



# **ECHO IDAHO:** **Autism**

**Early Intervention and Special Education**

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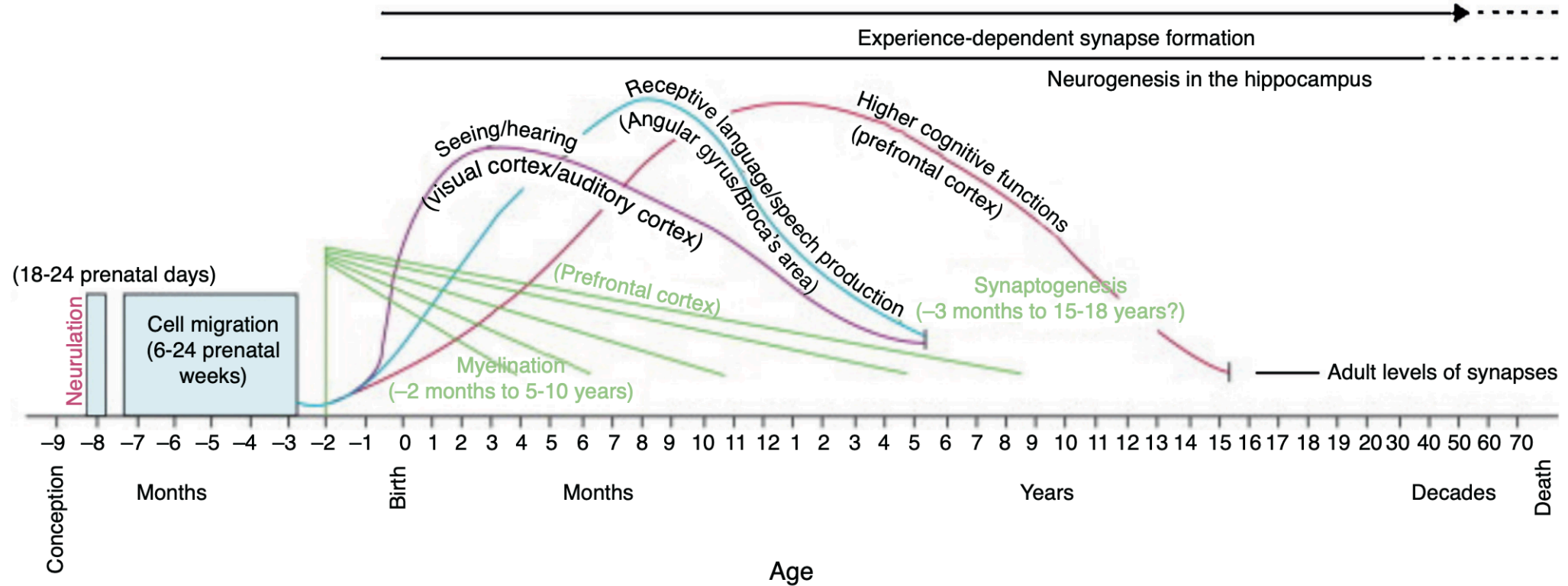
**Developmental Pediatrician**

**St. Luke's Children's Hospital**

# Learning Objectives

- Increase basic knowledge of special education law
- Summarize how to make an Early Intervention referral and guide Early Childhood Education transition
- Increase learners' familiarity with IEP processes
- Develop an approach to inform parents and advocate for your patients

# Early Supports Make a Difference



# Therapy and Educational Supports

Early Intervention (ITP) (0-3 yrs)

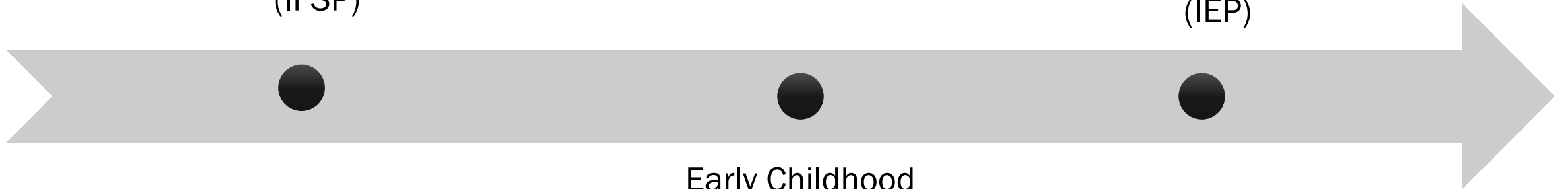
- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Special Education Programs (5-22 yrs)

- Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

Early Childhood Education Programs (3-5 yrs)

- Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)



# Federal Legislation

Prior to 1975, schools had the **unilateral authority to exclude disabled students, including students with learning, behavioral and emotional disabilities**. First federal civil rights law to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities.

