

## REFERRAL PROCESS

Benton-Stearns Education District (BSED) member districts in cooperation with the Interagency Early Intervention Committee (IEIC) have developed a public awareness system designed to inform potential families of available programs and services and have implemented interagency child find systems designed to seek out, identify, and refer infants and young children with, or at risk of, disabilities and their families.

The focus of the public awareness program is to provide information about the state's early intervention program, the local child find system including the purpose and scope of the system; how to make referrals and how to gain access to a comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation and other early intervention services. Information is disseminated to agencies and groups throughout the communities of BSED member districts. Community agencies and groups shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Physicians, clinics and hospitals;
2. Public health agencies;
3. Public and private social service agencies;
4. Public and private schools;
5. Head Start, preschools, nurseries and day care facilities;
6. Mental health service agencies; and
7. Local chapters of parent and lay associations

*(See Region 7W IEIC Operating Procedures for more details)*

BSED has a process in place for identifying children with disabilities beginning at birth. Children from birth through age five are referred by parents, physicians and other agencies to BSED or their resident school district. Referrals are received through the state Help Me Grow referral system, internally through screening programs or through phone calls directly to the districts. Early Childhood Special Education programs follow the post referral flowchart for all referrals as suggested by MDE. (*Flow chart Part C/Part B*). Intake is completed with input from the family and appropriate agencies that may provide services to the child and family.

For school aged children, each member district prepares and disseminates information regarding available services and the referral procedures for learners with disabilities who are eligible for special education services. Each district ensures that such information is available in the native language of its non-English speaking residents. Dissemination may be made by public news releases (i.e., newspapers, radio, etc.), school bulletins, brochures, speaking engagements to parent and civic groups, etc.

For children either attending a public or private school or children with disabilities who are of school age and are not attending school, referrals can be made to the building student assistance team. The student assistance team will process the referral, obtain parent input and permission to evaluate, and involve the appropriate team members from the school and other agencies, as appropriate.