



Infant Family Support Program

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023–2024





SAN DIEGO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION 2023-24 School Calendar for HOPE Infant Family Support Program

July 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
Days:						19

August 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
Days:						10

September 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Days:						20

October 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
Days:						22

November 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
Days:						16

December 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
Days:						11

January 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
Days:						17

February 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		
Days:						20

March 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
Days:						21

April 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
Days:						17

May 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Days:						22

June 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
Days:						5



School Closed/Holidays



Recess (No students and non-duty day for teachers)



Teacher In-Service Day
(No school for students)

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HOPE INFANT FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), HOPE Infant Family Support Program (HOPE). This handbook provides important information about the program, policies, and resources.

HOPE is an early intervention program for infants/toddlers with disabilities and their families.

- HOPE is part of California Early Start and the California Department of Education (CDE).
- HOPE is a special education program administered through the SDCOE.
- HOPE provides services to families residing within school districts in the North Coastal, North Inland, Poway, and South County regions of San Diego County.

The parents'/guardians' relationship with their infants/toddlers is the most important factor in supporting development. Early intervention specialists' partner with families to promote the infant's/toddler's development and learning in everyday activities within the family and community. The goal is that "families be well-informed, supported, and respected as capable and collaborative decision makers regarding services for their child." (California Early Intervention Services Act, 2001)

HOPE staff collaborates with families to support infant/toddler learning through everyday activities and routines. Research affirms the effectiveness of family-centered practices in building a family's confidence and competence in meeting their infant's/toddler's special needs.

HOPE staff provides the following universal support to all infants/toddlers and their families:

- Family-centered and reflective practice services,
- Parent/guardian-child interactions,
- Inclusion within family daily activities and routines,
- Child and family development, and
- Social and emotional development of children and family.

HOPE Staff

Each family receiving HOPE services is assigned early intervention specialists based on infant/toddler and family needs.

Early intervention specialists may include:

- Early Childhood Special Education Teachers,
- Special Education Assistants,
- Educational Audiologists,
- Language, Speech, and Hearing Specialists,
- Occupational Therapists,
- Physical Therapists,

- School Nurses,
- School Psychologists,
- School Social Workers,
- Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and
- Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

HOPE Program

HOPE is a special education funded, early intervention program for infants and toddlers, birth to three years of age, with disabilities and their families. HOPE services are free to eligible families.

HOPE services support the optimal development of infants/toddlers with disabilities. The goal is to create positive outcomes for infants/toddlers and their families by:

- Creating positive relationships with parents/guardians that promote family choice, participation, and decision-making,
- Affirming and building on infant/toddler and family strengths while acknowledging that the parent/guardian is the infant's/toddler's first teacher,
- Supporting infant/toddler learning through family daily activities and routines; and honoring and respecting the diversity and uniqueness of families.

Upon entry into the HOPE Program, a Registration form must be completed, which includes a review of the child's birth certificate. Annually, a Re-Enrollment form is completed to update contact information and verify annual notification of parents'/guardians' rights and responsibilities, pursuant to California Education Code (EC). An acknowledgement of receipt of this notice must be signed by the parent/guardian.

HOPE Parent/Guardian Survey

Once a year, parents/guardians will be sent a survey to complete. This anonymous survey will be sent for the purpose of collecting information about families' experiences while receiving special education services from HOPE. The survey results will be reviewed by the program management team and shared with the early intervention specialists. The results will be used to review the quality of the program and guide our future services.

INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP)

What is the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)?

An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written plan for providing early intervention services to an eligible infant/toddler and his/her family. For an infant/toddler who has been assessed and determined to be eligible, a meeting to develop the initial IFSP must be conducted within 45 days of the referral to Early Start. The IFSP is developed based on individual family priorities and concerns and defines which California Early Start services will be provided. Parents'/Guardians' input and participation during the development of the IFSP is integral. The IFSP is not a final document; it is an ongoing process. (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 303.342)

Who is Eligible?

An infant's/toddler's eligibility for special education services is determined through a review of medical and developmental information, administration of a play-based developmental assessment, and information about the infant's/toddler's development provided by the parent/guardian. The developmental assessment measures an infant's/toddler's skills in five developmental areas. Parents/Guardians can actively participate in the process of assessment and planning by providing information about the infant's/toddler's medical and developmental history and making observations about his/her strengths, talents, preferences, and difficulties.

Once a parent/guardian signs the Parental Consent for Evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for HOPE services, an educational file is created. Since HOPE is an extension of the school district in which the child resides, a couple of months after a child's second birthday, HOPE notifies the school district of the upcoming transition. Then 90 days prior to the child's third birthday the entire educational file is transferred to the district of residence.

Eligibility criteria is described in state law. Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 3031 states eligible children include those infants and toddlers who:

1. Have a developmental delay as determined by a significant difference* between the expected level of development for their age and their current level of functioning in one or more of the following five developmental areas:
 - cognitive development,
 - physical and motor development, including vision and hearing,
 - communication development,
 - social and emotional development, or
 - adaptive development.

**A significant difference is defined as a 33 percent delay in one developmental area before 24 months of age, or, at 24 months of age or older, either a delay of 50 percent in one developmental area or a 33 percent delay in two or more developmental areas.*

2. Having a disabling medical condition or congenital syndrome which the IFSP team determines has a high predictability of requiring intensive special education and services.

What Should Parents/Guardians do to Prepare for an IFSP Meeting?

Prior to an IFSP meeting, it would be helpful for parents/guardians to:

- Share information with the early intervention specialists that you think is important (e.g., medical records, baby book, growth chart, evaluation reports) and discuss concerns about the infant's/toddler's development,
- Speak with other parents/guardians,
- Learn more about the diagnosed conditions/medical history from the infant's/toddler's doctors/specialists and how they affect development,
- Write down questions and concerns to discuss at the IFSP meeting,
- Along with the service coordinator*, decide which family members, friends, teachers, therapists, physicians, and other professionals should be included and which members will help to write the IFSP,
- Plan times or locations for the IFSP meeting that are convenient for your family,
- Consider which service delivery environment (e.g., home, childcare center, babysitter) best suits the infant's/toddler's needs.
- Review your Parents'/Guardians' Rights and Legal Notifications (see page 12).