- 1964: Civil Rights Act
- 1973: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: landmark civil rights and labor law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin
- 1975: PL 94-142, **Education of Handicapped Children's Act:**
  - Bill of rights to guarantee free and appropriate education to handicapped children (5-18 years of age)
    - FAPE = Free appropriate public education
    - Zero reject
- 1977, age range extended (3-21 years, with 3-5 optional)
- 1986 Handicapped Children's Protection Act, Public Law 99-457
  - State-wide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary interagency program of early intervention services for all infants and children ages 0-3 with disabilities or delayed development, and their families

# Federal Legislation

1990: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - This law extends full civil rights to all people with disabilities and affords them the right to fully access public and particular private sector facilities and services.

1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Part H (now known as Part C) Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

1997: Individuals with Disabilities Act (EHA Amended): Introduced Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a whole-school approach

2004: Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act: Introduce Functional Behavioral Analyses (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)

2008: Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act: widens the coverage of disabilities

Early Intervention Programs  
Idaho Infant Toddler Program  
Part C  
0-3 years  
“natural environments”

# Federal Law Requires...

- States must offer early intervention services to children birth to 36 months who have established disabilities or who are considered “at risk” for disabilities.
- Type and extent of services are determined through the development of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Specific services must be offered

# Early Intervention “EI”

- Programs are available in every state and territory.
- Publicly funded programs provide services for free or at reduced cost for any child who is eligible.
- A doctor’s referral is not necessary.
- Eligibility for early intervention services is based on an evaluation of child’s skills and abilities.



# Idaho Infant Toddler Program

1. Online Referral Form: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/infant-toddler-program-referral>
2. Email: [ITPReferral@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:ITPReferral@dhw.idaho.gov)
3. Phone: 208-334-5514
4. Fax: 208-332-7331

## Infant Toddler Program Referral

Anyone can make a referral to the Infant Toddler Program (ITP) if it is suspected that a child up to age 3 years has a developmental delay or has a medical condition highly associated with a developmental delay.

### Make a referral

#### Secure Online Referral

This is a secure online referral. You may use this form to send referral information to the ITP. We will confirm receipt of your online referral so that you can be sure we received your information. **Your contact information is kept confidential**, however someone may contact you for additional information if needed.

