



TITLE: Typical Pre-Schools as Early Intervention

DOCUMENT: Service Standard

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Most children with developmental disabilities or delays receive significant benefit when they have opportunities to interact with and learn from children without disabilities. Typical children also benefit from early exposure to children with disabilities. Therefore, regional centers attempt whenever possible to ensure that young children receive early intervention services in natural environments such as typical preschools. If a service is available to the child in a natural environment and is appropriate for the child, the regional center will not support purchase of that service in a segregated setting.

Preschool

The regional center may purchase a typical preschool program for a child who has reached the age of 2 if the following two criteria are met:

1. The child is not eligible for service through the public schools.
2. The IFSP team has indicated that the child has functional or special needs which may be appropriately met in a preschool environment.

When a child with a development delay or disability is enrolled in a typical preschool, the regional center may provide staff of that program with support to enable them to better meet the needs of the child. This may be in the form of training for the staff or time-limited 1-1 inclusion support for the child, and the preschool would be expected to accept such support if the regional center determines that it is necessary.

Typically, part-time attendance is sufficient to meet the developmental needs of the child. The specific program and the number of days per week which are recommended for the child will be determined by the child's need for socialization opportunities, the need to prevent regression or loss of functional skills, the home environment, and the transportation resources

of the family. Children enrolled in a typical preschool may also receive supplemental therapies, including speech, occupational, or physical therapy.

Provision of preschool services does not supplant the parent's responsibility to provide day care for a child when working or attending school or vocational training.

The regional center purchases services directly from vendored preschools. If the preschool is not vendored, the regional center reimburses the parent for the cost of tuition up to the amount established for Los Angeles County by the California State Department of Education.

Reauthorization of Services

The need for continuation of early intervention services is assessed at the time of the semi-annual IFSP. Services terminate when the child's eligibility for the Early Start program ends at age 3.

Exception

If the child is currently enrolled in a preschool purchased by the Regional Center and the child turns three during the months of July or August when the public school is not in session, and if the child is determined eligible for ongoing regional center services, the Regional Center may continue to purchase the preschool services until the child enrolls in the public school program.