**A service coordinator is an Early Start provider from the San Diego Regional Center or a Local Educational Area (e.g., HOPE Infant Family Support Program) who assists families with assessment and the coordination of Early Start services.*

What is in an IFSP?

Title 17, California Code of Regulations, Section 52106 defines the elements that must be included in an IFSP. The IFSP shall include, but is not limited to:

- Family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the development of the infant/toddler,
- Infant's/toddler's present levels of development in all five areas,
- Infant/toddler developmental outcomes shall be based on the identified needs of the infant/toddler and family pursuant to the assessment. The family outcomes are developed based upon the family's priorities and concerns to support the infant's/toddler's development, and
- Early intervention services are necessary to meet the unique needs of the infant/toddler and the family to achieve the outcomes.

What Happens at an IFSP Meeting?

The IFSP team will discuss and address all the requirements described in the section above (i.e., What is in the IFSP?) and document this information on the IFSP.

Parents/Guardians are equal members of the IFSP team. They are the experts on their infant/toddler and are at the heart of the process. Parents'/Guardians' input is vital to this process.

All IFSP meetings will be in the language of the parent's/guardian's choice unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. In addition, the IFSP document may be translated upon request into the family's native language. The family will receive a copy of the IFSP. Written consent from the parent/guardian must be obtained on the IFSP before early intervention services as described in the IFSP can be provided.

When is an IFSP Reviewed or Updated?

A periodic review of the infant's/toddler's IFSP must take place at least every six months. A review may occur more frequently if there are any changes to the IFSP or if the parent/guardian requests a periodic review with the service coordinator. The IFSP must also be reviewed annually to monitor how the infant/toddler is doing and to make any needed changes to the IFSP. Infant/toddler and family needs change over time, and all service decisions can be amended to optimally support the child and family. (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 303.342; Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 52102)

HOPE SERVICES

Description of Services

Once eligibility has been determined, an IFSP is developed that includes the special education services that will be provided to the infant/toddler and family. Services are typically provided in-person in the family's home, childcare, private program, and/or other setting. These are considered natural environments. Natural environments mean settings that are natural or typical for a same-aged infant/toddler without a disability. Services can also be provided through distance learning/tele-intervention (i.e., phone calls, texts, emails, regular mail, videoconferencing). Each family receiving HOPE services is assigned a service coordinator and early intervention specialist(s). The early intervention specialists are the consistent contact for the family and will help in coordinating educational services. HOPE services are provided by partnering with the parent/guardian in the infant's/toddler's natural environment. Through partnerships with the family, services are tailored to each infant/toddler and family and can include parent/guardian coaching as well as direct interaction with the infant/toddler. Parents/Guardians are provided a program calendar that indicates the days HOPE is in session. HOPE operates 200 days in a school year and has a fixed schedule which

includes breaks in service for periods such as holidays and program breaks. Services are not available during the holidays and program breaks.

The special education services HOPE may provide are:

- Service coordination,
- Special instruction,
- Family training and counseling,
- Specialized deaf and hard of hearing services,
- Specialized vision services,
- Audiological services,
- Language and speech therapy,
- Occupational therapy,
- Physical therapy,
- Psychological services,
- Social work services,
- Assistive technology services, and/or
- Special education aide in regular development class, childcare center/family childcare home.

The following chart is designed to show examples of which early intervention specialists are available to support families based on their priorities and needs. When parents/guardians have concerns or questions, they should discuss them with the primary early intervention specialist to determine the HOPE resources and services needed to benefit the infant/toddler and family.

If you have questions, concerns, and/or desired outcomes in these areas:	Early Intervention Specialists who may support you:
Challenging Behaviors	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Occupational Therapy Specialist Social Worker School Psychologist
Eating	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Nurse Occupational Therapy Specialist
Family Stress	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Social Worker
Health	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Nurse
Hearing	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Educational Audiologist Language, Speech, and Hearing Specialist Nurse
Irritability	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant

	Occupation Therapy Specialist Social Worker
Sleeping	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Nurse Occupational Therapy Specialist Social Worker
Social Interaction	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Language, Speech, and Hearing Specialist Occupational Therapy Specialist Social Worker School Psychologist
Talking and Language Development	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Educational Audiologist Language, Speech, and Hearing Specialist Occupational Therapy Specialist
Vision	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Nurse
Walking and moving	Special Education Teacher* Special Education Assistant Occupational Therapy Specialist Physical Therapy Specialist
<u>Adaptive Equipment is available to support families with their daily routines and activities. Ask your Special Education Teacher, Physical Therapist, and/or Occupational Therapist.</u>	

**Special Education Teachers include Early Childhood Special Education Teachers, Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Teachers of the Visually Impaired*

HOPE Services Implementation

To provide the special education services listed on the IFSP, it is the responsibility of the early intervention specialists to:

- Offer services once or twice a week depending on the needs of the infant/toddler and family,
- Create a schedule with the family to implement the services designed on the IFSP,
- Begin service visits on time and provide the services designated on the IFSP,
- Provide special education services between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, within the 200-day school calendar. On rare occasions, early intervention specialists are required to participate in program obligations that may make certain times of the day or days of the week unavailable for service visits,
- Modify the service visit schedule upon request. Every effort will be made to accommodate a request for a change of schedule,
- Provide contact information to family to cancel or reschedule service visits,
- Suggest an IFSP Periodic Review if changes need to be made regarding services, a pattern of missed visits is identified, etc.

- Coordinate with the family to schedule service visits with other early intervention specialists listed on the IFSP,
- Collaborate with all early intervention specialists listed on the IFSP to meet the unique needs of families. This teaming facilitates the provision of quality early intervention services.

To provide the special education services listed on the IFSP, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to:

- Provide a safe, consistent, learning environment for service visits,
- Be present, or designate an adult caregiver to be present, and participate in service visits,
- Team with HOPE to implement evidence-based strategies to meet educational outcomes,
- Communicate ideas, suggestions, and concerns to the early intervention specialist or the manager, as needed,
- Notify the early intervention specialists, as early as possible, of a cancellation or need to reschedule a service visit,
- Follow the HOPE Health Guidelines for In-Person Service Visits (see page 12).