Referrer Name

Referrer Email  Referrer Phone Number

Child's Name

Relationship to Child  Child's Date of Birth

Parent / Guardian Name

Parent / Guardian Street Address

City  State  Zip

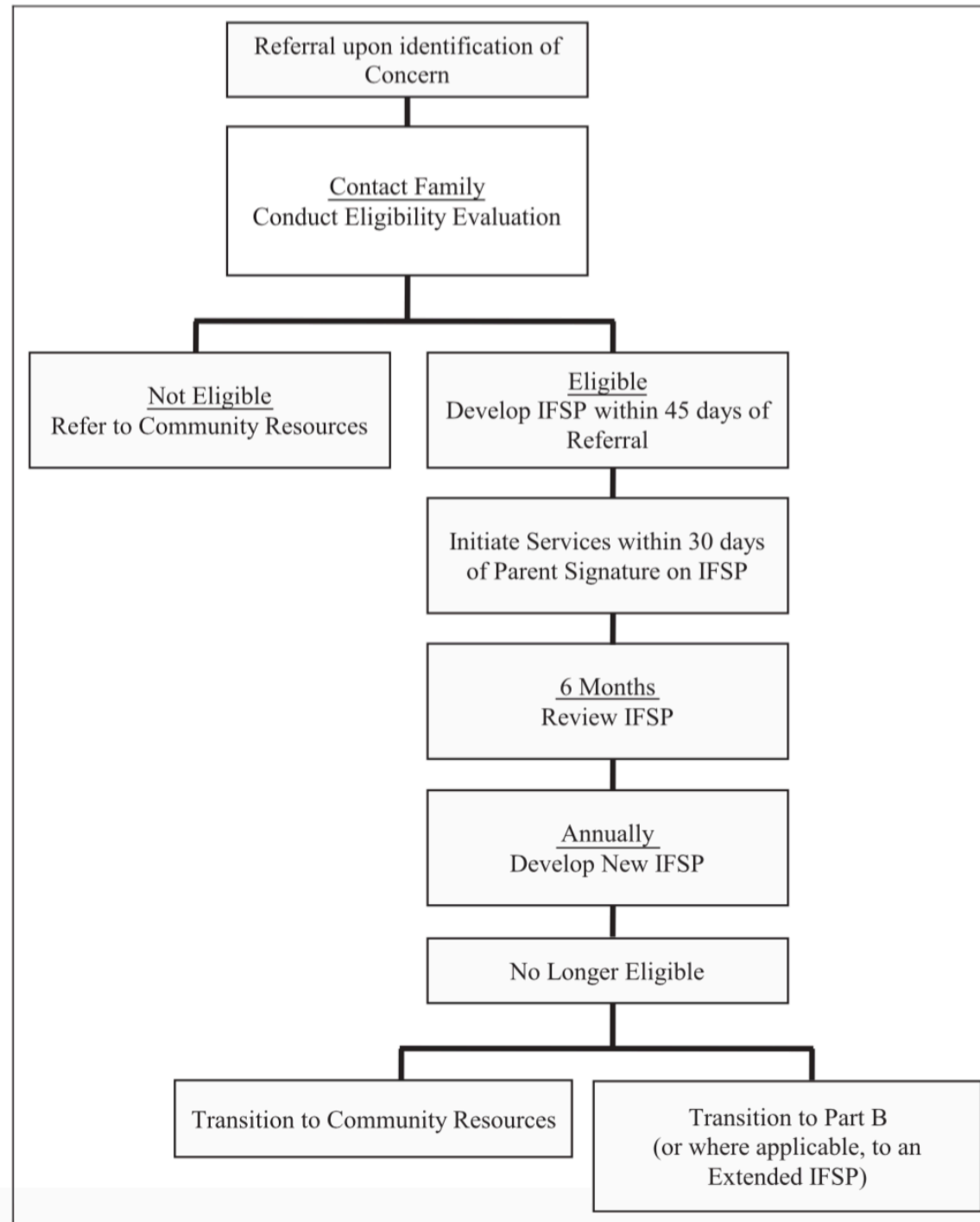
Parent / Guardian Email  Parent / Guardian Phone

Parent / Guardian Primary Language

Reason for Referral

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# Eligibility Criteria

- A significant developmental delay (30 percent below age norm, or six months behind other children the same age) in any of the following five areas of development:
  - Cognitive - such as thinking, learning and reasoning
  - Adaptive or Self-Help Skills - such as feeding, dressing, and taking care of himself or herself
  - Communication Skills - such as understanding and using sounds, gestures, and words, pointing, understanding your words, expressing thoughts and needs
  - Physical Development - such as vision, hearing, movement, and health
  - Social Emotional Development - such as getting along with others, expressing feeling, developing relationships, ability to relate to others
- A physical or medical condition (called an established condition) that usually results in developmental delay. Established conditions can include Down Syndrome, serious hearing or vision problems, cerebral palsy, cleft lip/palate, and more.

# Infant Toddler Program Services

- Service Coordination
- Developmental Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Language Therapy
- Hearing and Vision services
- Nutrition
- Audiology
- Social Work
- Other support services

# Transition Planning

- By law, services will end when child turns 3 years old
- 2 years, 3 months (27 months) to 2 years, 9 months (33 months)
  - IFSP will be shared with the school district
  - Transition plan written
  - Transition conference

