

## Special Education Preschool

Special education is instruction specifically designed to meet the educational and developmental needs of children with disabilities, or those who are experiencing developmental delays.

Preschool provides a place where your child can gain a sense of self, explore, play with her peers, and build confidence. It can also be an integral piece to transitioning to kindergarten in that your child will learn how to raise her hand, take turns, and share the teacher's attention.



### What is the special education preschool program?

The preschool special education program is required by a national law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The law provides services for children ages 0-3 (Early Intervention), ages 3-5 (preschool special education), and ages 5-21 (school-age special education). Services for preschool children (ages 3 through 5) are provided free of charge through the public school system (see page 3 for a link to your district). Preschool special education services must be provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE), which means, to the maximum extent possible, a student who qualifies for special education services should be educated alongside students who do not have disabilities. The purpose of special education is to provide a free appropriate public education or FAPE. FAPE is provided by the preschool beginning no later than your child's third birthday and means that special education and related services are provided at *no cost* to the parents.

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### Who qualifies for special education preschool and how do I know if my child is eligible?

Your child between the ages of 3-5 could be eligible for preschool special education services if he or she has a disability or developmental delay that affects your child's ability to learn. Eligibility for special education preschool services is not the same as early intervention eligibility. Some children who receive early intervention services are not eligible for special education preschool services. An evaluation is to be made by your school district to determine:

- If your child qualifies as a student with a disability,
- Your child's present level of academic achievement and functional performance,
- If your child's disability has an adverse effect on your child's ability to participate in and benefit from age-appropriate activities, and
- If your child needs special education and related services.

## **How do children access special education preschool services.**

There are several ways that children may begin receiving services. Children who are receiving early intervention services may begin special education preschool services:

- upon their transition out of early intervention, typically at age three;
- or, at the State's discretion, two-year-olds who will turn three during the school year may receive special education preschool services.
- Still other children are first identified and found eligible between the ages of two and five, and thus, may begin receiving services as preschoolers.

One of the more common ways that very young children become identified as needing special services lies in the process of attending regular well-baby and child check-ups with a pediatrician. Often a referral to a developmental pediatrician or other specialist is made if there's a question or concern about a child's development. This can, in turn, lead to comprehensive evaluations to fully determine if a child has a significant delay or disability and as a result needs specialized help.

Another way for very young children to be identified is through their local school district's Child Find program in the special education department. In keeping with IDEA, each state must have comprehensive systems of child find in order to identify, locate, and evaluate children with disabilities residing in the State and who are in need of special education and related services. Before children are old enough to attend public school, however, it's not uncommon for a babysitter, a daycare provider, or preschool staff to express concern to a child's parents about a possible developmental or learning delay. They may suggest that the parents contact the appropriate agency to have the child screened and/or evaluated to determine if there is an underlying problem or delay that might need to be addressed. Such screenings cover a range of skill areas—vision and hearing, gross and fine motor skills, speech and language use, social and emotional behavior, and more. A list of local special education preschool programs can be found on page 3.

***Parents don't have to wait until someone suggests that their child be screened***, though. If you are concerned about your child's development, you can contact the local school district office and arrange to have your child screened. Such screenings are free of charge to parents.

## **Self-Determination Skills for Preschoolers**

Families are vital in teaching self-determination skills to their children; especially their children with disabilities. Self-determination is deciding for yourself how you want to live your life. There are many skills that need to be taught at an early age for a child to become self-determined. To start with, it is important to realize you can make your own decisions. Some self-determination skills include independence, problem-solving, choice-making, decision-making, setting goals, and self-advocacy. For more information about this topic, please visit the following sites:

[How You Can Help Your Child Learn to Be a Good Self Advocate](#)

[What Self-Advocacy Skills Should be Learned by What Age?](#)

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jzdivq7ajqq7jyo/AABWp5SJelXiE2sOnj2Q-cc4a?dl=0>

## Local Special Education Preschool Program Links

- [Alpine](#)
- [Beaver](#)
- [Box Elder](#)
- [Cache](#)
- [Canyons](#)
- [Daggett](#)
- [Davis](#)
- [Duchesne](#)
- [Emery](#)
- [Garfield](#)
- [Grand](#)
- [Granite](#)
- [Iron](#)
- [Jordan](#)
- [Juab](#)
- [Kane](#)
- [Logan](#)
- [Millard](#)
- [Morgan](#)
- [Murray](#)
- [Nebo](#)
- [North Sanpete](#)
- [North Summit](#)
- [Ogden](#)
- [Park City](#)
- [Provo](#)
- [Salt Lake City](#)
- [San Juan](#)
- [Sevier](#)
- [South Sanpete](#)
- [South Summit](#)
- [Tintic](#)
- [Tooele](#)
- [Uintah](#)
- [Wasatch](#)
- [Washington](#)
- [Wayne](#)
- [Weber](#)

## Parent Resources

For more detailed information regarding the process for special education preschool services, please visit us at the link below to access a full handbook outlining:

### Transition from Early Intervention to Special Education Preschool:

*What You Need to Know Before Your Child's Third Birthday*

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

Click the link above to view this parent handbook in the language of your choice.

