



## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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### What is the Significant Developmental Delay Special Education Category?

By Wendy Overturf

Early identification and intervention are key to helping children with developmental delays reach their full potential. Wisconsin's Significant Developmental Delay (SDD) special education category allows schools to identify and serve children ages 3 through 9 who show significant delays in development. Other disability categories shall be considered before identifying the primary disability category as significant developmental delay. This ensures that young children receive the support they need at the most critical time for growth and learning. Early identification means recognizing and addressing developmental delays as soon as possible.

When children receive help early, they are more likely to:

- Improve communication, motor, and social skills.
- Build confidence and independence.
- Experience greater success in school and life.

In Wisconsin, early intervention often starts with the [Birth to 3 Program](#) for infants and toddlers. As children approach age 3, the public school district becomes responsible for evaluating and providing special education supports to those children who meet specific disability category criteria and require specially designed instruction.

In Wisconsin, the special education disability category **Significant Developmental Delay (SDD)** is designed specifically for children ages 3 through 9 who meet the criteria after consideration of any [other disability categories](#) if appropriate and applicable.

#### What SDD is in Wisconsin

According to [Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 11.36\(11\)](#) and the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\)](#):

Significant Developmental Delay (SDD) means children, ages 3 through 9, who are experiencing significant delays in two or more of the following areas of development:

- physical (fine or gross motor)
- cognitive
- communication
- social or emotional
- adaptive development,
- and who require special education and related services.

Other disability categories shall be considered first (i.e., you don't automatically default to SDD without considering if another category may be more appropriate).

#### Considerations through the Age of 9

It is important that a child continues to receive special education and related services under the category of Significant Developmental Delay until the age of 10. The intent of the rule is to allow enough time for the IEP team to gather sufficient information to determine, when appropriate, a new disability category. A reevaluation for continued eligibility under a new category or to determine whether the child no longer needs special education and related services must occur before the age of 10. Note that the state rule is an age (not grade level) limit/deadline.

### **When to Determine the Child No Longer Needs Special Education Services or Should Qualify Under a Different Criteria**

Natural times to consider conducting a reevaluation include:

- 3 year reevaluation (at age 6, 7, 8, or 9).
- Annual IEP (review information).
- End of the school year (especially during the year of the child's 9th birthday).
- Any time the IEP team has enough information to determine a new disability criteria area or that the child no longer needs special education services.

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## **HOME LEARNING**



### **March 20, 2026-First Day of Spring**

You and your child can have fun reading along with these engaging read-alouds about spring.

- [The Flower Thief](#)
- [First Notes of Spring](#)

### **March 2- Dr. Seuss's Birthday**

**Dr. Seuss**, whose real name was Theodor Seuss Geisel, is one of the most well-known children's authors in the world. His books are loved for their fun rhymes and creative wordplay. But his rhymes weren't just for fun — they also help children learn language and reading skills. Rhyming words in his stories make reading enjoyable and help kids recognize sounds and patterns in words.

Check out two of his books and read with your kids. Be sure to point out the rhyming words.

- [Green Eggs and Ham Read-Aloud](#)
- [Cat in the Hat Read-Aloud](#)

*The Cat in the Hat* is a fun and imaginative story. Here are some ideas to help children think about the story, be creative, and practice writing.

#### **Before Reading**

- What do you think this story might be about just from the cover?
- Have you ever had a rainy day where you were bored? What did you do?
- What do you think will happen when the Cat in the Hat comes inside?

#### **During Reading**

- How do you think the kids feel when the Cat first arrives?
- What would you do if someone started making a mess in your house?
- Why do you think the Cat keeps bringing in new surprises (like Thing 1 and Thing 2)?

#### **After Reading**

- How did the Cat help or cause trouble in the story?
- Do you think the children should tell their mother what happened? Why or why not?
- What lesson do you think the story teaches about responsibility or fun?

#### **Writing Prompts**

- Imagine *The Cat in the Hat* came to your house — what would he do?
- Write a new ending for the story. What happens when the mom walks in?
- If you could create your own "Thing," what would it look like and what would it do?

Make up a rhyming poem (like Dr. Seuss!) about a funny day at home.

Describe how you would clean up after the Cat left.



### Pi Day - March 14, 2026

Pi Day is a special math day because the date March 14 can be written like 3.14. That number (3.14) is a special number called *pi* (say it like 'pie!')." Pi (  $\pi$  ) is the ratio of a circle's circumference (the distance around it) to its diameter (the distance across it). It is a mathematical constant, meaning its value is the same for all circles, regardless of size, and it is approximately equal to 3.14. These read-alouds below will help your child learn more about circumference, radius, and diameter.

