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| Committee on Preschool  Special Education (CPSE) | | |
| Unatego Central School District | | **Contact Us:**  **Special Programs Office**  2641 State Highway 7  P.O. Box 483  Otego, Ny 13825  Phone: 607-988-5034  Fax: 607-988-5070 |
| **What is Preschool Special Education?**  Preschool Special Education is a system consisting of school districts, municipalities, approved providers, and parents.  Evaluations and specially designed instruction are provided to eligible children with a disability that affects their learning. | |
| **How can I get my child help?**  If your preschool-age child (3-5 years old) has delays in development such as difficulty talking, moving around, thinking, or learning, you can contact Special Programs to request an evaluation for your child.  You will be given a list of approved agencies that can evaluate your child in areas of difficulty. You will be asked to choose one of the evaluators, and sign a consent form giving permission for your child to be tested.  If your child received early intervention services as an infant or toddler, your service coordinator will assist you with making the transition to CPSE. | | **What does it cost?**  Nothing! If your child is eligible for special education programs or related services, those services, as well as transportation for your child, will be provided for free as well.  **Individualized Education Plan:**  If a child is found eligible, a plan called an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be written. The plan will include special education services, as well as any needed program and/or testing modifications that are needed.  **Special Education Services:**  **Special Education Itinerant Teacher** - a special education teacher works with a child in a setting recommended by the CPSE.  **Special Class in an Integrated Setting** - a class with preschool students with and without disabilities.  **Special Class**- a class with only children with disabilities.  **Related Services:**  Speech and Language Therapy  Occupational Therapy  Physical Therapy  Counseling  Parent Education |
| **What is the evaluation process like?**  Once parental consent is obtained, a “multi-disciplinary evaluation” will be scheduled.  Depending on the specific concerns about the child, this may include several different evaluations. These may not all happen on the same day.  All preschool evaluations include an observation of the child, a physical examination (with your child’s doctor), a social history interview, and a psychological evaluation. Some children will also meet with a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, or physical therapist.  The therapists will talk with you and “work” with your child.  But don’t worry, this will feel like fun games to your child! Just tell them to do their best and have fun.  It is important that you try your best to go to all the evaluation appointments. If you miss an appointment it will slow down the process significantly. | |
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| **More things to know:**  **What is an IEP?** An IEP is an Individualized Education Plan. If your child qualifies for preschool special education services, they will get an IEP. This is like a written map that lays out the special education instruction, supports, and other services your child needs.  In the IEP it will list all the things your child needs. This could simply include a related service such as speech therapy. Or, your child’s IEP could include several programs and services to provide more comprehensive support. The plan is individualized to what each child needs.  **What is a psychological evaluation?** A school psychologist will meet with you and your child for one to two hours. The evaluation looks at your child’s ability to learn, acquired knowledge about the world, and any emotional or behavioral factors that may contribute to difficulties.  **What is a speech and language evaluation?** This is an evaluation conducted by a Speech and Language Pathologist, that examines communication, language development, and articulation (forming clear speech sounds when speaking). Sometimes, oral motor skills or feeding skill may be examined.  **What is an occupational therapy evaluation?** This evaluation looks atyour child’s fine motor skills, visual-motor integration, strength, muscle tone, etc. These skills are important for writing as well as many life skills such as opening snack packages, buttoning or zipping clothing, or tying shoes. Emotional regulation and sensory processing are also examined when appropriate.  **What is a physical therapy evaluation?** The Physical Therapist examines large muscle (gross motor) skills, including balance, coordination, strength, speed, and dexterity. This includes running, jumping, sitting, etc.  **Physical Examination-** A physical examination is also required for all initial evaluations. This paperwork is obtained from your child’s doctor and is used to determine if any physical or medical factors interfere with the learning process, such as vision or hearing.  **Social History-** A psychologist, special education teacher, or other professional will contact you to gather background information about your child. You may be asked to complete a social history questionnaire or other paperwork about your child.  **Functional Behavior Assessment-** An intensive process of gathering and analyzing information in order to determine the purpose or intent of a child’s behavior. This type of evaluation is usually conducted when behaviors are severe or are significantly interfering with learning. | | |
| **Acronyms you may hear:**  CPSE: Committee on Preschool Special Education  PWD: Preschooler with a Disability  OT: Occupational Therapy  PT: Physical Therapy  CNS: Counseling  SEIT: Special Education Itinerant Teacher  SLT: Speech and Language Therapy  SC: Special Class | **What if I still have more questions?**  A more comprehensive resource about the evaluation process and special education can be found here: <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/preschool/brochure.htm>  And of course, feel free to ask questions throughout any of this process. There is no such thing as a “stupid” question! Call the Special Programs Office at 607-988-5034. | |