

# All in for Kids

## A Birth to 3 Program Family Newsletter

All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program is a newsletter that helps 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.



## Birth to 3 Program Services: Speech Therapy

The Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention special education program. It helps children under 3 years old who have delays or disabilities. The program helps children learn, interact, and thrive at home, in child care, and in the community.

Families enrolled in the Birth to 3 Program can receive many services. A team of professionals, in collaboration with the family, determines the specific services based on the family's needs. The services identified are listed on a family's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

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Examples of services a family may receive are special education, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and assistive technology.

In this newsletter, we will highlight speech therapy services.

## Speech Therapy Services

Children have different ways of communicating, like body language or signs, spoken language, and facial expressions. For example, children who are deaf or hard of hearing may not communicate with spoken words. They may use facial expression and body movement to communicate their feelings, wants, or needs.

Watching children learn to engage with others and begin to communicate is an exciting time for families!

### What are speech therapy services in the Birth to 3 Program?

Speech therapy services support families in helping their children to communicate through body movements, facial and body signs, and spoken language. Speech therapy helps kids build words and talk with others. It helps children understand language and use words to express themselves. The speech therapy services each child receives will be based on their unique abilities and needs.

The Birth to 3 Program uses a primary coach and team model individualized for each family. In this model, speech therapy services are typically delivered by the primary service provider. The primary service provider might be a speech therapist or another professional team member. These Birth to 3 Program team members are licensed professionals who help with speech, communication, and language development. Team members, like occupational therapists, physical therapists, and special education teachers can also support a child's language development. This means that no matter what team member is primary, families can get speech therapy services based on their child's needs and goals.

### Examples of Speech Therapy in the Birth to 3 Program

These include:

- Singing the alphabet song or other nursery rhymes during car rides or during bath time is a great way to help children communicate and better develop their speech. Adding in dance moves or hand motions is fun and supports speech and muscle development.

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## What is an IFSP?

Your Birth to 3 Program team, which includes your family, works together to create your IFSP. The IFSP is a written plan that outlines the actions to support your child's development. This plan is created specifically for your child and family to help meet your unique goals.

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## RESOURCES

- Learn more about special education and service coordination in prior All in for Kids Newsletters at [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023).
- Check out the five key focus areas for healthy child development at [aboutplaysc.com/the-key-5-focus-areas-of-healthy-childhood-development/](http://aboutplaysc.com/the-key-5-focus-areas-of-healthy-childhood-development/).

- Using sensory play with toys, which means asking children about colors of the toy, what the toy feels like, or what sounds the toy makes.
- Talking to children when playing and doing different daily activities. When families are folding laundry, they can talk to their child and say, “I am folding blue pants, and now I am folding a pink shirt. Do you want to fold the green socks with me?”

### What should I do if I have concerns about my child’s speech?

Getting support as early as possible can help a child’s growth and development significantly. Families do not have to wait until their child’s doctor or others have concerns to connect with the Birth to 3 Program. The earlier a child receives help, the faster they will start to see results in their speech.

A child may need early intervention for speech if:

- They are not talking.
- They have a stutter or lisp.
- They aren’t babbling.
- They have a cleft palate.
- Their speech is difficult to understand.
- They begin to talk later than average.

Most children speak their first word between 10 and 14 months of age. By the time a child is a year old, they are probably saying one to three words. They will be simple, and they might not be complete words, but families will know what they mean. For example, they may say “ma-ma,” or “da-da,” or try a name for a sibling, pet, or toy. They may also use body language, like waving to say “hi” or nodding their head to say “yes.”

A child may benefit from early intervention speech therapy if their family has concerns about how their child talks or communicates and if they are not meeting expected developmental steps.❖

## Helping Kids Keep Their Medicaid Coverage

A new federal law is helping most children under the age of 19 who are on Wisconsin Medicaid keep their health care coverage. Most children can keep their benefits for at least 12 months once enrolled, even if family circumstances change.

Keeping kids covered helps lead to better health outcomes, more stable access to health care providers and services, and less burden on families.

Learn more at [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03555](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03555).

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Wisconsin's Medicaid program helps more than 1 million residents get:

- High-quality health care.
- Long-term care.
- Other services that promote physical and mental health and well-being.

