

ARKANSAS CHILD FIND RESOURCE GUIDE

*ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION*

*Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Special Education Unit*

ARKANSAS CHILD FIND RESOURCE GUIDE

This guide was developed through the cooperative efforts of the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Special Education Unit, the Child Find Advisory Council, and the Arkansas Special Education Resource Center, with funds provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended.

Prepared By
ARKANSAS SPECIAL EDUCATION CHILD FIND ADVISORY COUNCIL,
published 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARKANSAS CHILD FIND PROCEDURAL GUIDE

PURPOSE

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. General Responsibility to Conduct Child Find

SECTION II: PLANNING THE LOCAL CHILD FIND PROGRAM

A. Development of Plan; Document of Effort Requirements

SECTION III: RECOMMENDED CHILD FIND PROCEDURES

A. Establish Child Find Planning Committee (Optional)

B. Developing a Child Find Plan

PLANNING THE LOCAL CHILD FIND PROGRAM

PUBLIC AWARENESS

PUBLICITY

SCREENING

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

CHILDREN IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

HIGHLY MOBILE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (SUCH AS MIGRANT AND HOMELESS CHILDREN)

CHILDREN WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF HAVING A DISABILITY AND NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE ADVANCING FROM GRADE TO GRADE

Child Find Plan (Example)

ARKANSAS CHILD FIND PROCEDURAL GUIDE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to assist public agencies in complying with Federal and State Child Find requirements through locating and identifying all children and youth in the state from birth to 21 years of age who are possibly in need of early intervention or special education and related services. This effort is in response to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)¹, which requires that each state provide a free appropriate public education for all eligible children with disabilities (34 CFR [303.302](#) & [300.111](#)).

Child Find is an ongoing cooperative effort that must involve state and local education agencies, parents, the community, professionals, related organizations, and private schools. This involvement is based on the premise that parents and public agency personnel, working cooperatively, can successfully locate and identify children in need of early intervention or special education and related services.

The collection and use of data to meet the requirements of Child Find are subject to the confidentiality requirements of IDEA.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. General Responsibility to Conduct Child Find

1. Each local educational agency, including charter schools, is responsible for ensuring that all children with disabilities from birth to twenty-one (21) years within its jurisdiction and in need of special education and related services are located, identified and evaluated, regardless of the severity of their disability, including:
 - a. children with disabilities attending private schools
 - b. highly mobile children with disabilities, including migrant children, children experiencing homelessness, and wards of the state
 - c. children who are suspected of having a disability and need special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade
2. The responsibility of the local educational agency to conduct child find activities extends to locating, identifying and evaluating all private school children with disabilities who attend private schools, including religious schools, who reside in the jurisdiction of the local educational agency. The activities undertaken to carry out this responsibility must be comparable to activities undertaken for children with disabilities in public schools.
3. Before any major location, identification or evaluation activity (child find), a notice to parents must be published or announced in newspapers or other media with local circulation adequate to notify parents throughout the LEA's jurisdiction of the activity.

SECTION II: PLANNING THE LOCAL CHILD FIND PROGRAM

A. Development of Plan; Document of Effort Requirements

1. Each local educational agency must develop and maintain a written Child Find Plan outlining the systematic and continuous efforts the local educational agency will undertake to meet its responsibilities as described in the above section.
2. At a minimum, any Child Find Plan must set forth annual child find activities including, but not limited to:
 - a. initiation of a campaign of public awareness and
 - b. procedures for the conduct of routine school screening.
3. The local educational agency shall maintain a written record of the Child Find Plan and documentation shall be of annual child find activities. Records and documents shall be available for review by staff of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE).
4. It is the responsibility of the local educational agency to maintain a record of all children with disabilities receiving special education and related services from the local educational agency.

SECTION III: RECOMMENDED CHILD FIND PROCEDURES

The recommended child find procedures described herein are designed to help the public agencies, either cooperatively and/or individually to (1) locate, evaluate and identify children birth to twenty-one (21) years with disabilities; (2) collect, maintain, and report data; and (3) maintain a process for coordination and collaboration between various agency programs. A guide is presented to assist in planning and implementing the Child Find Program.

A. Establish Child Find Planning Committee (Optional)

A Child Find Planning Committee may be established to facilitate child find activities. Interagency commitment is necessary to prevent duplication of effort. Members could include but are not limited to representatives of:

1. Parents
2. School Districts, including Charter Schools
3. Education Service Cooperatives
4. Early Intervention Programs
5. Private Schools
6. Medical Providers
7. Advocacy Organizations
8. Other Related Agencies
9. Additional Resource Personnel as needed

The LEA will be responsible for the ongoing development, implementation and evaluation of all activities in their respective areas and will ensure coordination within the Child Find Planning Committee. The size of this committee may vary, but should be of a size that allows for effective planning.

B. Developing a Child Find Plan

Each Local Education Agency, including Cooperatives who provide early childhood services, are required to have a written child find plan. The local

plan must state the systems in place for child find, and how the process is ongoing. These plans must be available for ADE review when requested.

The plan must include the following:

1. School District boundaries;
2. before major identification, location, or identification activity a notice to parents must be announced to parents in newspapers or other local media;
3. procedures for conducting school screening; and
4. before child find begins notice to parents published or announced in newspapers or other media.

