



# SPREAD THE WORD PRESCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

This document is intended to aid public agencies in understanding the requirements in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Indiana Article 7 related to preschool environments. Local education agencies (LEA) are required to ensure compliance with IDEA and Indiana Article 7. This document elaborates on federal and state education agency (SEA) policies to ensure appropriate educational placement practices and procedures at LEAs for preschool-aged students.

## Federal Regulations

34 CFR § 300.114-120

## State Regulations

511 IAC 7-42-10, 511 IAC 7-42-6, 511 IAC 7-42-11



Other regulations may be relevant to educational placement, but major regulations listed above are addressed in this document. LEAs are responsible for knowing and implementing IDEA and Indiana Article 7. Not all information related to educational placement is guaranteed to be in this document.



## LEA Responsibilities

- A. To the maximum extent appropriate, ensure that students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with nondisabled students AND maintain written policies and procedures on this issue.
- B. Ensure that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students from the general education environment occurs only if the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes using supplementary aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved AND maintain written policies and procedures on this issue.
- C. Ensure that a continuum of services, as described in subsections (b)(4) and (b)(5), is available to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities and makes provision for supplementary services, such as resource rooms or itinerant instruction, to be provided in conjunction with general education placement AND maintain written policies and procedures on this issue.
- D. Ensure that each student with a disability has an equal opportunity to participate with nondisabled students in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate AND maintain written policies and procedures on this issue.

Read 511 IAC 7-42-10 for further requirements.



## Continuum of Placement Options

LEAs must ensure the following continuum of placement options is available for early childhood students:

(A) Early childhood general education programs.

(B) Early childhood special education programs.

These programs include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Special education classrooms.

(ii) Separate schools.

(iii) Residential facilities.

(C) Early childhood special education and related services provided at the service provider's location.

(D) Home-based early childhood special education and related services provided in the residence of the student's family or caregivers.

# REGULAR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

LEAs must ensure correct reporting for early childhood education placements. Reporting codes are determined by attendance in *any* program, not just by services rendered by the LEA. Teams should therefore begin determining the preschool environment by asking:

## Does the child attend a Regular Early Childhood Program (RECP)?

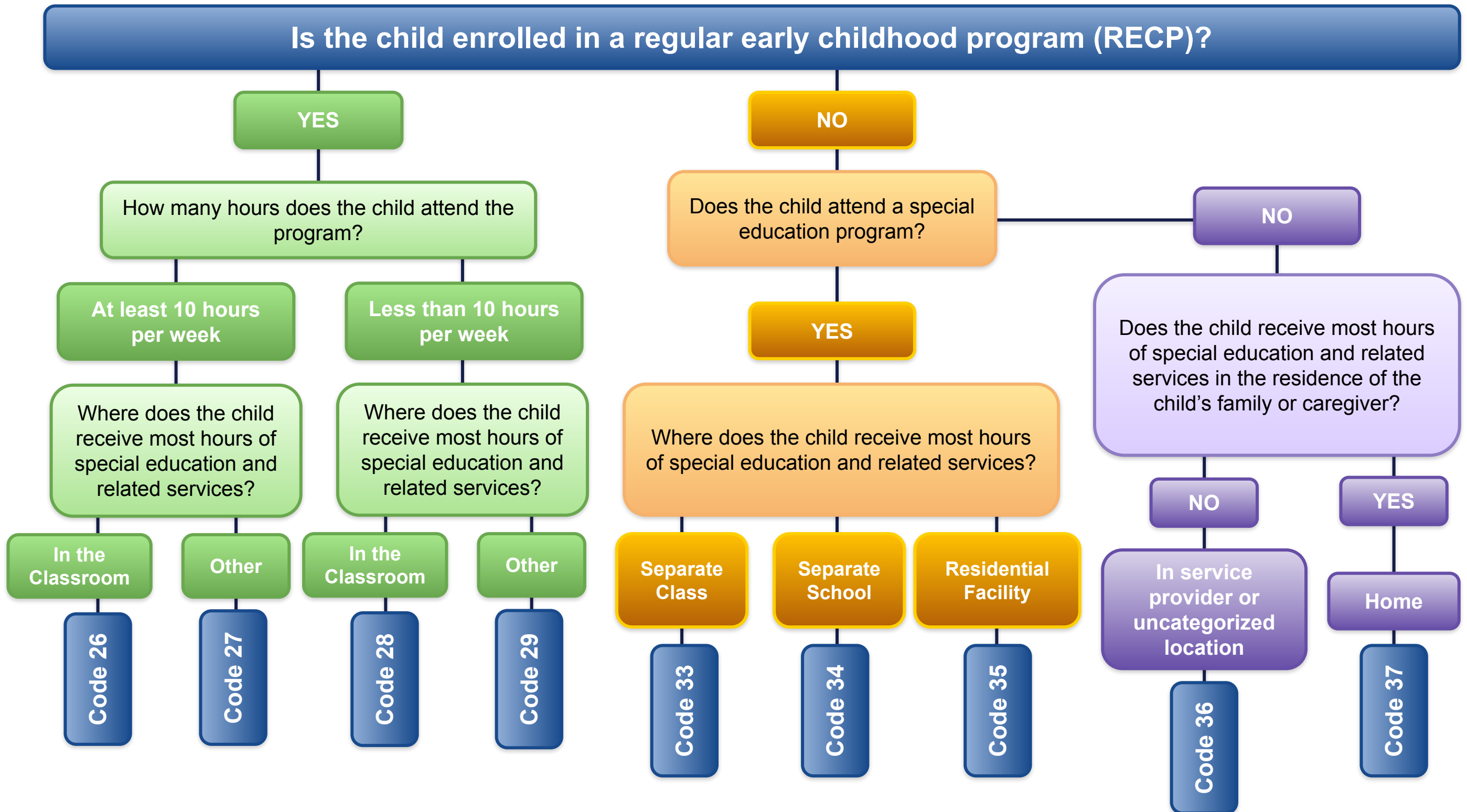
- A RECP is any public or private school, child care, or child development program with at least 50% nondisabled peers. See the frequently asked questions section for more information about private preschool programs.
- Code 38, Private Preschool, should only be used under specific circumstances outlined in the FAQ. LEAs are responsible for determining the correct reporting code.