What to Expect During a HOPE Service Visit?

Based upon the priorities and concerns of the family, each service visit is individualized.

- At the beginning of the service visit, discuss what was tried with infant/toddler since the last service visit - what did and did not work. Share anything new since the last service visit. Identify focus of today's service visit.
- Identify focus of today's service visit – begin a new activity OR continue the activity that was occurring when the early intervention specialists arrived. Early intervention specialists observe infant/toddler playing and interaction during daily routines and activities.
- Early intervention specialists and parents/guardians collaborate to practice new ways to help meet infant's/toddler's IFSP outcomes and discuss how to include the strategies in daily routines.
- Discuss the activities and strategies practiced during the service visit – what went well, what did not, and what can be tried next time.
- Early intervention specialists and parents/guardians share information to figure out what strategies will best help meet infant's/toddler's IFSP outcomes during the service visits and between visits.
- At the end of the service visit, schedule the next service visit. Service visits can be scheduled in the home, in community locations, or through distance learning/tele-intervention.

HOPE Health Guidelines for In-Person Service Visits

These guidelines were developed by the HOPE nurse to minimize the spread of infection to infants/toddlers, families, and early intervention specialists. In general, infants/toddlers do not have strong resistance to infection, and early intervention specialists serve many infants/toddlers with additional health concerns that can further compromise their ability to fight infection. Early intervention specialists take precautions to prevent the spread of illnesses, and we ask that families assist us in these efforts. To keep our staff and other children healthy, we ask staff not to conduct home visits when someone in the home has an infectious illness that can spread to others. We also ask that you and/or your child do not attend a group experience when ill.

PLEASE CALL TO CANCEL YOUR IN-PERSON SERVICE VISIT IF SOMEONE HAS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS:

- Elevated temperature (fever) of 100° or higher in the past 24 hours (You must be fever free for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication to resume in-person service visits.)
- Tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 7-days
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Large amount of nasal discharge, not related to allergies
- Frequent cough from a cold/flu/virus, not related to allergies or asthma
- Body rash for which the cause is unknown
- Scabies, head lice, or nits (eggs) present
- Unusually tired/fatigued, pale, and/or not feeling well
- Itchy, pink eyes (one or both) with or without drainage from the eye
- Open, moist sores or crusty, draining areas on the skin, especially the face (e.g., cold sores, impetigo)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat

Also, please call to notify the primary early intervention specialist if someone in the home has been exposed to a communicable disease even if he/she does not appear ill (e.g., if exposed to chicken pox, hand, foot, and mouth disease, strep throat, flu). The intervention specialist will then consult with the HOPE nurse to determine if the service visit needs to be cancelled.

The HOPE Health Guidelines do not necessarily address every situation. Please feel free to call the HOPE nurse to discuss any concerns at 760-307-1348.

ASSESSMENTS

Desired Results Developmental Profile (2015) (DRDP 2015)

The California Department of Education (CDE), Early Education and Support Division, requires all programs funded through the CDE to administer the DRDP 2015 twice yearly. It is an observational assessment for young children and their families that is used to inform instruction and program development. The DRDP 2015 represents a full continuum of development from early infancy up to kindergarten entry.

The DRDP 2015 is administered in natural settings through observations to measure progress in the following domains:

- Approaches to Learning – Self-Regulation,
- Social and Emotional Development,
- Language and Literacy Development,
- Cognition, Including Math, and Science,
- Physical Development, Including Health.

Infant-Toddler Developmental Assessment-Second Edition (IDA-2)

The IDA-2 is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, family-centered assessment designed for infants/toddlers birth to 3 years of age. The IDA-2 is used to determine eligibility for HOPE special education services. It measures skills in the following areas:

- Gross motor,
- Fine motor,
- Relationship to inanimate objects,
- Language communication,
- Self-help,
- Relationship to people,
- Emotions, and feeling states,
- Coping behavior.

SKI-HI Language Development Scale (SKI-HI)

The CDE requires administration of the SKI-HI twice yearly to children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). The SKI-HI is a parent observation scale listing the receptive and expressive language skills of children ages birth to 5 years of age. It is specifically designed for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). The results are reported to CDE.

Other Assessments

A variety of other assessments will be used by early intervention specialists as they facilitate discussions with families regarding development, to monitor developmental

progress, and to plan for special education services. Assessments may include, but are not limited to standardized assessments, curriculum-based assessments, developmental checklists, observations, interviews, questionnaires, and review of records. In cases where a standardized assessment is selected for administration, the early intervention specialist will obtain parent/guardian consent on the Consent for Evaluation/Assessment form.

TRANSITION AT AGE 3

Transition services are those services that assist a toddler with a disability and his/her family to experience a smooth and effective transition from HOPE to the toddler's next program (e.g., preschool special education program in the school district of residence, childcare center in the community, Head Start Program) or other appropriate services, including services that may be identified for a toddler who is no longer eligible to receive special education services.

A Transition Planning Conference must be held to discuss the transition process and determine specific steps to be documented in the IFSP Transition Plan. The Transition Planning Conference can be held as early as when the toddler is two years, three months of age but no later than two years, nine months of age. Participants may include, but are not limited to: parents/guardians, HOPE early intervention specialist(s), service coordinator, preschool representative from the school district of residence, and/or representative from childcare setting (e.g., Head Start Program, KinderCare Learning Center).

The focus of Early Start is on the infant/toddler and on the family, and the goal is to assist parents/guardians in supporting the growth and development of the infant/toddler with a disability. If a toddler begins a preschool program provided by the school district of residence, the emphasis shifts to a model that focuses solely on the child.

Additional information on the transition process can be found at:
<https://www.sdcoe.net/schools/hope> under Parent Resources link.

PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' RIGHTS AND LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS

Confidentiality and Access to Records

HOPE is your Local Educational Agency (LEA) acting on behalf of your school district of residence. When your child turns 3, the LEA is your school district of residence.