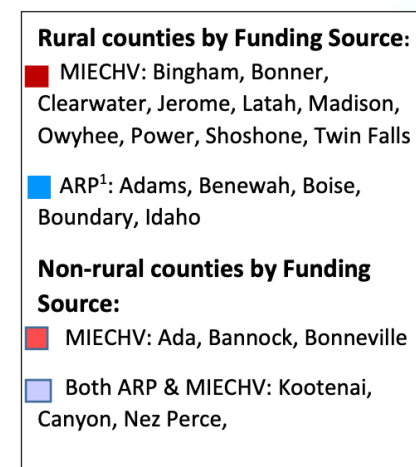
# Idaho Head Start Association

- **Head Start/Early Head Start/Migrant Head Start/Native American Head Start**
  - Focus on school readiness
  - 10% enrollment must be children with disabilities
  - <https://www.idahohsa.org/>
  - How to enroll: <https://www.idahohsa.org/head-start-advantage>
- **Eligibility**
  - Families with incomes below the poverty guidelines
  - Eligible for or receiving the following public assistance:
    - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
    - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
    - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
    - Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
  - Experiencing homelessness (see the definition <https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento-definition>)
  - In foster care
  - Disabled or has a serious health/mental health condition

# Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

- Evidence Based Home Visiting Models
  - Parents as Teachers (PAT)
    - (1) **One-on-one home (or personal) visits**
    - (2) **Group connections**
    - (3) **Health, hearing, vision, and developmental screenings for children.**
    - (4) **Linkages and connections for families to needed resources.**
  - Nurse/Family Partnerships (NFP)
    - Focuses on first-time mothers
    - Women must enroll during pregnancy and receive a home visit by their 29th week of pregnancy.

## Idaho MIECHV Program At-a-Glance



**Participants**  
1,167

**Households**  
555

**Home Visits**  
5,260

# Idaho Stars

- <https://idahostars.org/>
- Child Care Resource Center (CCRC)
- Professional Developmental System (PDS)
- Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP)
  - Enhanced childcare referrals for families that have a child with a developmental delay or disability
  - Training available on autism and inclusive early childhood practices
  - Inclusion of children with disabilities required in state Quality Rating and Improvement System

# Learn the Signs Act Early

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Aims to improve early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including autism, by promoting family-engaged developmental monitoring
- Act Early Idaho
  - <https://idahocdhd.org/aei>



# Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education
- Celebration of developmental milestones, promotion of universal developmental and behavioral screening, identification of possible delays and concerns early, and enhancement of developmental supports
- Help Me Grow National Center



# Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL)

- <https://ipulidaho.org/>
- Individual assistance
- Training workshops
- Advocacy training

# Practice Changes

- Refer all children who are at risk
  - Don't "wait and see" or "give him time"
  - It's ok to over refer
- Advocate
- Follow up!!
  - Review IFSP, progress reports, and medical diagnostic reports

**Early Childhood Education Programs**  
**Developmental Preschool**  
**Part B, Section 619: Local School Districts**  
**3-5 years**  
“least restrictive environments”

# Early Childhood Education Program

Enrollment process for the Early Childhood Special Education Program:

- Developmental Screening
  - *Speech, Language, Concepts, Motor Skills, Self Help Skills, Social Emotional, Vision, Hearing*
- Comprehensive Assessment
- Determination of Eligibility
- Placement

For a screening through Boise School District call:

(208) 854-5520

West Ada Special Services Department call:

(208) 350-5122

# Collaboration with the Schools

- “It takes a *collaborative* village”
- The role of the health care provider in the **educational community**
  - Evaluations provide specific diagnoses
  - Referrals for assessments
  - Referrals for intervention services
  - Advocacy for children’s needs in the school setting and educational community

# Importance of School Success

“School is the ‘workplace’ for children and adolescents. Successful school performance is essential for psychological and social growth.”

