

# Early Intervention to School Services: Transitioning at age 3

State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Area Board XI  
(714) 558-4404  
[www.scdd.ca.gov](http://www.scdd.ca.gov)



# What is early childhood transition?

The early childhood transition is a formal process

- ✿ Beginning at least 6 months prior to the toddler's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- ✿ Exiting the toddler from early start to school programs
- ✿ Required by federal and state law
- ✿ Should be a family-centered approach



# Who participates in the transition process?

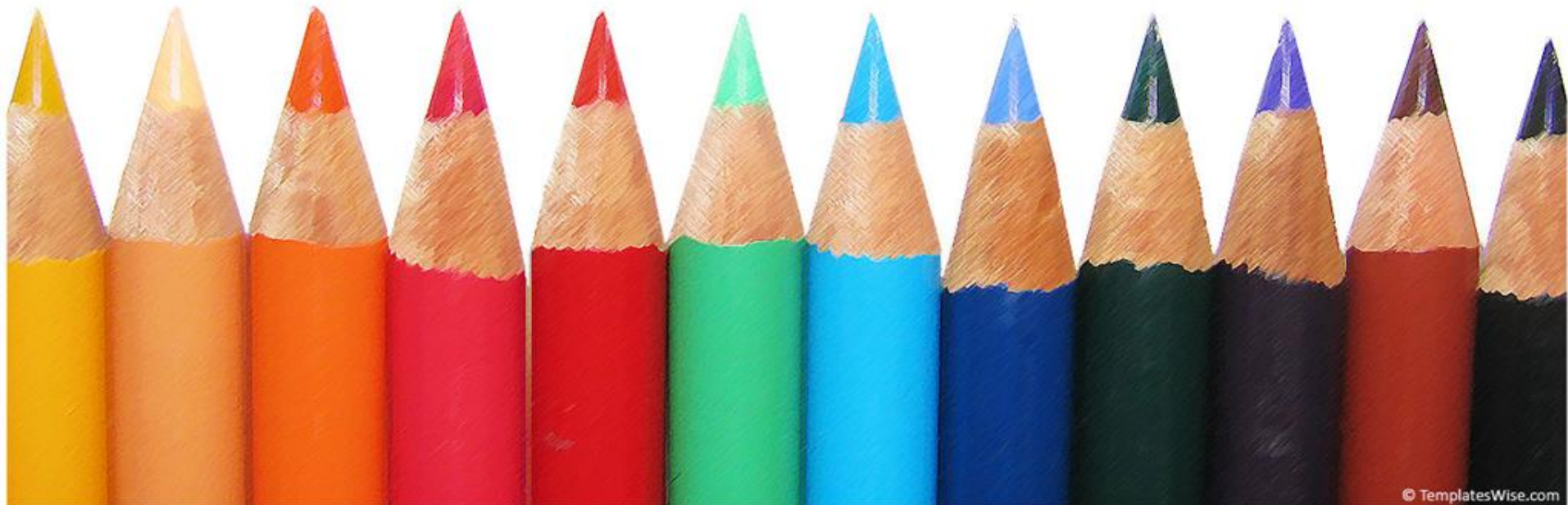
The transition process is a multidisciplinary approach that includes

- 🌸 Parents
- 🌸 Regional Center Service Coordinator
- 🌸 School District Personnel
  - 🌸 School Psychologist
  - 🌸 Therapists
  - 🌸 General Education and Special Education Teacher
  - 🌸 Administrator (Authorized Decision Maker)
- 🌸 Any one else you think will have valuable input



How Does the Transition Process Work?

Important Timelines






# Getting ready

- 🌸 Regional Center Service Coordinator will have you sign a release of information to share information with your local school district
- 🌸 Research information about the early childhood transition to better prepare
- 🌸 Remember...
  - 🌸 This is a collaborative process
  - 🌸 To keep lines of communication open
  - 🌸 To be patient
  - 🌸 To share your thoughts, concerns, desires, questions




# At 30 months...











-  The service coordinator must notify the parent that their toddler may be eligible for special education and related services and that transition planning will occur in the next 3-6 months.
-  The service coordinator must notify the local school district that there will be an IFSP meeting requiring their attendance when the toddler is between 30-33 months (as early as 30 months at the discretion of the entire team).
-  *Within 30 days* after the service coordinator notifies the parent and school district, *the team must agree on the date* for the IFSP for the purpose of discussing the necessary transition steps.

