

All in for Kids

A Birth to 3 Program Family Newsletter

All in for Kids: Birth to 3 is a newsletter created to keep you and your family informed about the services available through the Birth to 3 Program. The newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.



INTRODUCING THE BIRTH TO 3 PROGRAM FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Keeping you informed about the Birth to 3 Program

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is pleased to share *All in for Kids: Birth to 3*, a newsletter designed to keep families informed about the Birth to 3 Program. These newsletters will be mailed and posted on the Birth to 3 Program: Information for Families webpage at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/family/index.htm.

Birth to 3 Program overview

The Birth to 3 Program is a statewide program that serves families with children under the age of 3 with developmental delays or disabilities. The services that families receive support children's development and growth and families' knowledge, skills, and

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abilities. The Birth to 3 Program is here to help children grow and learn to their fullest potential.

The Birth to 3 Program is unique for each child. The services each family receives depend on the needs of the child and parents or caregivers and on the family's priorities and concerns. Examples of services include family training and counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. The Birth to 3 Program works as a partner with families. Services are delivered in families' natural environments (such as home, child care, or other community settings).

For more information about the Birth to 3 Program, go to

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/family/index.htm.

Birth to 3 Program continues during the pandemic

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has brought major challenges to our communities. During this difficult time, the Birth to 3 Program continues to support children and families. The Birth to 3 Program team carefully follows COVID-19 safety routines. Services can be provided in new and creative ways or at different locations to protect the health of children and families.

Enrolling new families

Children's learning and development are especially important during the first three years of life. When it comes to services for children and families, earlier is better. The pandemic has affected life in many ways, but the Birth to 3 Program is still enrolling new children. Enrollment has three steps: referring the child, determining eligibility, and developing an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Step 1: Referring the child

Parents and caregivers know the child's abilities and needs best. If they have concerns or questions, they can refer the child to the Birth to 3 Program. Child care workers, health care providers, and other individuals and programs that work with families may also make referrals. A conversation with parents before making a referral is strongly encouraged. To refer a child to the program, contact the Birth to 3 Program in the county where the child lives. Contact information can be found at

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/contacts.htm.

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Step 2: Determining eligibility

After referral, the child's eligibility for the Birth to 3 Program is determined. This is done through evaluations, observations, and information from the family and the doctor or other health care providers. The evaluation looks at five areas of development:

- Learning (cognitive development)
- Movement, sight, and hearing (physical/motor development)
- Communication and understanding others' communication (speech and language development)
- Responding to and relating with others (social and emotional development)
- Eating, dressing, and performing daily living activities (adaptive development)

Step 3: Developing an Individualized Family Service Plan

If the child is determined eligible, an IFSP is developed. The Birth to 3 Program team, which includes the family, works together to create the IFSP. The IFSP is a plan that guides and supports the efforts to boost the child's development up to age 3. This plan is based on identified needs to help meet the unique goals of that family and child.

Serving families already enrolled

The local county Birth to 3 Program provides the supports and services that have been determined by the team. The team also determines when, where, and how often supports are provided. If any part of the plan is no longer working for the child or family, the IFSP can be updated—just talk to your team!

Take the Birth to 3 Program Family Outcomes Survey

The Family Outcomes survey has been mailed to all families with children who have been in the Birth to 3 Program for at least six months. This yearly survey helps DHS understand if the program is meeting the needs of families and children. The information it gathers helps make the program stronger for families throughout Wisconsin.

If your family received a survey, please respond by December 31, 2020.

There are two ways to complete the survey:

- Fill out the paper survey that was sent and then use the postage-paid envelope that was included to return it free by U.S. mail.

SPREAD THE WORD

If you know of a child who might be helped by the Birth to 3 Program, spread the word! Tell other parents about the program, pass along this newsletter, or share the website address with them.

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- Use a computer, smartphone, or tablet to take the survey at www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3248930/Family-Outcomes-Survey.

The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete. Survey responses will not be linked to families or children. Taking the survey is not required and will not change the services the family receives.

Thank you for providing valuable feedback about the Birth to 3 Program!

Communicating with the child's health care provider

The Birth to 3 Program is here to help children develop and learn to their highest ability. No matter the structure of the family, parents and caregivers are viewed as experts on the child. Doctors, nurses, and other health care providers can be powerful partners in helping the child's development. Open communication between families, caregivers, and health care providers can benefit the child.

Making the most of a health care appointment

Health care appointments can go by fast. Usually there is a lot of information to cover in a short period of time. Being prepared will help make the most of a health care appointment.

Here are some tips for a successful appointment:

- **Write things down.** Between appointments, write down questions or concerns. Keep a list of the child's new skills or milestones and share them during the appointment. For examples of milestones, go to www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html.
- **Think about timing.** Book appointments for the best time of day for the family. For example, avoid nap time.
- **Ask others to help.** If possible, ask family or friends to help with other children or tasks during the appointment. This reduces stress and helps you focus.
- **Follow your instincts.** Parents and caregivers know the child best. Their "gut feelings" are a great tool. Let the health care provider know of concerns sooner rather than later.

Tell the health care provider about the Birth to 3 Program

Families enrolled in the Birth to 3 Program are encouraged to tell the health care provider about the program. Share information on how it is helping the child progress. Let them know what supports have worked best. The more

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information the health care provider has about the supports the child is receiving, the better they can adjust the medical care they provide.

Helpful resources

Myths about mask-wearing by children:

www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Mask-Mythbusters.aspx

Help support a child in wearing a face mask:

www.asaonline.org/research-treatment/clinical-corner/face-mask

How to prepare for in-person service visits during the pandemic:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02703.pdf

Information on early childhood development:

www.zerotothree.org/early-development

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

For faster delivery, sign up to receive the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the Birth to 3 Program. Go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm. Then scroll down and click the Birth to 3 Program Information for Families link on the left side.

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The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention program committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. The program partners with families to assist the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills, and abilities as they interact with and raise their child. For more information, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/index.htm.

Para leer este boletín en español, visite www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3.htm.

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