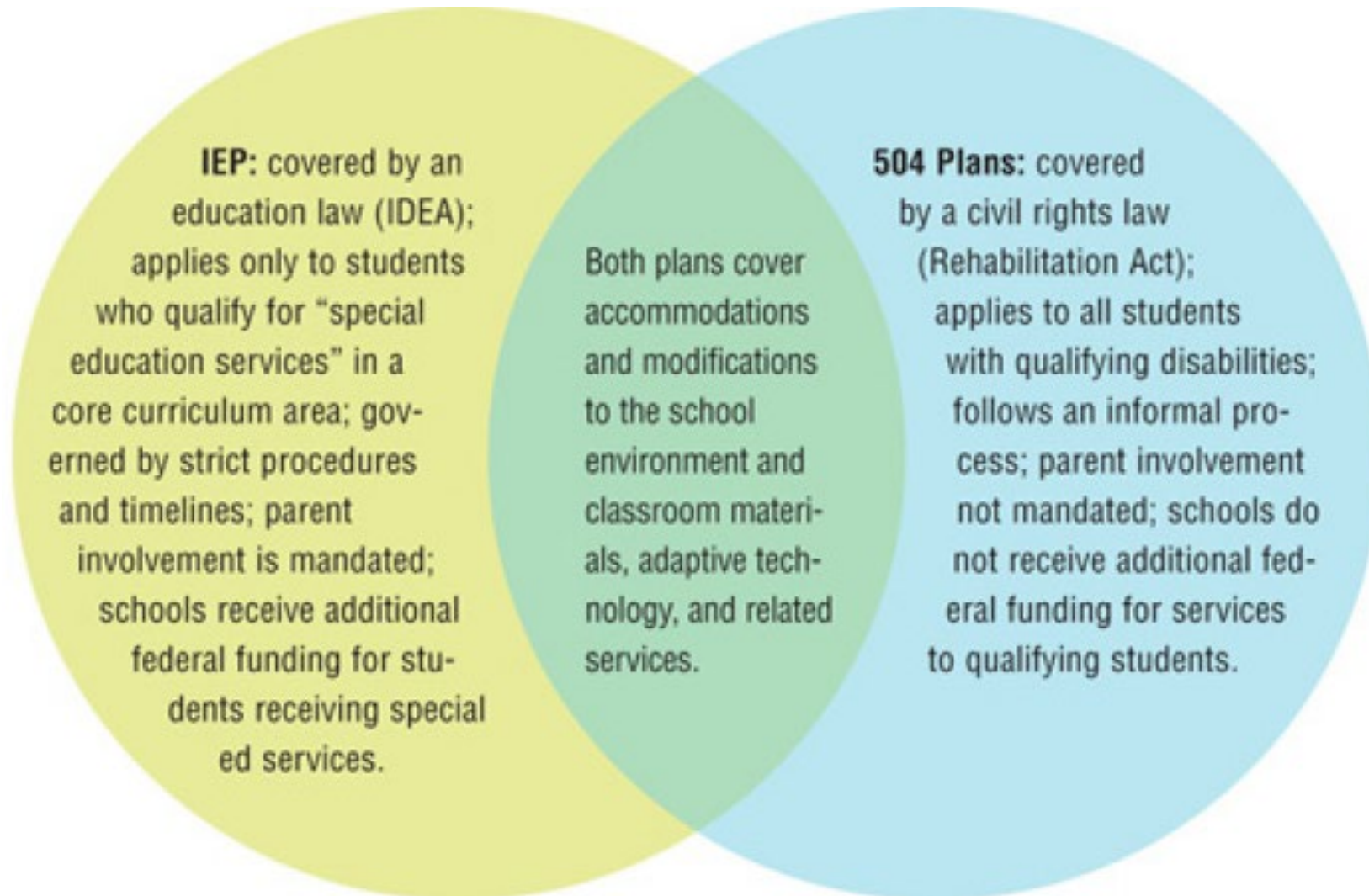
Larry Silver, M.D., and Dana Silver, M.D., (2011): [Guide to learning disabilities for primary care: How to screen, identify, manage, and advocate for children with learning disabilities.](#)