# Between 30-33 months...

- 🌸 The transition meeting occurs when the toddler is between 30-33 months, and it must include the following:
  - 🌸 Discussion and information to the parents on
    - 🌸 The special education eligibility criteria
    - 🌸 Community resources for toddler's that may not qualify for special education services at age 3
    - 🌸 Steps to prepare the toddler for changes in service delivery and steps to help the toddler adjust to, and function in, a new setting
  - 🌸 The team will identify what assessments they will conduct to determine service related needs after age 3 (assessments must be done in all areas of suspected disability)
  - 🌸 A projected date for doing a final review of the IFSP

# Between 33-35 months...

 Qualified personnel will meet with your toddler over the course of several days to conduct assessments ***in all areas of suspected disability***, which may include, but not limited to:

-  Speech and language
-  Occupational therapy (includes sensory processing needs)
-  Physical therapy
-  Social-emotional
-  Psycho-educational (cognition, academic achievement)
-  Vision and hearing
-  Auditory processing
-  Health
-  Adaptive behavior
-  Assistive technology

## Assessment timelines

1. At the transition meeting , or no more than 15 days thereafter, you will receive a proposed assessment plan.
2. You have 15 days to sign the assessment plan and return it to the school.
3. The school personnel has 60 days to conduct the assessments.





# At 35-36 months...

- ✿ Convene for an IEP meeting to discuss
  - ✿ Results of the assessments (you will receive copies)
  - ✿ Determination of special education eligibility at age 3 and the development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
  - ✿ Community resources for those who are not eligible for special education at age 3
- ✿ Regional Center specialists will decide eligibility for on-going services after age 3 by reviewing the following information
  - ✿ Toddler's history
  - ✿ Progress made in Early Start
  - ✿ Current level of development

# At 36 months...

🌸 One of three things will happen...



Your toddler is found eligible for continuing regional center services and also for special education services through the school






Your toddler is found not eligible for continuing regional center services, but is eligible for special education services through the school



Through early start services, your child has closed any developmental gaps and is not eligible for regional center or special education

# Responsibility and Accountability

-  Each agency or person who has a direct role in the provision of early intervention services is responsible for making a good faith effort to assist each child in achieving the outcomes in the child's IFSP.
-  However, no agency or person shall be held accountable if an eligible child does not achieve the growth projected in the child's IFSP.
-  Not meeting IFSP goals does not, in and of itself, justify continued regional center services or special education eligibility, although it does play a factor.

# Regional Center Eligibility for Age 3 and Older



# What is the eligibility criteria for regional center at age 3?


## **Diagnosis**

 Mental Retardation

 Cerebral Palsy

 Epilepsy

 Autism

 Fifth Category - disabling conditions found to be *closely related to* mental retardation or to *require treatment similar to* that required for individuals with mental retardation

 **Time of Onset:** Originating before age 18

 **Prognosis:** Likely to continue indefinitely

 **Severity:** Substantial disability in three (3) areas of major life activity

# What is the eligibility criteria for regional center at age 3?

❁ Substantial disability means a “significant functional limitation” in three or more of the following areas of major life activity

❁ Learning

❁ Self-care

❁ Receptive and expressive language

❁ Mobility

❁ Self-direction

# My toddler meets regional center eligibility criteria, now what?

- 🌸 You will be assigned a new regional center service coordinator specializing in on-going eligibility
- 🌸 The service coordinator and you will develop an Individual Program Plan (IPP) that includes
  - 🌸 Goals
  - 🌸 Objectives
  - 🌸 Services and supports
  - 🌸 Strengths
  - 🌸 Areas of concern



# Regional center tips

- ❁ The information provided at the IPP dictates what services and supports the individual is eligible to receive through regional center.
- ❁ Make your needs known!
- ❁ Regional centers are considered the payor of last resort\*
- ❁ Regional centers must provide or secure services and supports that\*
  - ❁ Respect and support the decision making authority of the family
  - ❁ Flexible and creative in meeting unique needs
  - ❁ Build on family strengths, natural supports, community resources
  - ❁ Are culturally competent
  - ❁ Promote inclusion