### What action do families need to take?

Your family should:

- Make sure to read any letters or notices you get because they will have information about keeping your child covered.
- Continue to report any changes in your contact information.

### Who can I contact if I have questions?

If you have questions about your child's health care:

- Contact your county or tribal agency. Find your agency's phone number and address at [www.dhs.wi.gov/areaadmin/hsd-programs.htm](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/areaadmin/hsd-programs.htm).
- Covering Wisconsin can give you free, expert help with health insurance for you and your family. Go to [WisCovered.com](http://WisCovered.com) or call 211 ([211wisconsin.communityos.org](http://211wisconsin.communityos.org)). ❖

## The 2024 Circles of Life Conference: It's a time to learn, connect, and grow!

In its 39th year, Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for families who have children of any age with disabilities. Providers and other professionals who support families also go to the conference.

At the conference, you can connect with other families, join educational sessions, and learn about new resources. There are activities for the whole family, including:

- Twenty-five family-focused workshops
- Gathering of Youth, a dynamic program for youth with disabilities
- Family fun night
- Sibshop, a session for siblings of children with disabilities
- Resource vendors
- Spanish interpreters at all sessions

### Conference Details

This year's conference will be held on May 16–17, 2024. You can attend either in person or remotely (online). To provide a safe space for families who choose to attend the conference in person, face masks are strongly encouraged for all planned sessions and events.

## QUALIFYING PROGRAMS

- BadgerCare Plus
- Emergency Services Medicaid
- Family Planning Only Services
- Foster Care Medicaid
- Home and Community-Based Waiver Medicaid
- Institutional Medicaid
- Katie Beckett Medicaid
- Medicaid Purchase Plan
- Medicare Savings Programs
- Special Status Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid
- SSI-Related Medicaid
- Tuberculosis-Related Medicaid
- Wisconsin Well Woman Medicaid

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## Attend in Person

The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. The Holiday Inn Convention Center is holding some rooms for conference attendees who want to stay at the hotel. We recommend making hotel reservations early.

## Attend Remotely

You can attend remotely (or online) using a smartphone, tablet, or computer. Two sessions will be livestreamed over Zoom. The keynote speaker will also be livestreamed. It will also be recorded so that you can watch other sessions for up to six months after the conference.

## Register for the Conference

Find more information and registration for the conference at [familyvoiceswi.org/circles-of-life-conference/](https://familyvoiceswi.org/circles-of-life-conference/). ❖

## Parent Members Needed for the Birth to 3 Program Interagency Coordinating Council

The Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) shares ideas and recommendations for how the Birth to 3 Program can help children with delays and disabilities and their families.

“Make a difference by joining our group,” says Ginger Brath, administrator of Rehab Resources and board chair for the ICC. “By joining the ICC, parents can make recommendations and open lines of communication for how the early intervention programs are put into action.”

Some council members are parents or guardians from different backgrounds who have children with delays or disabilities. Parents and guardians are valuable council members who provide information about their experiences and the needs of families. Their ideas help shape Birth to 3 Program practices and policies.

Other council members include advocacy groups, Birth to 3 Program staff, and other county and state agencies.

## How to Join the Interagency Coordinating Council

The ICC is looking for parent members. Members' terms last three years.

The ICC meets quarterly every year (four times). Right now, meetings are held remotely (with attendance online or by phone). One meeting each year is held in-person at the Circles of Life Conference.

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If you are interested in becoming a council member, go to the ICC member webpage at [www.dhs.wi.gov/b3icc/members.htm](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/b3icc/members.htm) and scroll down to the online application link. Even if you are not a member, you may join any of the meetings as a guest!

The next ICC meeting dates are:

- Friday, May 17, 2024, from 9 a.m. to noon.—This is an in-person townhall meeting at the Circles of Life Conference.
- Wednesday, September 11, 2024, with remote attendance.
- Wednesday, November 6, 2024, with remote attendance.

You can also be a part of an ICC meeting even if you are not a member. You can share your thoughts and comments about the Birth to 3 Program with the ICC at the meeting.

