk to families about your concerns, visit the [Birth to 3 Program: Professional Development](#) webpage or the [Work Together: A Positive Experience for All](#) YoungStar webpage on the Department of Children and Families' website.



Call to Action

- Monitor a [child's development](#) and conduct developmental screening for children in your care.
- Talk with families about their child's development and support families with [developmental milestone](#) monitoring.
- Give the family the contact information for the [primary point of referral](#) for their local county Birth to 3 Program.
- [Make a referral](#) and ask for the family's consent to share information.