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| Early Childhood Clinic Handbook  **Four Rivers Special Education District**  936 West Michigan Avenue  Jacksonville, IL 62650  [www.frsed.org](http://www.frsed.org) |
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**Four Rivers Early Childhood Clinic**

**Mission Statement**

The Four Rivers Early Childhood Clinic is committed to finding, assessing, and providing services to children with disabilities from ages three to five in a timely manner so that children in need will have the opportunity to benefit from the intervention and grow to their full potential. Services to children should be individualized through development of appropriate goals that are applied in the least restrictive environment with a continuum of services available. Important factors in attaining this goal are open communication, cooperation and involvement among parents, school and agency personnel and others involved with the child.

**Child Find Responsibilities**

Child Find is a component of Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, who are in need of early intervention or special education services. Studies show that students are more successful when receiving help early in their lives. In Illinois the responsibility for implementing child find requirements rests with the school district in which the child resides. On behalf of the local school districts within the Four Rivers Special Education District, three services involving children 2 ½ to 5 years old are provided. These include preschool transition coordination, developmental screening, and full and individual evaluations.

Referrals may be initiated, for any of these 3 services, from many different sources. Referrals for preschool transition coordination are made by service coordinators from Child and Family Connections (Early Intervention). Referrals for screenings come from daycare centers, nursery schools, preschools, school personnel, physicians, Head Start, DCFS, health departments, Child and Family Connections (Early Intervention), or parents/guardians. Those children referred for a full and individual evaluation may come from developmental screenings, Child and Family Connections (Early Intervention), parents/guardians, Head Start, preschool personnel, or other school personnel, such as speech and language pathologists.

**Transition Coordination**

The Early Intervention Services Systems Act is an Illinois law which creates a system to provide services to children under age 3 who have a developmental delay, a high probability of developmental delay, or who are at risk of having a developmental delay. Early Intervention services meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers in any one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, speech and language development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development. Eligible children receive services through an Individualized Family Service Plan until the age of three.

The Four Rivers Special Education District provides transition coordination for Early Intervention services on behalf of the Four Rivers Special Education District member districts. The Four Rivers Preschool Transition Coordinator attends the transition planning conference, which is scheduled as close as possible to a child turning 2½ years of age. The Preschool Transition Coordinator completes an informational sheet on each child during the transition planning conference, which includes identifying information, Early Intervention services, as well as general medical and developmental information. The Preschool Transition Coordinator schedules a domain meeting with parents, educational specialists, administrators, preschool teachers, and Early Intervention personnel to identify needed assessments within 2 months of the child’s third birthday. The domain team determines the need for a full and individual evaluation.

**DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING**

Developmental screening is a program offered by the Four Rivers Special Education District to meet the Federal Child Find mandate in identifying children who may be in need of early intervention or educational support services. The program is available and free of charge to all children 2 ½ to 5 years of age residing in any of the Four Rivers Special Education District member districts.

The developmental screening program is facilitated by the Clinic Screening Facilitator. This individual has a Master’s degree in psychology, speech/language pathology, or education and has supervised training specific to assessing children, and in the ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of Early Childhood Clinical assessments. Developmental screenings are administered by trained technicians. The screening team visits each school district at least once per year for community wide screenings. Registration information, screening dates, times, and locations are announced through the media. Developmental screening is offered to children attending preschools, Head Start, and private preschool programs. Child and Family Connections, and other educational, medical, and social service agencies may make referrals with the knowledge of the parent/guardian. Parents/Guardians may request a developmental screening. Individual screenings can be scheduled by contacting the Clinic Screening Facilitator.

A Student Information Form is completed by a parent or guardian at the time of the screening or beforehand. Birth/health history and parent observations are reviewed and assist in determining the overall development of the child.

Vision and hearing screenings are scheduled at the same time as community screenings. This service is provided by the county public health department, school district personnel, or the developmental screening technicians. Children who attend preschool, Head Start, and private preschool programs may receive vision and hearing screenings at a different time.

The child’s performance on the screening and the information supplied by the parents/guardians are reviewed by the Clinic Screening Facilitator. When possible, the results regarding the child’s development are discussed with the parent immediately after the screening. Parents/Guardians of children who attend child care centers, Head Start, and private preschool programs receive letters with recommendations. Children with a possible delay in communication may be referred to the district speech therapist for a speech/language screening. Children whose developmental screenings reflect potential delays may be referred for progress monitoring by the child’s teacher or for a full and individual evaluation by the Early Childhood Clinic evaluation team.

Please see [Developmental Screening Chart](#Developmental) for an overview of this process.

**Audiology Department**

Four Rivers Special Education District contracts with Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) in Jacksonville for audiological services. ISD maintains a fully-equipped audiological suite. A licensed audiologist evaluates children beginning at the age of 3 on an appointment basis at ISD. The Four Rivers Screening Team refers children for audiological evaluations after failing hearing screenings. Parents/Guardians, school nurses, and teachers may refer children for an audiological evaluation as well. Services include measurement of hearing levels, middle ear function assessments (tympanometry), hearing aid checks, and referrals for specialized hearing aid needs. Consultations with special or regular education teachers occur on a case-by-case basis.

**Full and Individual Evaluation Process**

Referrals for a full and individual evaluation may come from screenings, Early Intervention, parents/guardians, Head Start, preschool personnel, or other school personnel, such as speech/language pathologists. After Four Rivers Special Education District is contacted regarding the referral, the Early Childhood Clinic Administrator contacts the required IEP participants to set the date, time, and location for a domain meeting. If an evaluation is warranted, the Early Childhood Clinic School Psychologist conducts assessments in the following areas: intellectual functioning, pre-academic skills, independent functioning, or social-emotional functioning. If a speech and/or language evaluation is warranted in conjunction with the Early Childhood Clinic School Psychologist’s evaluation, the Early Childhood Clinic Speech/Language Pathologist conducts the evaluation. The district Speech/Language Pathologist conducts speech and/or language evaluations when a school psychological evaluation is not warranted. Autism evaluations are conducted by a team consisting of the Early Childhood Clinic School Psychologist, Early Childhood Clinic Speech/Language Pathologist, and Occupational Therapist.

Refer to the [Clinic Referral Process](#Clinic) chart for an overview of this process.

Following the completion of the full and individual evaluation components, the Early Childhood Clinic Administrator schedules the Eligibility Determination Conference (EDC) with required IEP participants. At the EDC/IEP meeting, the IEP team determines eligibility for special education services and develops an IEP, if warranted. Services may include, but are not limited to, the following: Early Childhood Special Education (blended, inclusion, self-contained), vision itinerant services, hearing Itinerant services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language therapy, social work, behavior intervention plan, and individual aides.

Appendix A: Developmental Screening Chart

The Screening Team is coordinated by a certified teacher. Screening is administered by trained technicians. The team visits each district at least once per year. Vision and hearing screenings are typically scheduled at the same time. Screening is offered to all children, including those attending daycare, Head Start, and preschool programs. Individual screenings may be scheduled at Four Rivers. Results of the screenings are discussed with the parents immediately after the screening (if parent is present).

Appendix B: Clinic Referral Process

**Early Childhood Clinic Referral Process**