- [Pi For Kids](#)
- [Circumference and the First Round Table](#)

Pi day is often celebrated by making pies. Older children can figure out the circumference. Younger children can help prepare the recipes and then can be asked to figure out how to divide the pies in half, fourths, or eighths.

- [Pizza Pie](#)
- [7 Kid Friendly Pies for Pi Day](#)



### Spring Books for Kids of All Ages

Use this [best books about spring list](#) to have a blast reading about animals, nature, and more. There is something for every reader on this list!

### [Fun Recipes to make with Kids over Spring Break](#)

Spring break becomes even more fun with these kid-friendly breakfasts, snacks and desserts. This website has a variety of recipes as: Raspberry-Banana Tacos, Rainbow Yellow Cubes, Arts and Crackers and more.

## WI FACETS EVENTS

### [What is Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System \(WSEMS\) and How to Use It](#)

**Date:** March 2, 2026

**Presenters:** Heidi Siebert, CESA 7 and Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS

### [Understanding Educational Materials \(AEM\): Support and Resources for Students and Families](#)

**Date:** March 4, 2026

**Presenter:** Stacy Duffy, CESA 2

### [Tu participación cuenta: Estrategias para ser un miembro activo del grupo de toma de decisiones \(Parte 4&5\)](#)

**Date:** March 5, 2026

**Presenter:** Alejandra Loeza, WI FACETS

### [Section 504: What Students and Parents Need to Know](#)

**Date:** March 10, 2026

**Presenter:** Ann Zielke and Lisa Stewart, WI FACETS

### [Self Determination: Choice Making Skills for All Ages / Autodeterminación: Habilidades para tomar decisiones para todas las edades](#)

**Date:** March 11, 2026

**Presenter:** Molly Murphy, Teacher and Behavior Analyst

**[Social Security Disability Benefits: Everything you need to know/ Beneficios del Seguro Social por discapacidad: Todo lo que necesitas saber](#)**

**Date:** March 17, 2026

**Presenter:** Elida Elizondo, Public Affairs Specialist with the Social Security Administration

**[Eyes Wide Open: Technology for the Blind and Visually Impaired that Redefines Possibility](#)**

**Date:** March 18, 2026

**Presenter:** Amy Snow, DPI certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist for the Blind (CATIS)

**[Familias como líderes: Colaborando y generando impacto en los grupos](#)**

**Date:** March 19, 2026

**Presenter:** Alejandra Loeza, WI FACETS

**[Executive Functions: The What, the When, and the How/ Funciones ejecutivas: El qué, el cuándo y el cómo](#)**

**Date:** March 25, 2026

**Presenter:** Dr. Jen Rohrbaugh, Wisconsin Comprehensive School Mental Health Statewide Coordinator

**[Sección 504: Cómo Ayuda a Estudiantes con Discapacidades](#)**

**Date:** March 26, 2026

**Presenter:** Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

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## UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

**[Training for Home Language Interpreters: Supporting Families through the Special Education Process](#)**

For those seeking training for home language interpreters for families at IEP meetings, DPI has partnered with WI FACETS, LEAs, and other organizations to develop a one-day training for home language interpreters who interpret for families at IEP meetings. Language interpretation training is a requirement to meet the provisions outlined in DPI's [Providing Language Assistance to Parents guidance document](#). The training provides increased awareness of state and federal regulations related to the educational rights of students who receive special education through an IEP and who may also be English Learners. The training also provides increased knowledge and resources related to legal responsibilities and ethical considerations for translation and interpretation of special education terms and concepts.

**Upcoming In-person trainings:**

March 12, 2026 – [CESA 6 – Registration Information](#) – Use CODE “SpecialEvent” at checkout - closes 3/5

March 13, 2026 – [CESA 1 – Registration Information](#) – Registration closes on 3/5

**[2026 Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin and the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin Annual Conference](#)**

**Dates:** April 23-25, 2026

**Location:** Kalahari Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells, WI

The purpose of the annual conference is to provide a wide range of information to those within the autism community. The goal is to provide relevant information for attendees at all levels, including those who are new to autism and those who have years of experience.

**[Circles of Life Conference-Save the Dates](#)**

**Dates:** May 14-15, 2026

**Location:** Holiday Inn Stevens Point Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI

Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for families who have children with disabilities and the professionals who support them.