As a Parent/Guardian, you have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education records within five (5) business days of the date the school receives a request for access. Parents/Guardians or eligible students should submit to the school administrator a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school administrator will forward requests to the Custodian of Records. The Custodian of Records will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student. [CFR 303.402, CCR 52164, CCR 52168]
- Receive, within five days of your request, copies of records relating to your child and/or explanations that you request; [CCR 52164]
- Request a meeting with the superintendent of the LEA about information contained in the record, [CCR52168]
- Have personally identifiable information about your child maintained in a confidential manner per the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, [CFR 303.401, CFR 303.460, CCR 52160, CCR 52162, CCR 52165, CCR 52169]
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents/Guardians or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school administrator; clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate education interests. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request from officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, the district shall disclose education records without parent/guardian consent.
- When a student moves to a new district, the district will forward the student's records upon the request of the new school district within 10 school days.

Note: In order to keep your infant's/toddler's information confidential, please do not text confidential information (e.g., medical information, birth certificate, assessment results) to your early intervention specialist. You may share this information in a service visit, in a phone conversation, and/or through email.

Procedural Safeguards and Parents'/Guardians' Rights Regarding Assessment

The determination of eligibility for Early Start in California includes a timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment of every child under age three years who is suspected to be in need early intervention services. If no Parent/Guardian or guardian is available or the child is a ward of the court, a knowledgeable surrogate Parent/Guardian who has no conflicting interest will be appointed. Procedural safeguards ensure that families are provided with their rights under the law. [CFR 303.322, CFR 303.406, CCR 52082]

As a Parent/Guardian, you have the right to:

- Be fully informed of your rights under Early Start; [CFR 303.403, GC 95020(c), CCR 52160, CCR 52161]
- Refer your child for evaluation and assessment, provide information throughout the process, make decisions, and give informed consent for your child's early intervention services; [CFR 303.401, CFR 303.404, CCR 52040(d)]
- Understand and provide voluntary written permission or refusal before the initial evaluation and assessments are administered; [CFR 303.405, CCR 52161]
- Participate in the initial evaluation and assessment process including eligibility determination; [CFR 303.322, GC 95020, CCR 52082, CCR 52084]
- Receive a completed initial evaluation and assessment within 45 days after the referral of your child to a regional center or an LEA; [CFR 303.321, CFR 303.322, CCR 52086]
- Participate in a meeting to share the results of evaluations and assessments; and [GC 95020(b)]
- Participate in all decisions regarding eligibility and services. [CFR 303.343, GC 95014(a), GC 95020(b), CCR 52082(a), CCR 52104]

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the following:

- Evaluation and assessment materials are administered in the language of the parents'/guardians' choice or other mode of communication unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. [CFR 303.323, CCR 52084]
- Evaluation and assessment procedures and materials are selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory. [CFR 303.323, CCR 52082]
- Evaluation and assessment materials are appropriate to assess the specific areas of developmental need and are used for the specific purposes for which they were designed. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52082]
- Evaluations and assessments are conducted by qualified personnel. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52084]
- Evaluations and assessments administered to children with known vision, hearing, orthopedic, or communication impairments are selected to accurately reflect the child's developmental level. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52082]
- Evaluations and assessments are administered in the five developmental areas, which include physical development (motor abilities, vision, hearing, and health status); communication development; cognitive development; adaptive development; and social or emotional development. Assessments and

evaluations are ongoing while your child is in Early Start. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52082, CCR 52084, CCR 52102]

- Evaluations and assessments shall be conducted in natural environments whenever possible. [CCR 52082(i), CCR 52084(e)]
- Pertinent records relating to your child's health status and medical history are reviewed. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52082]
- No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining your child's eligibility for early intervention services. [CFR 303.323, CCR 52082]
- Interviews to identify family resources, priorities, and concerns regarding the development of your child and your family's needs are voluntary. [CFR 303.322, CCR 52084, CCR 52106].

During the development and implementation of an IFSP, you have the right as the parent/guardian to:

- Attend the IFSP meetings and participate in developing the IFSP; [CFR 303.343, CCR 52104]
- Invite other family members to attend IFSP meetings; [CFR 303.343, CCR 52104]
- Invite an advocate or persons other than family members to attend and participate in the IFSP meetings; [CFR 303.343, CCR 52104]
- Have a copy of the complete IFSP; [CFR 303.402, CCR 52102]
- Have the contents of the IFSP fully explained in the language of your choice; [CFR 303.342, CFR 303.403, CCR 52102]
- Give consent to services listed on the IFSP. If you do not give consent to a service, it will not be provided. You may withdraw consent after initially accepting or receiving a service; [CFR 303.342, CFR 303.404, CFR 303.405, CCR 52102]
- Have services provided in the natural environment or an explanation of why that is not possible; [CFR 303.12, CFR 303.344, CCR 52106]
- Exchange information about your child among other agencies; [CFR 303.460, CCR 52112, CCR 52169]
- Be notified in writing before any agency or service provider proposes or refuses to initiate or change your child's identification, evaluation, assessment, placement, or the provision of appropriate early intervention services to your child or your family. [CFR 303.403, CCR 52161]

The notice must contain:

- The action that is proposed or refused,
- Reasons for the action, and
- All available procedural safeguards.

The notice must be presented in the language of your choice, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, and may be translated so that you understand its contents. [CFR 303.400 to 303.460, CCF 52161]

Mediation

Parents/Guardians have rights and protections to assure that early intervention services are provided to their children in a manner appropriate to their needs, in consideration of family concerns, and in compliance with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

Mediation is a flexible, non-binding, confidential process in which a neutral mediator facilitates settlement negotiations between you and another party. Voluntary impartial mediation conferences are a more informal way to resolve disagreements with early intervention service agencies or to address alleged violations of any state and federal statutes or regulations. Mediation is voluntary. [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173]

As a Parent/Guardian you have the right to:

- File a request for mediation as the initial option for resolving a dispute or any time during the due process hearing or complaint process; [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173]
- Request a due process hearing or file a state complaint if the disagreement is not resolved; [CCR 52173]
- Refuse to participate in mediation; [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173]
- Have an impartial person to facilitate the mediation conference; [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173]
- Require that the mediation conference is carried out at a time and in a location that is reasonably convenient for you; [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173]
- Have all personally identifiable information maintained in a confidential manner; [CFR 303.419(b), CCR 52173(g)] and
- Receive a written document outlining the agreements reached as a result of the mediation conference. [CFR 303.419, CCR 52173(i)]