# Regional center services for children

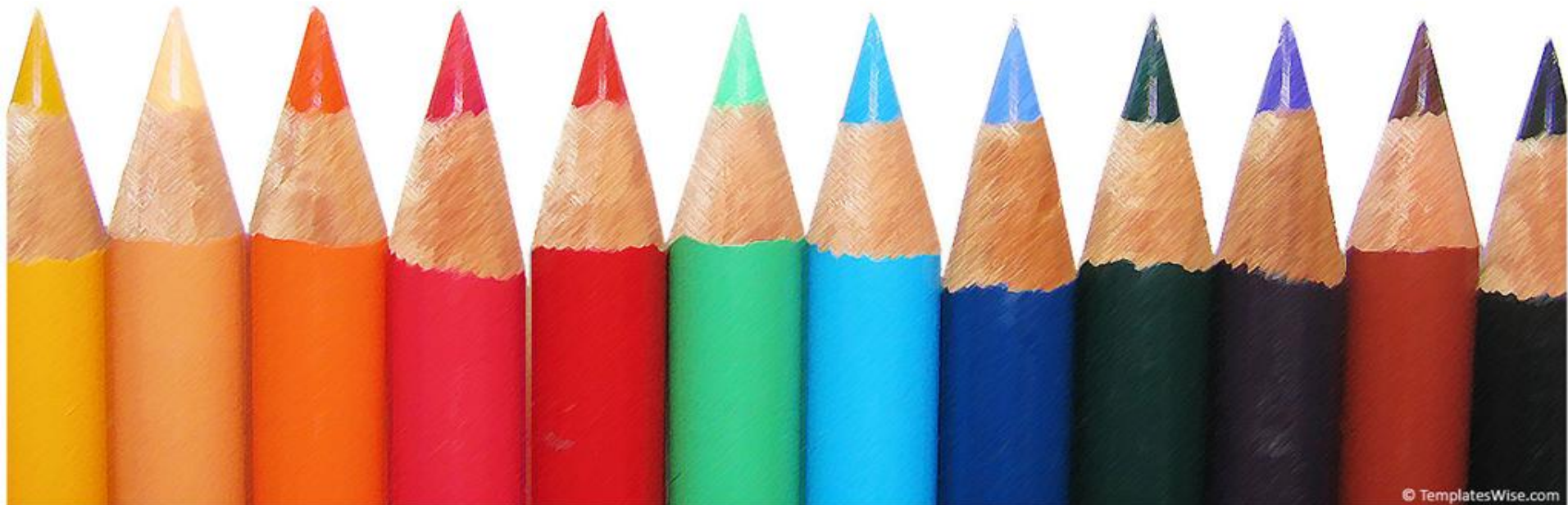


❁ This list does not include all possible services

❁ It is important to work very closely with your service coordinator to develop the most appropriate service plan

- ❁ Behavior intervention services
- ❁ Crisis intervention services
- ❁ Day care
  - ❁ to age 18 only
  - ❁ Day care inclusion assistance
- ❁ Durable and nondurable medical equipment
  - ❁ diapers, wheelchair, walker, braces, van lifts, eating aids
- ❁ Family or individual counseling
- ❁ Licensed residential services
  - ❁ Group home placement
- ❁ Respite
- ❁ Special education advocacy clinic

# Special Education Eligibility for Age 3 and Older



# Who qualifies for special education?

- 🌸 Mental Retardation
- 🌸 Hearing Impairments
- 🌸 Speech and Language Impairments
- 🌸 Vision Impairments
- 🌸 Emotional Disturbance
- 🌸 Orthopedic Impairments
- 🌸 Autism
- 🌸 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 🌸 Specific Learning Disability
- 🌸 Other Health Impairments (OHI)



20 United State Code §1401(3)  
34 Code of Federal Regulations §300.8  
California Education Code §56026(a)

# My toddler qualifies for special education...what happens next?

- 🌸 At the IEP meeting that takes place when your toddler is 35-36 months, the team will develop an IEP document that includes
  - 🌸 Your child's present levels of performance
  - 🌸 How the child's disability affects their participation in appropriate activities
  - 🌸 Measurable annual goals, both academic and functional
  - 🌸 Statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services
  - 🌸 Determination on the least restrictive environment (placement options)
  - 🌸 Accommodations and/or modifications necessary to help the student make educational progress
  
- 🌸 This IEP constitutes the school district's offer of a "free and appropriate public education" for your child.
  - 🌸 Don't sign it unless you are in agreement!