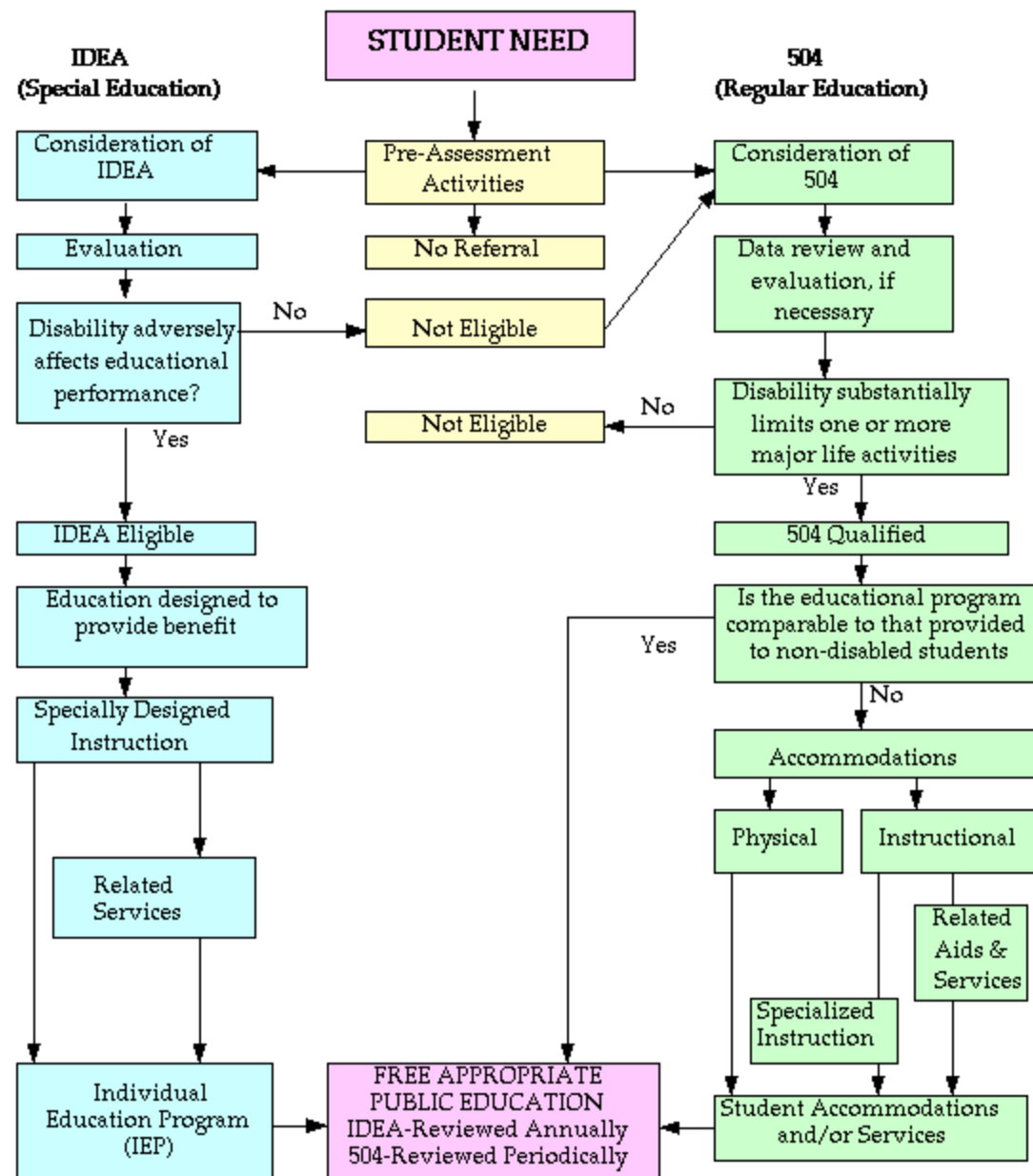
# Two UMBRELLAS of Protection for Students with Disabilities

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**
  - Protects students with disabilities requiring specialized instruction and related services (hands on) - monitored by ISBE / Office of Special Education
- **Section 504**
  - Civil rights law: Protects students with disabilities requiring accommodations (hands off) - monitored by OCR