Requests for mediation are filed with:

Office of Administrative Hearings
Attention: Early Start Intervention Section
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 2000
Sacramento, CA 95833
Office (916) 263-0654 Fax (916) 376-6318

Due Process Hearings

All parents/guardians are encouraged to resolve differences at the lowest administrative level possible. When differences between parents/guardians and a regional center or LEA cannot be resolved, due process hearings are available. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to seek assistance from the child's service coordinator, the regional center, the LEA, or the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) office. [CFR 303.420, CCR 52173]

Circumstances leading to a due process hearing may be disagreements related to a proposal or refusal for identification, evaluation, assessment, placement, or services. [CCR 52172(a)]

The child will continue to receive the early intervention services identified on the IFSP that he/she is currently receiving unless you and the regional center or LEA otherwise agree to a change. If your disagreement involves a new service that has not started, your child will receive all services identified on the IFSP that are not in dispute. This does not include your regional center providing early intervention services after your child has reached 36 months of age, as federal law and regulations do not allow states to pay for early intervention services under any circumstances once your child transitions from Early Start. The program or programs your child enrolls in subsequent to transition from Early Start is responsible for providing you and your child services for which he or she is eligible to receive. [CCR 52172(g)]

Requests for a due process hearing are filed with the Office of Administrative Hearing at the following address:

Office of Administrative Hearings
Attention: Early Start Intervention Section
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833
Office (800) 515-2229 Fax (916) 376-6318

The due process hearing request form may be obtained from your service coordinator, the regional center, the LEA, and DDS website

https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CCA_DS1802_20190312.pdf

The due process hearing must be completed within 30 days of receipt of the request by the Office of Administrative Hearings. The timely issuance of the written decision may not be delayed by any concurrent voluntary local efforts to resolve the matter. The decision will be final unless appealed. [CFR 303.425, CCR 52172(e)]

State Complaints

Any individual or organization may file a signed, written complaint against the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the California Department of Education (CDE), or any regional center, LEA, school district or private service provider that receives Part C funds alleging violations of state or federal early intervention statute or regulation. The complaint process can also address remedies for denial of eligibility or appropriate services. However, even though DDS is mandated to investigate any complaint it receives, state law does not allow disclosure of the Early Start recipient's personally identifiable information without written parent/guardian consent, other than authorized employees specified by the regional center or LEA. [CFR 303.510, CCR 52170(a)]

Information or assistance in filing complaints is available from your child's service coordinator, the regional center, the LEA, or the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). DDS and CDE are available for consultation regarding the filing of a complaint. Additional assistance is available from advocacy organizations such as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities or Disabilities Rights California. As efforts to resolve the matter at the local level are undertaken, a complaint may be filed concurrently with a request for a mediation conference or due process hearing. [CFR 303.423, CCR 52170]

Complaints are filed directly with:
Department of Developmental Services
Office of Human Rights and Advocacy Services
Attention: Early Start Complaint Unit
1600 9th Street, Room 240, MS 2-15
Sacramento, CA 95814
Office (916) 654-1888 Fax (916) 651-8210

Any individual or organization who files a complaint has the right to:

- Receive assistance in filing the complaint from the service coordinator, regional center, or LEA; [CCR 52170]
- Not be compelled to use any other procedures under the Education Code or the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act to resolve the complaint; [GC 95007, CCR 52170]
- Submit additional information to DDS that may be helpful to the investigation; [CCR 52170]
- Receive a final written decision within 60 days of the date DDS receives the complaint; [CCR 52170]
- Receive appropriate remedies that may include monetary reimbursement or other corrective action, and assurance that services will be provided appropriately in the future if the decision of DDS includes remedies for denial of appropriate services; [CCR 52170]
- Have any issue in a complaint that is not part of a due process hearing be resolved by DDS within 60 days of the receipt of the complaint: [CFR 303.512(c), CCR 521719(c)]
- Be notified by DDS that the hearing decision is binding if an issue is being raised in a complaint that had previously been decided in a due process hearing involving the same parties; and [CCR 52170]
- Have any complaint resolved that alleges the failure of a public agency or private service provider to implement a due process decision. [CCR 52170]

The complaint must:

- Be in writing and contain a signed statement alleging that DDS, CDE, the regional center, LEA, or other service provider involved with Early Start has violated a federal or state law or regulation; [CCR 52170(z)]
- Provide the name, address, and phone number of the complainant; [CCR 52170(f)]
- Contain a statement of facts upon which the violation is based; [CCR 52170(f)]

- Include the name of the party responsible against whom the complaint is being filed; [CCR 52170(f)]
- Have occurred not more than one year before the date the complaint is received by DDS unless a longer period is reasonable because the alleged violation continues for the child or other children, or [CCR 52170(c)]
- Have occurred not more than three years before the date on which the complaint is received by DDS if the complainant is requesting reimbursement or correction action as remediation of the complaint [CCR 52170(c)]; and
- The complaint may also include, if applicable, a description of the voluntary steps taken at the local level to resolve the complaint. [CCR 52170]
- Be withdrawn if the complainant elects to participate in mediation within the 60-day complaint investigation.

LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF HOPE STUDENTS

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Discrimination in education programs is prohibited by state and federal law. Education Code section 200, et seq. requires school district to afford all pupils regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, race, color, religion, natural origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification/ethnicity, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or the perception of one or more of such characteristics, equal rights, and opportunities in accessing educational programs, activities, and facilities.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Also, pursuant to EC 212.1, “race” is inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles and textures. “Protective hairstyles” is defined to include (but not limited to) styles such as braids, locks, and twists.