# Remember...

- 🌸 Parents are a critical part of the IEP team!
- 🌸 You have valuable input on your child's strengths and areas for improvement
- 🌸 Make sure that your concerns are captured in the IEP meeting notes.
- 🌸 The IEP meeting must be held at a mutually-agreeable time and place
- 🌸 If you need a translator for the IEP, the school district must provide one to you

# Related services

❁ Related services include, but are not limited to

- ❁ Transportation
- ❁ Speech-language pathology
- ❁ Audiology services
- ❁ Interpreting services
- ❁ Psychological services
- ❁ Physical therapy
- ❁ Occupational therapy
- ❁ Therapeutic recreation
- ❁ Social work services
- ❁ School nurse services
- ❁ Counseling
- ❁ Orientation and mobility services



# Least Restrictive Environment

🌸 If your child qualifies for special education and related services, the law requires placement in the child's least restrictive environment. For toddler's at 36 months, this means

- 🌸 Regular education preschool
- 🌸 Dual-enrollment (preschool + OC Head Start)
- 🌸 Special Day Class (SDC) preschool
- 🌸 County preschool
- 🌸 Non-Public School
- 🌸 Home/Hospital

# Free and Appropriate Public Education

## What it is...

- ❁ Special education and related services which
  - ❁ Have been provided at public expense
  - ❁ Include an appropriate preschool, elementary, or secondary school education in the state
  - ❁ Are provided in conformity with the IEP required under IDEA

## What it is not...

- ❁ The best possible education
- ❁ Potential maximizing





# Free and Appropriate Public Education

## What is required...

- Reasonably calculated to enable the child to receive educational benefits
  - Whether the program is individualized on the basis of the student's assessment and performance
  - Was the program administered in the least restrictive environment
  - Were the services provided in a coordinated and collaborative manner by "key stakeholders"
  - Were positive academic and non-academic benefits demonstrated
- Meaningful progress, not regression
- Meaningful access to an education

## What is not required...

- Provide a specific program, even if the program would be more educationally beneficial
- Guarantee totally successful results
- Allow parents to dictate educational methodology or compel a school district to supply a specific program for child with a disability

# IEP Tips

- 🌸 Make sure you tour the various placement options recommended before making a decision
- 🌸 Make sure you review and are happy with the proposed goals
- 🌸 Make sure you get copies of all assessments and reports and carefully review them
- 🌸 You do not have to sign the IEP at the close of the meeting
  - 🌸 Take it home to review and think over
  - 🌸 Establish a reasonable time for you to return the IEP
  - 🌸 Make sure you are completely satisfied with the IEP before you sign
- 🌸 The IEP is a legal document!
- 🌸 If you have any concerns, make sure you speak up!
- 🌸 Safe-keep all your toddler's progress reports, evaluations, notes, and assessments in an easily accessible binder

# Compliance Complaint


- ❁ Can be filed with the California State Department of Education (CDE)
- ❁ Can be filed when the education agency has not followed special education laws or procedures or has not implemented what is already in the child's IEP
- ❁ Timeline
  - ❁ CDE has 60 calendar days from receipt of the complaint to carry out any necessary investigation and to resolve the complaint
- ❁ Procedural Safeguards & Referral Service
  - ❁ (800) 926-0648

# Your Rights...Procedural Safeguards

- ❁ Parent must receive a copy of procedural safeguards
  - ❁ At least once per year
  - ❁ Upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation
  - ❁ Upon filing a due process complaint
  - ❁ Upon the request of the parents




# Your Rights...Procedural Safeguards

 Due process protects the rights of the parents to have input in the child's education and is used when there is a disagreement about what should go into the IEP