## Online Training Resources

The Utah Parent Center's YouTube Page ([www.youtube.com/user/UtahParentCenterUPC](http://www.youtube.com/user/UtahParentCenterUPC)) has a wide range of online trainings on preschool and services. Click the links below to view these online trainings:

- [Transition from Early Intervention to Special Education Preschool](#)
- [Parents as Partners in the IEP Process](#)
- [Early Childhood Behavior Webinar](#)

## Website Resources

- <http://www.utahparentcenter.org/resources/preschool/>
- [Transition to Preschool Resources](#) (National)
- [USOE Special Education Preschool Resources](#)





## A Health Perspective

*From Utah Family Voices Family to Family Health Information Center*

When your child with special health care needs enters preschool, you will want to identify any health care concerns that need to be addressed during his time at school. When medications need to be given, or a particular health care concern will need to be monitored, it is good to have an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP) in place. Working with the school nurse and your child's primary care physician to develop an IHP, and having it available for staff to read, refer to, and better understand your child's needs, is essential to your child's health and safety at school.

### Who needs an individualized health care plan?

Students who:

- Are medically fragile with multiple needs
- Require lengthy health care or multiple health care contacts with the nurse or unlicensed assistive personnel during the school day
- Have health needs that are addressed on a daily basis
- Have health needs addressed as part of their IEP or 504 plan

### Why do you need a health care plan at school?

The number of students with special health care needs in the education setting is increasing due to advances in medicine and increased access to public education as authorized by federal and state laws. Furthermore, some chronic conditions have a potential for developing into a medical emergency and require the development of an Emergency Care Plan (ECP). The ECP is a component of an IHP, not a substitute. The IHP is helpful for:

- Creating a safer process for delegation of nursing care, supporting continuity of care;
- Serving as the health plan component of a 504 plan, and for students qualifying for special education; it can be incorporated into the Individualized Education Plan when the health care issues are related to the educational needs of the student;
- School nurses can utilize IHPs to communicate nursing care needs to administrators, staff, students, and parents.

The IHP should focus on health issues that affect safety and the student's ability to learn or that the student, family, Primary care physician, and/or teachers perceive as priorities. Ideally, the IHP is developed collaboratively with the student, family, school nurse, and Primary care physician. Ongoing evaluation assures a commitment to achieving measurable student outcomes. IHPs are updated as appropriate and revised when significant changes occur in the student's health status.



## **Making Choices**

Every day we are all faced with making choices. Some choices are simple, others complex, and yet others require a great deal of effort and thought. There are many steps to learning the skills necessary to make choices. Babies and toddlers acquire the ability to make choices in a variety of ways. Some examples are deciding what to wear, choosing a snack or a toy they want to play with, etc. For more information about how to teach your child to make choices, visit

- [www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/teaching/good-decision-making/](http://www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/teaching/good-decision-making/)
- [http://www-tc.pbskids.org/berenstainbears/caregiver/BB\\_Sec\\_3.pdf](http://www-tc.pbskids.org/berenstainbears/caregiver/BB_Sec_3.pdf)

## **Family to Family Network**

[www.utahfamilytofamilynetwork.org](http://www.utahfamilytofamilynetwork.org)

A Volunteer Network of the Utah Parent Center supported by the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD)



### **Some facts about the Utah Family to Family Network:**

The Family to Family Network is a statewide volunteer network that provides information, education and support to families with family members that have disabilities. The Network is not disability specific, but supports individuals/families dealing with many types of disabilities.

### **Who are its leaders?**

Local Network groups are directed by volunteer parent Leaders who serve as a resource for other parent/family members in their vicinity. Local Network Leaders have a child with a disability and experience with services provided through the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD). This experience allows Leaders to be a resource for individuals and families either using DSPD services or on the waiting list to receive services. The mission of each Network Leader is to educate, strengthen, and support families of persons with disabilities.

### **What services do local Network Leaders provide?**

Services vary between local Networks but include a combination of the following:

- One-on-one consultations with families
- Meetings for families with presenters on a wide range of topics
- Meaningful activities and events
- Dissemination of information and calendar of events to local listservs
- Meetings with representatives of various agencies and organizations to obtain information to be shared with families
- Outreach at agency fairs and other events to raise awareness

## **Where are local Networks located and how do I join?**

To join and learn about upcoming activities contact a local Leader in your area!