This policy requires notification in the native language of persons with limited English language skills if service area contains a community of minority persons with limited English language skills. HOPE will take the required steps to assure that the lack of English will not be a barrier to admission and participation in district programs. This policy applies to all students insofar as participation in programs and activities is concerned, with few exceptions such as contact sports. In accordance with federal law, complaints alleging non-compliance with this policy are investigated through the Uniform Complaint Process.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Under California Child Abuse and Neglect reporting law, Penal Code 11164-11174.3, HOPE staff are “mandatory reporters.” This means that staff are required by law to report all known or suspected instances of child abuse and neglect to the appropriate law

enforcement agency when they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been a victim of child abuse and/or neglect. Reasonable suspicion does not require certainty that child abuse and/or neglect has occurred. The reporting staff member's name and report are confidential. The fact that a child is homeless, or an unaccompanied minor is not, in and of itself, a sufficient basis for reporting child abuse or neglect.

Immunization and Communicable Diseases

At this time, immunizations are not required to enroll in the HOPE Infant Program. However, the following immunization information is important should your child transition into an LEA (i.e., school district) at age 3. Additionally, other agencies may have immunization requirements for enrollment that are not included below.

LEAs shall follow all laws, rules, and regulations regarding immunizations required for students to enroll. LEAs shall not admit any student until the student is properly immunized as required by law. If there is good cause to believe a student has been exposed to a disease, and proof of immunization does not show proof against that disease, LEAs may temporarily exclude the child from school until the local health officer is satisfied that the child is no longer at risk of developing or transmitting the disease.

Students in a home-based private school and students enrolled in an independent study program who do not receive classroom-based instruction may still attend school without specified immunizations.

If the parent or guardian files with the governing authority a written statement by a licensed physician to the effect that the physical condition of the child is such, or medical circumstances relating to the child are such, that immunization is not considered safe, indicating the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances, including, but not limited to, family medical history, for which the physician does not recommend immunization, that child shall be exempt from the immunization requirements. [EC 48216, 49403]

Effective January 1, 2016, the California Legislature passed SB 277, which eliminated the exemption from specified immunization requirements based upon personal beliefs. A pupil who, prior to January 1, 2016, submitted a letter or affidavit on file at a private or public elementary or secondary school, child day care center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center stating beliefs opposed to immunization shall be allowed enrollment to any private or public elementary or secondary school, child day care center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center within the state until the pupil enrolls in the next grade span. Grade span means (1) from birth to preschool; (2) Kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, including transitional kindergarten; and (3) grades 7 to 12 inclusive.

Custody Issues

Schools are not a forum to settle custody disputes and the school has no legal jurisdiction to refuse a biological parent/guardian access to his or her child and the child's school records unless a signed restraining order or proper divorce papers specifically setting forth limitations are on file at the school office. Custody disputes must be handled by the courts.

Children in Homeless Situations

The McKinney Vento Act requires that every county office of education, public school district, and charter school hire a local liaison to assist in the identification of children experiencing homelessness and that each child and youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education and procedures to remove barriers to a high-quality education.

- SDCOE Liaison contact information
 - Susanne Terry
susanne.terry@sdcoe.net
- District and Charter Liaison contact information
 - Homeless Education – San Diego County Office of Education (sdcoe.net)
- Early Education Programs funded with federal dollars are required to use the McKinney-Vento Act definition to determine eligibility. Circumstances for eligibility include:
 - Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
 - Children who may be living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or shelters;
 - Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or
 - Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are children who are living in similar circumstances listed above; or
 - Unaccompanied youth: a child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- McKinney-Vento Act Rights and Entitlements include:
 - Right to immediate enrollment in school of origin or school where currently residing without proof of residency, immunization records or tuberculosis skin-test results, school records, or legal guardianship papers
 - Right to education and other services including to participate fully in all school activities and programs for which child is eligible, to qualify automatically for school meal programs, to receive transportation

- services, and to contact liaison to resolve disputes that arise during enrollment
- That no homeless youth shall be required to attend a separate school for homeless children or youth
- That homeless youth shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

More information can be found online at <https://www.sdcoe.net/special-populations/homeless-education>

Foster Youth Bill of Rights

“Foster child” means a child who has been removed from his or her home pursuant to Section 309 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (“WIC”), is the subject of a petition filed under Section 300 or 602 of the WIC or has been removed from his or her home and is the subject of a petition filed under WIC section 300 or 602.

A foster child who is placed in a licensed children's institution or foster family home shall attend programs operated by the local educational agency in which that licensed children's institution or foster family home is located, unless one of the following applies:

- (1) The pupil is entitled to remain in his or her school of origin
- (2) The pupil has an individualized education program requiring placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency, or in another local educational agency
- (3) The parent/guardian, or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil pursuant to Section 361 or 726 of the WIC or Section 56055 (“educational rights holder”), determines that it is in the best interests of the pupil to be placed in another educational program and has submitted a written statement to the local educational agency that he or she has made that determination.

Foster children living in emergency shelters (as referenced in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act [42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.]), may receive educational services at the emergency shelter as necessary for short periods of time for either of the following reasons:

- (1) For health and safety emergencies.
- (2) To provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the child's unique needs if a decision regarding whether it is in the child's best interests to attend the school of origin cannot be made promptly, it is not practical to transport the child to the school of origin, and the child would otherwise not receive educational services.

The educational services may be provided at the shelter pending a determination by the educational rights holder regarding the educational placement of the child.

SDCOE has designated Charisma De Los Reyes as the SDCOE liaison for foster children. The role of educational liaison is advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of school of origin and does not supersede the role of the parent/guardian retaining educational rights, a responsible adult appointed by the court, a surrogate parent/guardian or a foster parent/guardian exercising their legal rights with respect to the foster child's education. The educational liaison serves the following roles:

- (1) Ensures and facilitates proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school for foster children.
- (2) Assists foster children when transferring from one school to another school or from one school district to another school district in ensuring proper transfer of records.