Visit the ICC meetings webpage at [www.dhs.wi.gov/b3icc/meetings.htm](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/b3icc/meetings.htm) for the dates and agendas of upcoming meetings.❖

## **Birth to 3 Program (Part C) Grant Application Available for Public Comment**

Every year, the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program must submit a grant application to the Office of Special Education Programs in the U.S. Department of Education to receive federal funding.

Families can comment on the grant application and give feedback on how the Birth to 3 Program plans to spend the federal money.

Family voices are important—we want to hear from families with children in the Birth to 3 Program. All comments will be taken into consideration.

Families can see the 2024 Birth to 3 Program Grant Application at [www.dhs.wi.gov/birthto3/reports/federal.htm](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/birthto3/reports/federal.htm).

Families can submit comments by email to [dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov) or by mail to the following address:

Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Attn. Part C Coordinator  
1 W Wilson St Rm 418  
Madison WI 53707

You can ask for a paper copy of the Part C application by emailing [dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov).❖

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## Wisconsin Wayfinder Helps Connect You to Resources

Families often have many questions after learning their child has one or more delays, disabilities, special health care needs, or mental health conditions. Wisconsin has five Children's Resource Centers that are devoted to supporting these families. The centers help both families and providers.

Each center has children's resource guides who are trained to help you and your family:

- Connect to community resources.
- Learn about and find supports and services.
- Get answers to questions.



You can call the toll-free phone number **877-WiscWay (877-947-2929)** to talk to a live person who will connect you with a children's resource guide.



You can go online at [dhs.wi.gov/wiscway/index.htm](https://dhs.wi.gov/wiscway/index.htm) for more information. ❖

## The Birth to 3 Program Wants Your Family Stories and Photos!

The All in for Kids newsletter is for families. We want to feature your photos and experiences for other readers to enjoy! You can share things like:

- A positive interaction with the Birth to 3 Program.
- An example of how the Birth to 3 Program has helped your family or child.
- A photo or story of an activity you did with your child.
- A photo of artwork or something else your child has made.

Email your family story or photo to [dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsbirthto3@dhs.wisconsin.gov) with "All in for Kids" in the subject line. You can also send ideas for stories you would like to see in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you! ❖

## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

For faster delivery, sign up to get the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the Birth to 3 Program. Go to [www.dhs.wi.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm](https://www.dhs.wi.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm) and scroll down and click the Birth to 3 Program Information for Families link. Don't forget to tell your family and friends in the Birth to 3 Program to sign up as well!

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## Spring Family Fun Ideas

Spring is on its way! After you pack away the snow pants, here are some ways you can enjoy the warmer weather with a baby or toddler:

- **Bubble play**—Bubbles are an excellent way to help babies' and toddlers' visual skills and muscle development. Blowing a bubble for a baby encourages them to follow it with their eyes and move their head to see where it goes. Toddlers love to learn how to blow bubbles on their own and have a great time chasing and popping them!
- **Explore nature**—Find different surfaces like sand, gravel, or wood chips and talk about how they feel different. Pick dandelions and name the colors of the flower and the leaves. This is also a great time to tell stories to each other, sing, or play “follow the leader!”
- **Head to the park**—Your local park offers fun things to do for kids of all ages and abilities, from swings and slides to equipment for climbing, jumping, or spinning. Plus, there is plenty of space to just run around!❖



## Learn More About the Birth to 3 Program

The First 1,000 Days brochure gives an overview of the program:

[www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-02928](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-02928).

The Birth to 3 Program Services at a Glance guide explains the supports and services available: [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03011](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03011).

The Early Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers With Delays and Disabilities in Wisconsin booklet helps you understand how early intervention helps your family and child learn and grow together:

[www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03022](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/p-03022).

Previous issues of the All in for Kids newsletter: Birth to 3 Program are available online: [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akidsb-3-2023).

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All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program is a newsletter published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for children and families in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program.

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.wi.gov/children/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/children/index.htm).

Para leer este boletín en español, visite [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akisb-3-2024](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akisb-3-2024).

Xav nyeem tsab ntawv xov xwm no ua Lus Hmoob, mus xyuas [www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akisb-3-2024](http://www.dhs.wi.gov/library/collection/akisb-3-2024).

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