Once the program determines if the child attends a RECP, the team should determine for how many hours the program is attended. LEAs can use the decision tree on the following slide to help make determinations about the child's environment.



## Decision Tree for Preschool Educational Environments

This decision tree, based on the Idea Data Center (IDC) Preschool Environments Toolkit, can be used to help local educational agencies (LEAs) identify the correct federal value abbreviations for reporting preschool educational environments data.



# EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

LEAs must ensure correct reporting for early childhood education settings. Settings should only be reported if they are relevant to a child's circumstances. If no setting codes apply to the child being reported, it should be left blank. Data Exchange only allows certain setting codes for certain placement options. Data reporters can review the [Data Exchange Knowledge Hub](#) for guidance.

## Code Value & Setting Descriptor

~~01 = community-based Preschool~~ (no longer valid for 2025 school year reporting)

02 = Medical/Mental Health Placement

04 = Court-Ordered Placement

06 = Out-of-State Placement

~~08 = Headstart~~ (no longer valid for 2025 school year reporting)

09 - Private Vendor (Day Program/Residential)

10 = Non-Public School (PK-13)

(blank)



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## When is a child considered to be attending “private preschool”?

To be considered Code 38, Private Preschool, the private preschool should meet the requirements of 511 IAC 7-34-1. The private preschool would need to be “in a non-public school that meets the definition of an elementary school in 511 IAC 7-32-33.” Children attending child care centers and child development centers should be coded according to the decision tree.

## Are there recorded sessions to better understand these codes?

Yes. Create an account on Indiana Learning Lab to watch “Preschool Special Education Data Collection: Practical Tools to Improve Data Reliability.” This session also contains resources to practice using the decision tree to effectively report early childhood environments.

## What does the state do with the data reported by the LEA?

Early childhood environments are reported to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on an annual basis through Indicator 6. It has set targets and must conduct analysis when targets are not met. At the state level, the data is used to improve early childhood special education programming around the state through professional development, grant opportunities, and technical assistance.

## Where is there more information about early childhood reporting?

Interested parties can find more specific information and training around data reporting through the Data Exchange Knowledge Hub, available through the LINK Portal. The state also conducts regular sessions for technical assistance regarding data. Email [osedata@doe.in.gov](mailto:osedata@doe.in.gov) for information on the next available sessions.

# REFERENCES & RESOURCES

## Resources

- [Indicator 6 Monitoring and Compliance Guide](#)
- [Environments Reporting Learning Lab](#)
- [Blooket Game Knowledge Check](#)
- [Indiana Article 7](#)
- [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#)

## Contact Information

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