

Public Awareness/Child Find

It is the Newport News School Board's policy to ensure that all children and youth, ages 2-21, inclusive, residing in the school district, who are suspected of or identified as having a disability and in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, evaluated, and placed in a free and appropriate educational program. Also, it is the Board's policy for the special education staff to work cooperatively through the Interagency Coordinating Council to ensure that services are provided appropriately to children who reside in the City of Newport News who are birth to two years of age.

The Director of Special Education and Assessment Services and the Supervisor of Referrals and Assessments are responsible for division-wide Child Find efforts. Requests for translated materials should be made to the above individuals so that information can be provided in a person's native language or primary mode of communication.

Local agencies participating in the child identification, location, and evaluation efforts include the following:

- Exceptional Family Member Program (Ft. Eustis)
- Speech and Hearing Clinic at Riverside Hospital
- Peninsula Child Development Clinic
- Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services Board
- Newport News Health Department
- Newport News Social Services Department
- Infant Parent Education Program at Sarah Bonwell Hudgins Regional Program
- Infant Development Program at Riverside Hospital
- Williamsburg Child Development Resources
- Head Start
- Juvenile Court System

Other organizations participating in location of children with a disability by providing awareness programs and distributing information brochures are:

- Ministerial Alliance
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Area private and parochial schools

These agencies serve as major sources for community-based referrals. They assist in the evaluation process, and when appropriate, participate in the eligibility and IEP process. Also, personnel from clinics and early intervention programs conduct follow-up activities on preschool children who were previously served in infant/toddler programs.

Child Find is an ongoing process—activities continue throughout the year, and in addition to those described above, include notices posted on the website and the area TV channel. School-based child study committees and monthly preschool screenings serve as major sources for locating children (ages 0-21) in need of special education and related services.

All referrals from school and community services are processed according to the Newport News Public School Division's *Special Education Procedures* and these *Operational Guidelines for Managing the Special Education Process*.