

COMPARISON BETWEEN FIRST STEPS AND PRESCHOOL SERVICES

	FIRST STEPS	PRESCHOOL (PS) SERVICES
FOCUS:	Developmental needs	Educational needs
TYPES OF SERVICES:	Individual	Integrated into classroom, small group and individual
DURATION:	Plans outlining number of hours of therapy written for six months, until child turns three, or until child no longer meets eligibility criteria	Developmental PS follows school calendar; Summer services limited-must qualify for "Extended School Year (ESY)"
PROGRESS REPORTS:	Quarterly Annual IFSP	Varies by district: Annual IEP (Individual Educational Program)
ELIGIBILITY:	Determined by early intervention team following evaluation by ED Team & based on state criteria	Determined by case conference committee following evaluation and based on state criteria
OT/PT:	Separate individual service Developmental Model	Considered "related services"; based on a need for special education and is supplemental
OT:	Fine Motor Sensory Integration Feeding Developmental Model	Fine Motor Pre-writing; self-help skills Sensory issues addressed through PS activities; Educational model
PT:	Individual Developmental Model	Integrated to improve accessibility in educational or individual settings depending on child need; Ed. model
COST:	No Fees assessed for evaluations; ongoing services have sliding fee based on family income	No cost to parent (except for "supply" fee)
LOCATION/PLACEMENT OPTIONS:	Services performed in the Natural Environment (e.g. Home, Day Care, etc.)	Services provided at schools or designated community placement (Least Restrictive Environment may be: walk-in speech or OT/PT; community PS; developmental PS)
TRANSPORTATION:	Mileage reimbursement to parent, public entity, or participating provider	Transportation provided or mileage reimbursement offered for parent
DISCHARGE:	Individual therapies d/c when child is no longer eligible or turns 3yrs.	Individual therapies d/c when child no longer needs special education; services can be modified or ended with a case conference

* Please remember that the transition from First Steps to Preschool Services involves a shift in focus. Services are not more or less; they are DIFFERENT, reflecting the different needs of your child when he/she reaches 3 yrs. of age. School districts attempt to meet the needs of your child as those needs relate to his/her educational needs to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)