# IEP and 504 Plans



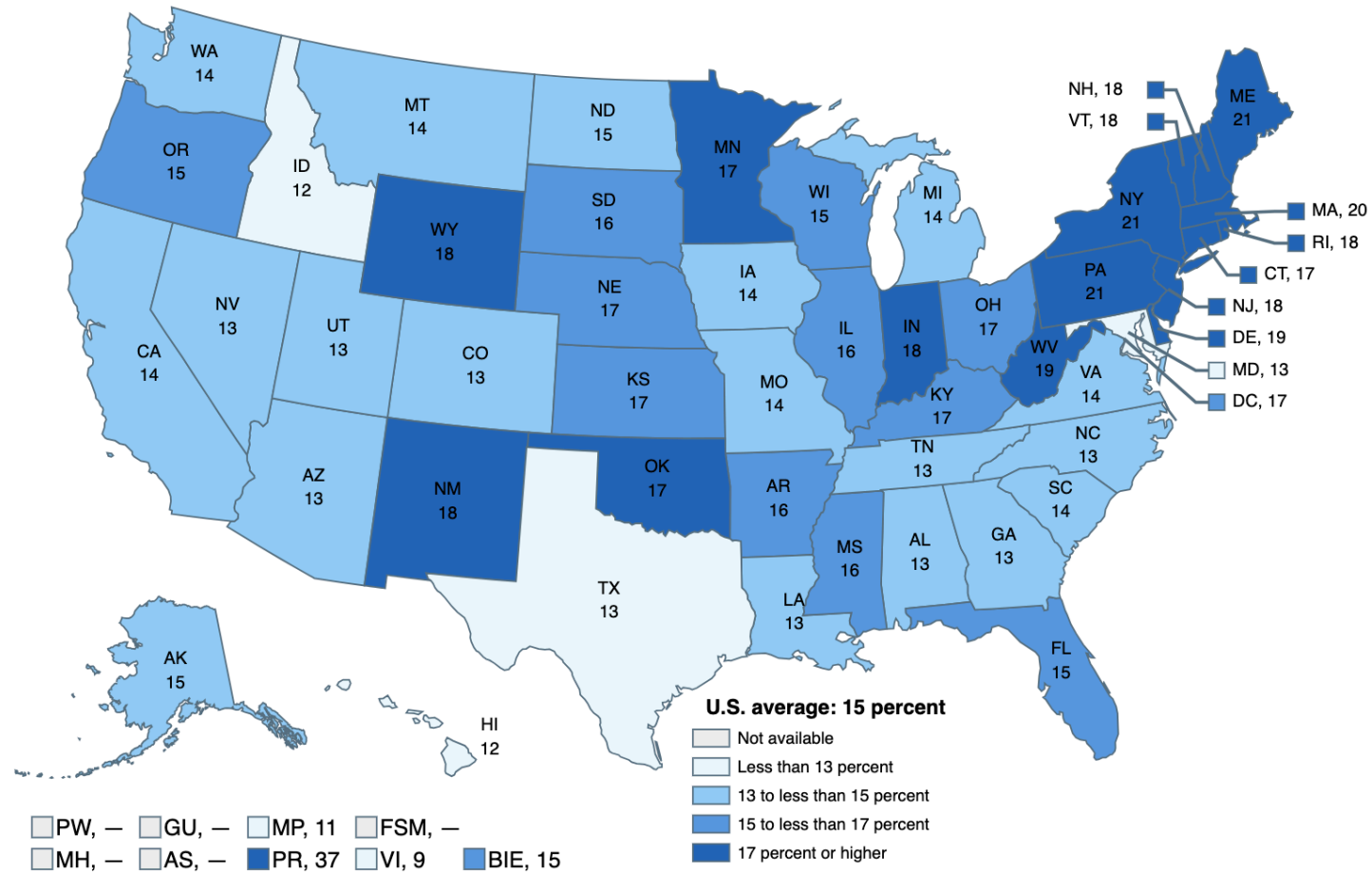


# Special Education Statistics

- The number of students ages 3–21 served under IDEA in the United States increased from 6.4 million in school year 2012–13 to 7.5 million in school year 2022–23
- 13 to 15 percent of students
- **SOURCE:** National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). Students with Disabilities. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved May 30, 2024, from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgg>.

**Figure 1. Students ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as a percentage of public school enrollment, by state and jurisdiction: School year 2022–23**

Map | Bar | Table



# Some Important Terms in Special Education Law

**IDEA** – Individuals with Disabilities Act (1975)

**FAPE** – Free and Appropriate Public Education - Every child is entitled to a free and appropriate public education in the United States – can no longer exclude students

**LRE** – Least Restrictive Environment - Children should be placed in an environment which maximizes their time in general education as much as possible, with accommodations and supports

**IEP** – Individualized Education Program (it is a plan and a process)

# **Six Major Principles of IDEA [PL 94-142, 1975]**

Zero reject

Testing, classification, and placement

Appropriate education (FAPE)

Least restrictive appropriate educational placement

Procedural safeguards

Parent participation and shared decision making

# Criteria for Special Education

## Yes x 3

1. Does the student have a disability?
2. Does the disability negatively impact the student's educational progress?
3. Does the student require special instruction or related services, beyond what is available in the general education program, to make progress?