PLANNING THE LOCAL CHILD FIND PROGRAM

- 1. Establish a local child find interagency committee (optional).**
 - a. Identify target groups and or agencies to make up committee membership.
 - b. Define the geographic boundaries.
 - c. Select and invite individuals to represent targeted groups or agencies.
- 2. Provide orientation training to child find planning committee (optional).**
 - a. Distribute Child Find Procedural Guide to committee members.
 - b. Review purpose and general responsibilities to conduct child find.
 - c. Identify general responsibilities for targeted groups and/or agencies.
 - d. Elect chairperson(s) for Child Find Planning Committee activities.
- 3. Develop a written plan that includes:**
 - a. School District boundaries;
 - b. before major identification, location, or identification activity a notice to parents must be announced to parents in newspapers or other local media;
 - c. procedures for conducting school screening; and
 - d. before child find begins notice to parents published or announced in newspapers or other media.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

1. Define specific responsibilities for public awareness.
 - a. Identify awareness activities for:
 - i. Schools
 - ii. Parents/guardians
 - iii. Target groups

- iv. Agencies
 - v. Civic groups
 - vi. Communities
- b. Outline media/activities.
- c. How child find activities are announced in newspapers, radio, social media, and other media.
- d. A description of the public awareness campaign done by the district.
- e. Evaluate awareness campaign.

PUBLICITY

1. Suggested strategies for publicity.
 - a. Utilize child find materials from ASERC.
 - b. Contact with local newspaper; radio; television/ Cable.
 - c. Speak to groups and civic groups and organizations.
 - d. Provide information and training for:
 - i. school personnel
 - ii. target groups
 - iii. Agencies
 - iv. communities

SCREENING

1. Identify screening activities.
 - a. Identify who and where screening will take place.
 - b. Determine timelines.
 - c. Organize community screening programs.
 - d. Determine instruments to be used:
 - i. Standardized achievement
 - ii. Grade cards
 - iii. Inventories

- iv. Observation
- v. Hearing screening
- vi. Vision screening
- vii. Speech/Language
- viii. Developmental
- ix. Behavioral
- x. Cognitive
- e. Maintain data on number screened and referred and number screened and not referred.
- f. Evaluate effectiveness of screening program.

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

1. Inform target groups of referral procedures.

- a. Designate person(s) to receive referrals.
- b. Provide information to LEA to assist in arranging for initiation of due process.
- c. Conduct individual evaluations as appropriate as outlined in the Procedural Requirements and Program Standards ADE 2018.
- d. Maintain data on numbers identified, evaluated and placed and the number of students evaluated and not placed.
- e. Evaluate the effectiveness of identification and evaluation activities.

CHILDREN IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

1. Identify all private schools within the geographic area including religious schools

- a. Establish contact representative in each private school.
- b. Consult with representatives of private schools on how to carry out the location, identification and evaluation of children suspected of having a disability that are attending the private school.
- c. Implement identification procedures in each private school as required under Section 14 of the Procedural Requirements and

Program Standards Manual ADE 2000.

- d. Maintain documentation of the number of students:
 - i. screened
 - ii. evaluated
 - iii. determined to have a disability under IDEA - Established Individual Service Plans (ISP)

HIGHLY MOBILE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (SUCH AS MIGRANT AND HOMELESS CHILDREN)

1. Identify district personnel responsible for homeless, migrant and highly mobile
 - a. Coordinate with district personnel responsible for homeless, migrant and highly mobile families in the district.
 - b. Insure public awareness campaign includes: shelters, motels and other locations where individuals might reside when homeless, migrant and highly mobile, etc.
 - c. Maintain data on the number of children located that are homeless, migrant and highly mobile within the geographic area.
 - d. Insure that location, identification and evaluation procedures are implemented in accordance with Procedural Requirements and Program Standards ADE 2000.
 - e. Maintain data on number screened, referred, evaluated and determined to have a disability under IDEA.
 - f. Evaluate the effectiveness.

CHILDREN WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF HAVING A DISABILITY AND NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE ADVANCING FROM GRADE TO GRADE

1. Establish a pre-referral committee.

- a. Utilize referral committee to review
 - i. group norm NRT and CRT scores to match grades
 - ii. documented teacher concerns
 - iii. teacher observations
- b. Identify students suspected of having a disability but still advancing from grade to grade.
- c. Make appropriate referrals and evaluations to determine need for special education/ interventions.
- d. Evaluate committee's effectiveness by documenting:
 - i. number of students reviewed
 - ii. number of students referred for evaluation
 - iii. number of students placed for services
 - iv. number of repeat referrals

Child Find Plan (Example)

The following example is provided to assist public agencies in complying with Federal and State Child Find requirements.

CHILD FIND PLAN FOR:

Program Name

Program Year

I. Child Find Planning Committee Membership:

Agencies Represented:

Parent:

School District, including Charter Schools:

Education Service Cooperatives:

Early Intervention Programs:

Private Schools:

Medical Providers:

Advocacy:

Other Related Agencies:

Others as Necessary:

II. This child find plan covers the geographic boundaries of:

PLANNING THE LOCAL CHILD FIND PROGRAM **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

PUBLIC AWARENESS **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

PUBLICITY **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

SCREENING **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

CHILDREN IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

**HIGHLY MOBILE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
(SUCH AS MIGRANT AND HOMELESS CHILDREN)** **Yes / No**

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

**CHILDREN WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF HAVING A DISABILITY
AND NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION EVEN THOUGH
THEY ARE ADVANCING FROM GRADE TO GRADE**

Yes / No

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

¹Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) reference 34 CFR [303.302](#) & [300.111](#)