### **Cache County**

Leader: Lora Meerdo

E-mail: [imeerdo@comcast.net](mailto:imeerdo@comcast.net)

Facebook: [Cache Family to Family Network](#)

### **Carbon/Emery County**

Leaders: Darrelyn Davis & Terri Stettler

E-mail: [carbonemeryftof@gmail.com](mailto:carbonemeryftof@gmail.com)

Facebook: [Carbon/Emery Family to Family Network](#)

### **Davis County**

Leader: Natalie Najera

E-mail: [natalienajera67@yahoo.com](mailto:natalienajera67@yahoo.com)

Facebook: [Davis County Family to Family Network](#)

### **Duchesne County**

Leaders: Dana Ross & Christie Rhoades

Email: [danakarren@yahoo.com](mailto:danakarren@yahoo.com)

Email: [rhoadeschristie@gmail.com](mailto:rhoadeschristie@gmail.com)

Facebook: [Duchesne Family to Family Network](#)

### **Iron County**

Leader: Amy Bates

Email: [bates4ever@hotmail.com](mailto:bates4ever@hotmail.com)

Facebook: [Family to Family Network Iron County](#)

### **Salt Lake County**

Leaders: Lisa Wade & Julia Pearce

Email: [Augman@comcast.net](mailto:Augman@comcast.net)

Email: [runnamokk@hotmail.com](mailto:runnamokk@hotmail.com)

Facebook: [Family to Family Network](#)

### **Washington County**

Leaders: Nikki Nelson & Stephanie Anderson

Email: [wcf2fn@gmail.com](mailto:wcf2fn@gmail.com)

Facebook: [Washington County Family to Family Network](#)

Instagram@wcf2fn

## **Want to start a Family to Family Network Group?**

Simply send an e-mail to Rebecca Turley, Volunteer Coordinator at [rebeccat@utahparentcenter.org](mailto:rebeccat@utahparentcenter.org) explaining:



- Who you are
- A little about your family member with disabilities
- Your experiences in a leadership role
- A brief description of your knowledge and experience with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities
- An indication of how the Network and/or UPC could help support you to be successful as a leader.

The letter will be given to the Family to Family Network Advisory Council for approval. All new Networks will receive a budget and ongoing support from the Utah Parent Center and existing Network Leaders. For additional information about how to become a Network or how to provide support to an existing Network call Rebecca Turley, Volunteer Coordinator at (801) 272-1051 or (800) 468-1160.

## Utah Parent Center Upcoming Events

### From Homework Horror to Homework Happiness

**Thursday, December 4, 2014, 7:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m.**

Utah Parent Center, 230 West 200 South Suite 1101, Salt Lake City

Register online at: <http://conta.cc/Zoq78a> call 385-646-4190

*If you are struggling to help your child with his or her homework, this workshop is for you!*

### Community Events

- **St. George Needs Your Help to Build an All Abilities Park and Playground**

Join Leisure Services on Wednesday, December 3 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, located at 175 E 200 N in St. George, UT to learn more about the magical, fully-accessible park and playground designed for ALL children in our community. Contact 435-627-4500 with questions.

- **Seizures and Epilepsy 101: What to Expect Once a Diagnosis has been Made**

On Monday, December 8, 2014 from 6:30-7:30 pm at Murray Library location at 166 East 5300 South in Murray, pediatric neurologist Denise Morita, MD will discuss EEGs, MRIs and seizure medications. Q&A to follow. The presentation is free. Advanced registration is required.

**Register online at:** <http://bit.ly/1uMWxVX>

- **Deaf-Blind Institute**

Training provided by the Deaf-Blind Project to individuals who serve children with deaf-blindness (parents, family members, related service providers, teachers, nurses, etc.) All trainings will be held from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind Ogden Campus, 742 Harrison Blvd, Ogden, Utah. Two hours of University of Utah credit available. Lunch will be provided

**Register now at:** <http://goo.gl/b9jii2>

- Day 1: December 18, 2014 – Introduction to Deaf-Blind Services, Communication Matrix, and There is More Than One Way to Have a Conversation
- Day 2: January 15, 2015 – Concept Development, Routines, and Calendar Systems, Positive Behavior Strategies, Orientation and Mobility
- Day 3: February 20, 2015 – Sensory Integration, Positioning, Hearing, and Vision

- **2015 Utah Assistive Technology Team Conference**

This year's conference will be held on February 4 and 5, 2015 at the Ogden Eccles Conference Center and will feature keynote presenter Chris Bugaj. The conference is free of charge for residents and professionals in Utah. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

- **BYU Social Skills Study for Boys and Girls Ages 12-17 with Mild to Moderate Autism (ASD)**

To have your qualifying child participate, your child will need weekly transportation to BYU for 8-12 weeks; be a member of a community group such as scouts, church youth group, or sport team; attend this community group independently; and have fluent language abilities in English. For more information or to participate email [autism@byu.edu](mailto:autism@byu.edu) or learn more at <https://education.byu.edu/autism>.

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## Utah Parent Center Information Disclaimer



**Serving Utah families since 1983**

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