# Educational Eligibility\* Categories based on IDEA

Autism

Deaf-Blindness

Deafness

Developmental Delay

Emotional Disturbance

Hearing Impairment

Intellectual Disability

Multiple Disabilities

Orthopedic Impairment

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Speech Language Impairment

Traumatic Brain Injury

Vision Impairment (including blindness)

\*Language is important. Children are not diagnosed in schools they are made eligible for special education services.

Idaho Eligibility Category Quick Guide:

<https://idahotc.com/Portals/0/Resources/924/Eligibility%20Categories%20Quick%20Guide.pdf>

# Autism Spectrum Disorder

- **School** psychologists **can** identify or classify a child with an educational eligibility of **autism** within the school context
- This does not constitute a medical diagnosis of autism.
- The criteria is based on the DSM-5
- **Required team members**
- Must consider a private evaluation or diagnosis provided by a parent from a psychiatrist, a physician or a licensed psychologist
- School teams can suggest a medical evaluation
- If IEP recommends that parents obtain a medical diagnosis, then school pays

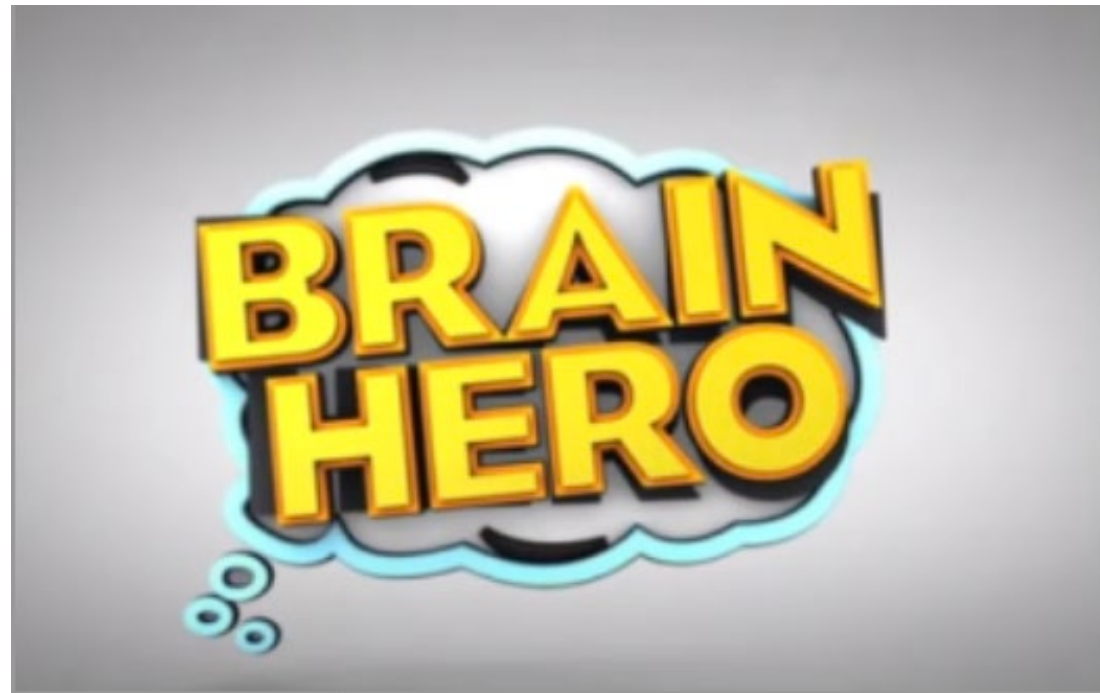
# Developmental Delay

- This is for students who are ages 3-9 during year that IEP is in effect
- It is used for students who do not have diagnosis
- Do not use if you know student's diagnosis; match known diagnosis to eligibility

# Early Intervention Improves Outcomes

- Increase in IQ of approximately 8 points
- Greatest effects in those with psychosocial risk
- Decrease of 5-25% use of special education
- Decreased of 10-15% grade retention
- 15% increase in high school graduation

# Brain Hero



<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/brain-hero/>

# Thank you!

# References

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- <https://idahocdhd.org/aei>
- <http://developingchild.harvard.edu>