



**Early Intervention** refers to the services and supports available to infants and toddlers who have developmental delays and disabilities. In Wisconsin the **Birth to 3 Program** provides these services that help the child learn, interact, and thrive at home, in childcare, and during other everyday activities. The Birth to 3 Program is a special education program, operated at the local county level, that uses trained and qualified staff to support a child's development.

As parents, we want to feel that our children know they can rely on us to take care of them. But when a child is not reaching developmental milestones, it's good to reach out and ask for help. If you have not worked with a public agency or county government before, asking one for help with your child may not feel comfortable. This connection opens the door to resources that can support your child and family.

"Birth to 3 helped me learn more about being a new parent, and to speak up for what my daughter needs."

— Birth to 3 Program Parent

### Tips for Families



Your child **does not** need a diagnosis to be eligible for the Birth to 3 Program.

You **do not** have to prove citizenship to be eligible for Birth to 3 Program services.

Your child **does not** need to be covered by Wisconsin Medicaid to get services.



### Why Participate in the Birth to 3 Program?

The first three years, or the **first 1,000** days, in your child's life are a critical time. Getting children help early gives them a better start to their learning and development. The Birth to 3 Program uses this time to help your child learn, move, communicate, interact and relate with others, and learn to eat, dress, and take actions to meet their needs.

While you might hear "wait and see" or "don't worry so much," from other parents or family, remember that you know your child best. Ask your child's primary care provider and Birth to 3 Program staff to evaluate if any early intervention is needed.



### Which Services Can the Birth to 3 Program Offer?

If your child is eligible, your family will work with a **core team** made up of occupational, physical, and speech therapists, an early childhood special educator, and a service coordinator. If needed, other providers like vision or hearing specialists, or social service providers can be added to the team based on your child's and family's needs.

You will **partner** with your service coordinator, who will help you find, and connect with needed services and supports. Your family's and child's interests and daily activities will be used to make a plan for these services. Learn more about Birth to 3 Program services at [dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03011.pdf](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03011.pdf).



## Are Birth to 3 Program Visits in My Home?

The Birth to 3 Program provides services where you are every day. Learning and growing happens in the places your family spends time and during activities the child finds fun and engaging. This helps your child develop and practice new skills in the places they will use them.

There may be times when you can't have the visit at your home and your Birth to 3 Program team understands this. The Birth to 3 Program team is happy to meet any place that's a **natural environment** for your child. This means a place where your child is comfortable playing and learning. This might be a childcare center, a grandparent's house, a library or even a park.



## How Are Services Provided?

As a parent or caregiver, you will learn how to be the child's **first and best teacher**. The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program brings you, as parents and caregivers, into this learning process. The team coaches you on what you can do so you can continue to help the child learn during your family's everyday activities and daily routines when providers are not there.

You will learn how to communicate your child's needs, help your child learn and grow, and understand your rights with the program. Your family and primary service provider will be supported by the full team of professional services providers, including a service coordinator, special education teacher and therapists.



### Learn More

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/index.htm](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/index.htm)

Birth to 3 Program, Contact Us: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/contacts.htm](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/contacts.htm)

Birth to 3 Services at a Glance: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03011.pdf](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03011.pdf)



## How Do I Get Started?

**1st**—You'll need a referral to the Birth to 3 Program. This can come from you, a family member, your child's primary care provider, or anyone in your child's life. Start by finding your county's local **Primary Point of Referral** at [dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/contacts.htm](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/contacts.htm). You will talk with an intake staff member about your child and learn more about the program.

**2nd**—Birth to 3 Program staff will set up a home visit to determine your child's eligibility for the program. The screening uses the information you shared at intake as a starting point for the evaluation. For example, if your child seems to have delays around communication, a speech and language provider will be one of the early interventionists who evaluate and assesses your child.

**3rd**—If your child is found eligible, a service coordinator will meet with your family to develop an **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)**. Your insights, goals and dreams for your child are important to the IFSP process because the team uses the IFSP to direct the services provided.

**4th**—If you have questions about your child's progress or think changes to your child's Birth to 3 Program services are needed, you can ask for a team meeting at any time.



### Still Have Questions? Need Help Finding Services for Your Child?

- [Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/index.htm)  
[dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/index.htm](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/index.htm)
- [Well Badger Resource Center](https://www.wellbadger.org) [wellbadger.org](https://www.wellbadger.org) or 800.642.7837