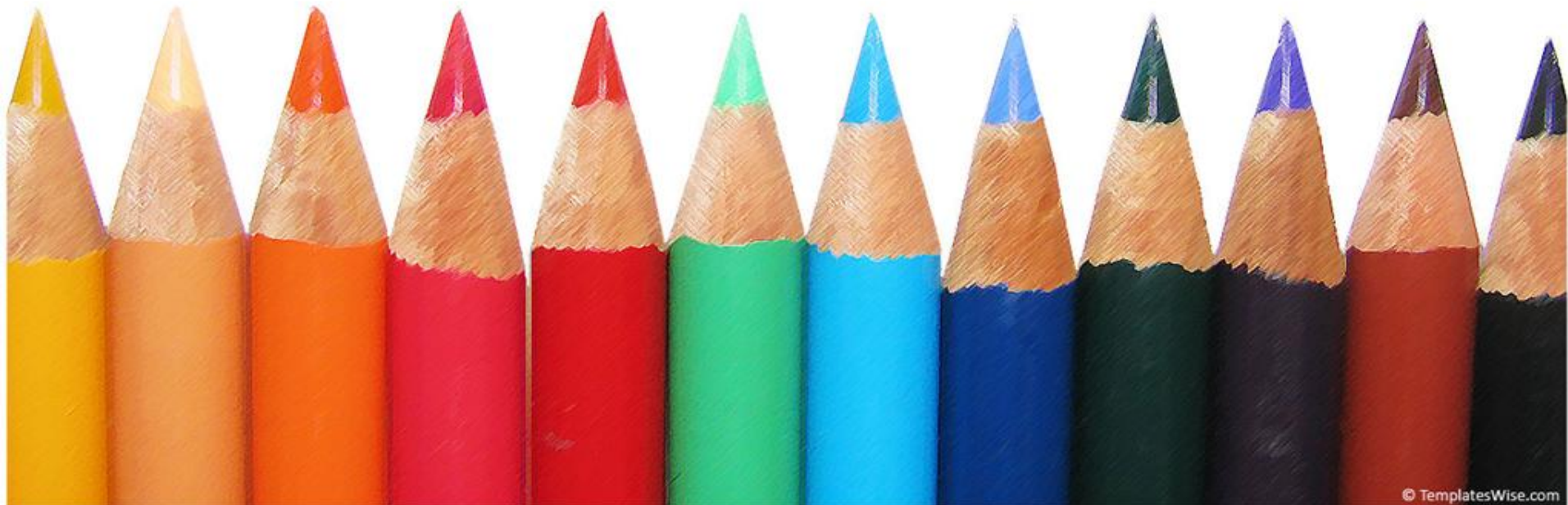
## Mediation

 Parents and school personnel sit down with a mediator and attempt to come to an agreement


## Impartial Due Process Hearing

 Parents and school personnel present evidence to a hearing officer, and he or she makes a decision on how to resolve the issue. If it is not resolved, parents may continue to challenge the school's decision in court


Other programs and resources for  
those who do not qualify for  
regional center or special  
education




# Orange County Head Start

 Ten percent of enrollment opportunities are available for students with disabilities

 Ask about dual enrollment at the IEP

 If your child does not qualify for special education and related students,

 OCHS provides early childhood programs for families who meet income guidelines

 Education

 Child health and safety

 Nutrition services

 Child mental health

2501 S. Pullman Street, #100

Santa Ana, CA 92705

Phone: 714.241.8920

Fax: 949.596.8291

[www.ochsinc.org](http://www.ochsinc.org)

# Children's Home Society

- ✿ Provides child care resource and referral, child care assistance, and child care placement
- ✿ Children from birth to 13 years of age who are in need of care during any part of the day (morning, afternoon, evening)



505 North Euclid Street, #100  
Anaheim, CA 92801  
Phone: 714.817.8600  
[www.chs-ca.org](http://www.chs-ca.org)



# School Readiness Program

- 🌸 Funded by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County
- 🌸 Goal is to increase the number of "Kindergarten-ready" children entering the school system
  - 🌸 Facilitating the smooth transition of young children and their families into a formal education environment
  - 🌸 Identifying the needs of families in their communities
  - 🌸 Developing strategies to help children enter school ready to succeed
  - 🌸 Building relationships to ensure communication with the early care and education community

