

What is Child Find and Important information you should know.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act includes the Child Find mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This obligation to identify all children who may need special education services exists even if the school is not providing special education services to the child. The IDEA requires all States to develop and implement a practical method of determining which children with disabilities are receiving special education and related services and which children are not. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3); *Wrights law: Special Education Law*, pages 72, 206-207).

Who is Covered by Child Find?

Schools are required to locate, identify and evaluate **all children** with disabilities from **birth through age 21**. The Child Find mandate applies to all children who reside within a State, including children who attend private schools and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state. This includes all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children who receive passing grades and are "**advancing from grade to grade.**"

How does Pickens County Schools implement Child Find?

Pickens County Exceptional Students Department uses the Child-Find process to identify pre-school age students with special needs that may be eligible to receive services through Special Education. Our district makes every effort to identify these children and implement several avenues for referrals and assessments to occur.

- **Babies Can't Wait**— Babies Can't Wait identifies children from Birth to Three years old. Pickens County Schools works closely with Babies Can't Wait to assess and transition these children by the age of three.
- **Pre-School Referrals**—Pickens County Schools works closely with the local Headstart program and Day Care facilities. These facilities have referral packets that are filled out by the parent if they are in agreement with the referral.
- **Health Department Referrals**—Pickens County Health Department also has Referral packets for the parent(s) if they suspect a disability.
- **Parent Referrals**—Parents can contact Pickens County Schools Exceptional Student Services Department to request a referral packet.

What Happens Next?

Once a referral is made and consent is received the Pickens County Schools Exceptional Student Services Department will conduct the appropriate assessments. The assessment team includes a School Psychologist, Speech Therapist, Play Facilitator, and if needed an Occupational Therapist and/or Physical Therapist. The team analyzes results from the assessments and during an Eligibility meeting, the team, including the parents, discusses the results and determines if the child is eligible for services through Special Education. Once this determination has been made, the parents may sign a Consent for Placement and the team develops an Individualized Education Plan.

This process can take up to 60 days.

Did you know.....

One in ten of Georgia's children have a sensory, emotional, physical, intellectual or language disability that may inhibit learning. Many of these disabilities are subtle, so they go unnoticed. As a result, children may have trouble in school, at home and with their peers. The earlier these disabilities are discovered and identified, the more effectively they can be managed. That means the child will have every chance to be successful in life.

The Georgia Department of Education and local school systems have a mission to locate, identify and evaluate each child--birth through 21 years of age--with a suspected disability, and to provide appropriate educational services to these children throughout Georgia. We need your help to find these children.

Calling "Child Find" can lead to a more successful life experience for a child. Once a child's disability is identified and evaluated, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be created to meet that child's specific and unique educational needs.

For more information and assistance about free educational services that are available for children with disabilities, simply call the toll-free number for CHILD FIND, 800-282-7552 (V/TDD).