Williams Complaint Policy and Procedures

SDCOE has adopted a uniform complaint process to help identify and resolve deficiencies related to instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health and safety of pupils or staff and teacher vacancy or misassignment. Notice of the complaint process and the location to obtain a compliant form can be found at <https://www.sdcoe.net/uniform-complaint-procedures>

Megan's Law

Information about registered sex offenders in California and how to protect their families can be found at <http://meganslaw.ca.gov/>

Pupil Protections Relating to Immigration and Citizenship Status

School districts must provide information to parents and guardians regarding their children's right to a free appropriate public education, regardless of immigration status or religious beliefs. Except as required by state or federal law or as required to administer a state or federally supported educational program, HOPE shall not collect information or documents regarding citizenship or immigration status of pupils or their family members. [EC 234.7]

Illegal Recording of Confidential Communication

It is unlawful in California to intentionally eavesdrop or record the confidential communication between two or more parties without the consent of all parties to the confidential communication. The eavesdropping or recording of a confidential communication includes by means of any electronic amplifying or recording device whether the communication is carried on among the parties in the presence of one another or by means of a telegraph, telephone, or other device, except a radio. Such an

act is punishable by a fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500), or imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one year, or in the state prison, or by both that fine and imprisonment. Additionally, pursuant to Education Code section 51512, the use by any person, including a student, of any electronic listening or recording device in any classroom without prior consent of the teacher and the principal is prohibited. Any person, other than the student, willfully in violation shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Any pupil in violation is subject to the school district's disciplinary procedures. [PC 632 and EC 51512]

RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Exceptional Family Resource Center (EFRC)

www.efrconline.org

619-594-7416

To sign up for additional information, click on the Contact Us tab and complete the form.



San Diego Regional Center (SDRC)

www.sdrc.org

858-576-2996

Email SDRC at info@sdrc.org with any comments or questions.



San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) – HOPE Infant Family Support

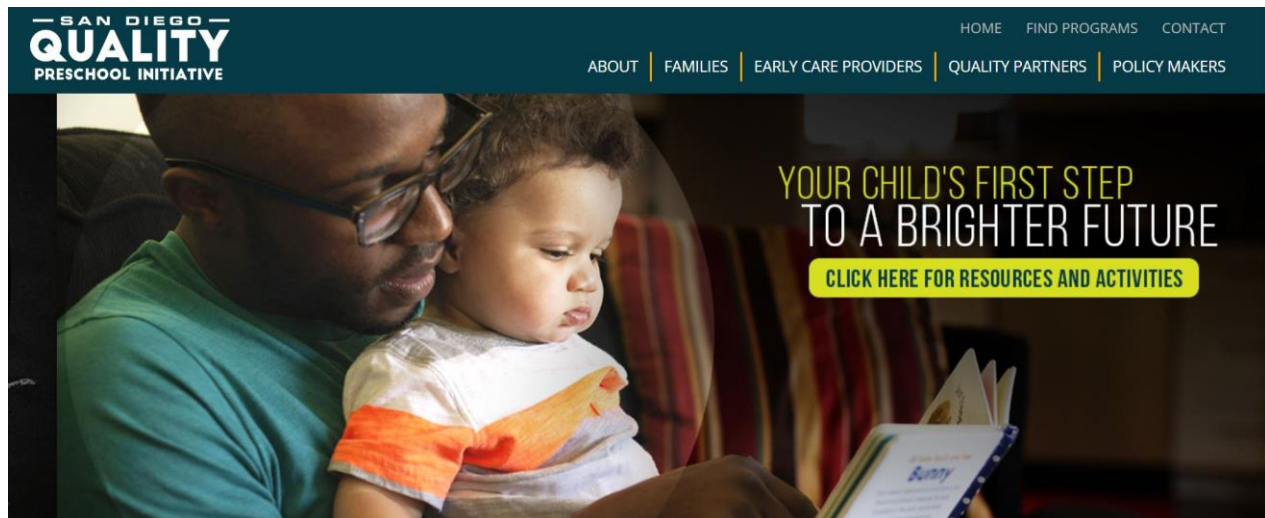
<https://www.sdcoe.net/schools/hope>

For additional information or help, call 858-292-3700



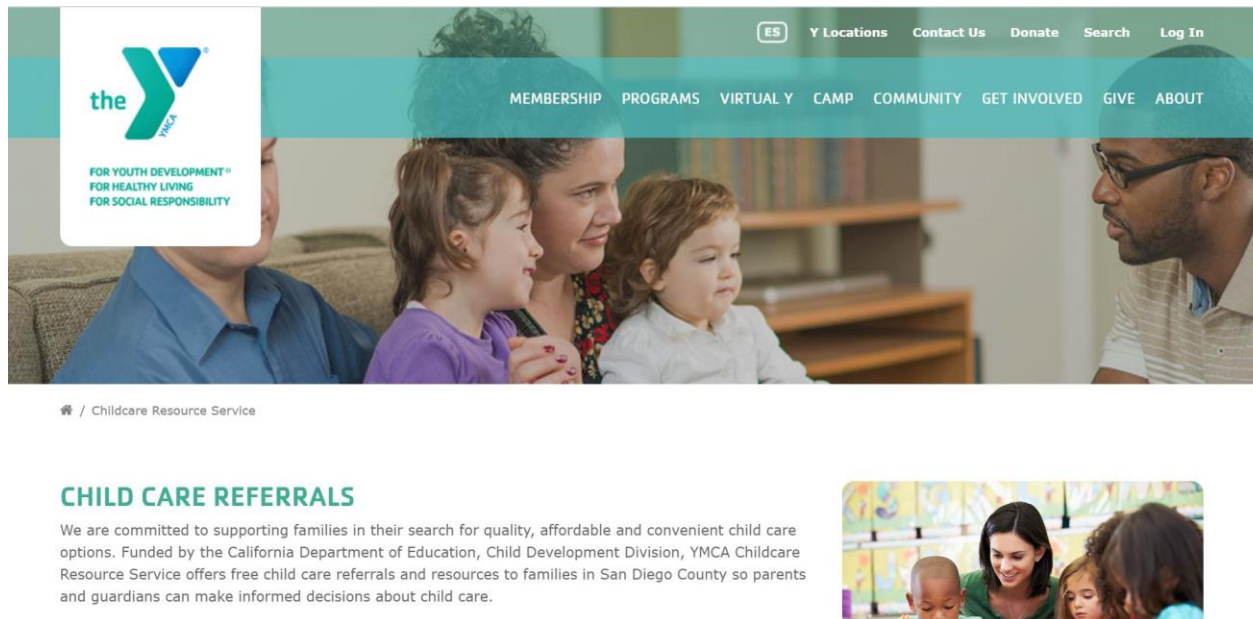
San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative

<https://www.sdqpi.org/> Choosing a quality childcare center/preschool is important to your infant's/toddler's future. Explore this website to help you choose the best program for your family.