## [2026 WI FACETS Endless Possibilities Conference-Save the Date](#)

At the 2026 conference, we will focus on *Advocacy in Education and Beyond!*

**Date:** August 7, 2026

**Location:** Waukesha County Technical College ([AJN Center](#)), Pewaukee, WI

The annual Endless Possibilities conference invites families and professionals who support students with disabilities to learn and grow together. We encourage open dialogue between families and professionals to discuss positive solutions for all our students with special needs in Wisconsin.

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### [New Resource: Addressing Mental Health Needs in the IEP](#)

When a student receiving special education services has a mental health condition that affects the student's ability to access, engage, or progress in age or grade level general education curriculum, instruction, environment, or activities, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must address the student's mental health needs. This resource provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding the role of the comprehensive special education evaluation, IEP development, and various school staff in addressing the mental health needs of students with IEPs.

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## ONLINE RESOURCES



### [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This website has a variety of resources related to early childhood education. Additionally, if you are concerned about your child's development [this section](#) of the website has tips for parents. There are many immediate things you can do to help your child. Information on early intervention services is also provided.

### [Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#)

The first three years are the most important building blocks of a child's future. The Birth to 3 Program is a federally-mandated Early Intervention Program ([Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—IDEA](#)) to support families of children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three.

### [Significant Developmental Delay \(SDD\)](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website has information related to SDD. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams may now consider identifying SDD as a disability category for children ages 3 through 9, for both initial and reevaluations. A section on frequently asked questions related to SDD is available as well.

### [Too Small to Fail](#)

Too Small to Fail aims to help parents and businesses take meaningful actions to improve the health and well-being of children ages zero to five, so that more of America's children are prepared to succeed in the 21st century. The website has many links to resources related to children from 0-5 years of age.

### [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)

The NAEYC is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with a focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for children from birth through age 8. NAEYC administers a voluntary, national accreditation system for high-quality early childhood programs, sponsors a variety of initiatives to improve professional preparation of early childhood educators, and produces a wide array of early childhood resources.

### [ZERO TO THREE](#)

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to support the healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers, and their families. This multidisciplinary organization advances its mission by informing, educating, and supporting adults who influence the lives of infants and toddlers.

### [Wisconsin Head Start Association \(WHSA\)](#)

The Wisconsin Head Start Association (WHSA) is made up of 39 grantees providing Head Start and Early Head Start services to families throughout Wisconsin. They serve all of Wisconsin's 72 counties and interact with 424 school districts in the state. WHSA provides comprehensive services for over 16,000 of Wisconsin's youngest and most vulnerable citizens. WHSA provides a network for information, training, advocacy, support, and action for directors, parents, and staff of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin.

### [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Developmental Milestones](#)

Developmental milestones are a set of functional skills or age-specific tasks that most children can do at a certain age range. Your pediatrician uses milestones to help check how your child is developing. Although each milestone has an age level, the actual age when a typically developing child reaches that milestone can vary quite a bit as every child is unique. If parents have concerns about their child's development often the first step is to discuss those concerns with their pediatrician.

### [Children's Screen Time Action Network](#)

This website has resources and recommendations developed by a group of educators, practitioners, parents, and advocates to reduce the amount of time kids spend with digital devices.

### [The Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Website](#)

This site serves as the collaborative source of information on issues of cross-sector interest, state initiatives, and research-based practices.

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## RESEARCH

### **YouTube's ABCs and 123s: Describing the Quality of Early Literacy and Math Videos on YouTube**

Christensen, C., & Cincebeaux, M. (2024). YouTube's ABCs and 123s: Describing the Quality of Early Literacy and Math Videos on YouTube. *SRI Education, a Division of SRI International*.

### [Read Full Article](#)

In recent years, children's video viewing has shifted from television to online streaming platforms like YouTube. While such platforms include many educational videos for children, little is known about the educational value of the content in these videos. To understand the learning opportunities available to children when they watch videos online, this paper describes the quality, duration, and popularity of a sample of 1,198 YouTube videos focused on early literacy and math topics. The authors found that while most of these videos use concrete examples to illustrate learning content, only about half directly address the audience or involve characters, and very few integrate learning content into the narrative. Further, videos in the sample that directly addressed the audience were less popular, as measured by views and likes, as were videos that included a greater variety of math topics. The article also discusses important ways that user-generated educational videos may differ from educational television.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming Newsletter Topics

**April: Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**May: Mental Health**

**June: ADD / ADHD**

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](#).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: [www.servingongroups.org/newsletter](http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter)



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WI FACETS | 600 W. Virginia St., Suite 501 | Milwaukee, WI 53204 US

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