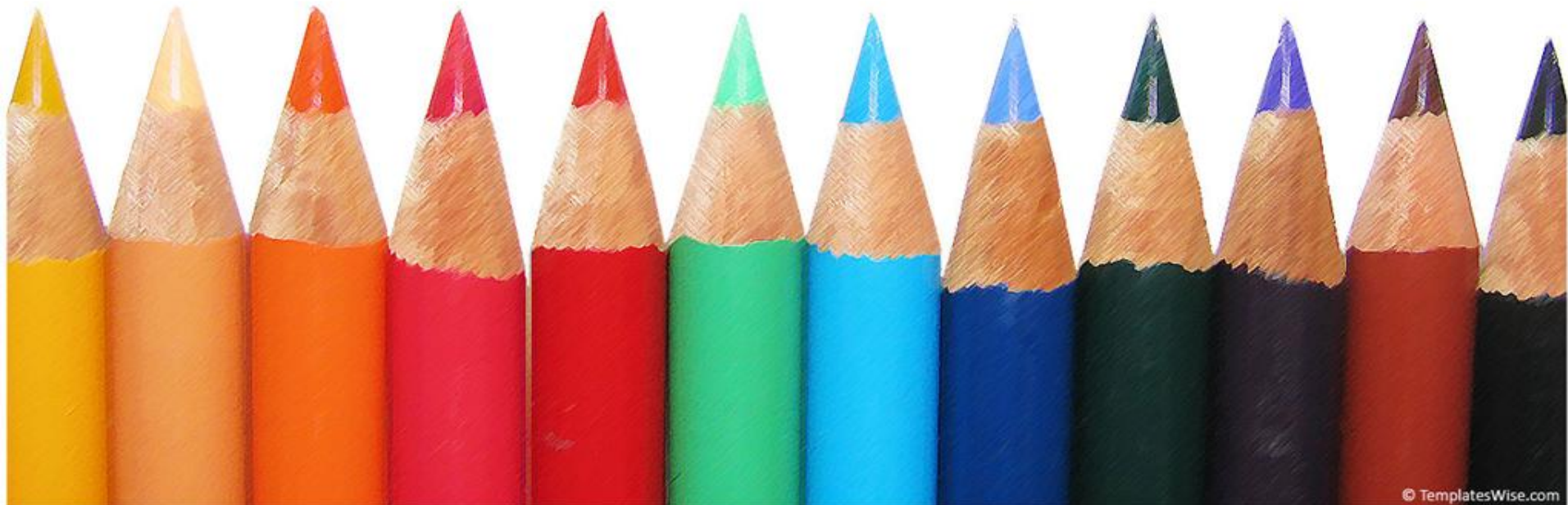
220 23rd Street  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627  
Phone: 949.548.1329  
Fax: 949.548.7436  
<http://scs.ocde.us/schoolreadiness.htm>

# Mommy and Me

- 🌸 Founded by Dr. Cindy Nurik, a child developmental psychologist and marriage and family therapist
- 🌸 Focus is on children ages six months to four years old and offer fun, developmental and stimulating activities that both parents and children can share together
- 🌸 Website offers a playgroup finder by zip code

[www.mommyandme.com](http://www.mommyandme.com)

# Resources



# Resources

- 🌸 “Moving On at the Age of 3” – Harbor Regional Center
  - 🌸 [http://www.harborrc.org/sitemanager/assets/pdfs/113\\_F60D8B93CF13E4B4938524F1A1EBD7A1.pdf](http://www.harborrc.org/sitemanager/assets/pdfs/113_F60D8B93CF13E4B4938524F1A1EBD7A1.pdf)
- 🌸 “Moving On At Three...Transition” – RC Orange County
  - 🌸 Available at the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center
- 🌸 “Special Education Rights and Responsibilities” – Disability Rights California
  - 🌸 <http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/PUBS/504001.pdf>
- 🌸 “18 Tips for getting quality special education for your child” – Disability Rights California
  - 🌸 <http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/pubs/513001.htm>

# Thank You!

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