The YMCA Childcare Resource Service

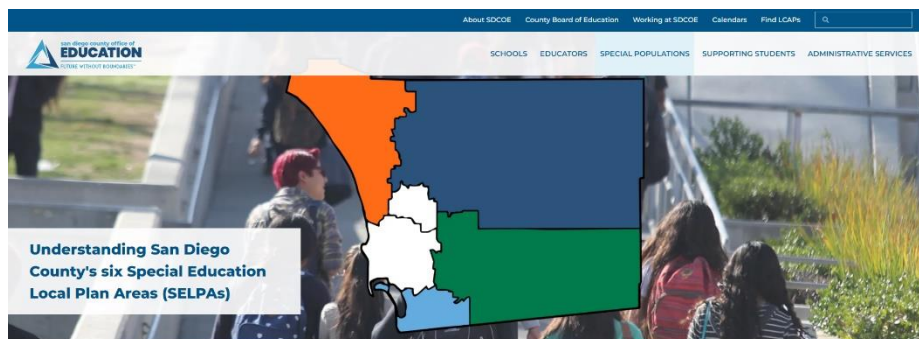
<https://www.ymcasd.org/community-support/childcare-resource-service>



Resources and Links to County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Offices

<https://www.sdcoe.net/special-populations/special-education>

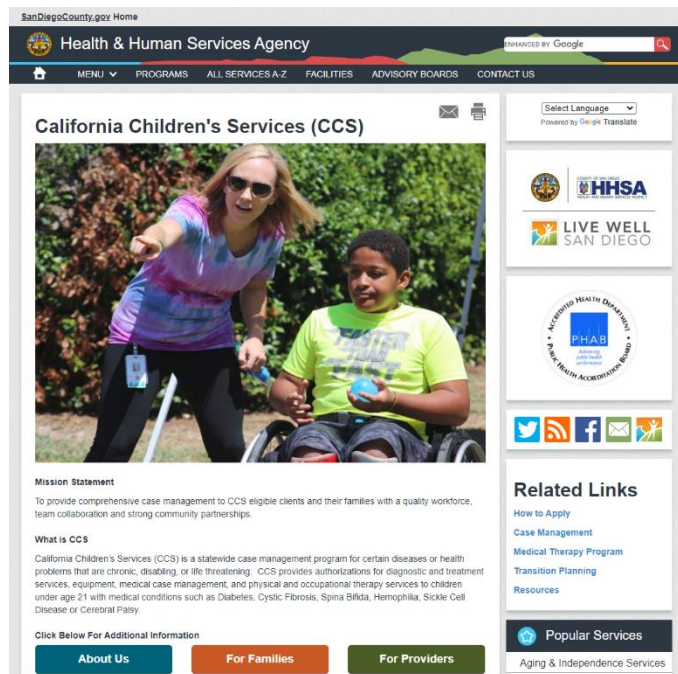
858-290-5964



California Children Services

www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/california_children_services.html

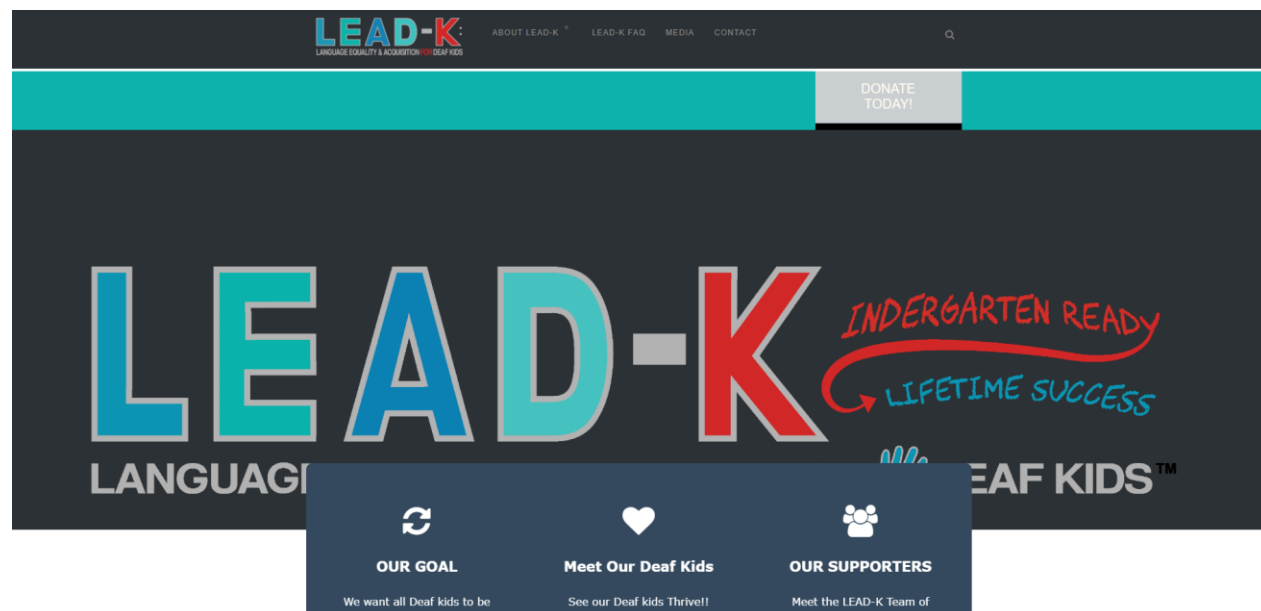
Note: There are underscores between the words 'california,' 'children' and 'services.'
619-528-4000



LEAD-K Family Services for Infants/Toddlers Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

<https://leadkfamilyservices.org>

916-367-0511



MY CHILD'S HOPE CONTACT INFORMATION

My Child's HOPE Early Intervention Teacher:

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

My Child's HOPE Early Intervention Manager:

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

My Child's HOPE Early Intervention Team: Name _____

Role _____ Phone _____

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My Child's HOPE Early Intervention Team: Name _____

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Email _____

North County Region, Program Secretary
760-307-1451

South County Region, Program Secretary
858-290-5977