

InSHAPE program goals

InSHAPE assesses a young child's development and learning abilities, then uses this information as a basis for developing an in-home instructional support plan. The emphasis is on 1) supporting the family through information about autism spectrum disorders and modeling effective communication, interaction, and play strategies, and 2) preparing the child to enter a preschool learning environment. The program's goals are:

- To help families adjust to a new diagnosis of autism by providing research-based, "best practice" programming and a positive, supportive, realistic outlook.
- To teach parents and other family members skills for working with the child, understanding the challenges of autism, and structuring the home environment to decrease family stress and reinforce learning.
- To increase the child's social skills and develop communication strategies and skills.
- To prepare the child to learn comfortably in a group setting and provide a supported transition into a preschool setting after age three.

Who is eligible?

Children from birth to age three with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or suspected of an autism spectrum disorder are eligible for the InSHAPE program. Placement is provided through an Infant and Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP team also determines the number of hours and best settings for each child.

For more information about the InSHAPE program, contact the Sonoma County Office of Education Preschool Office, (707) 524-2712.

InSHAPE provides specialized services to help move from diagnosis toward growth

InSHAPE Infant School and Home Autism Program through Education



An intensive, specially designed, and individualized program for young children diagnosed on the autism spectrum, from birth to age three



SCOE Preschool Office
8511 Liman Way
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
(707) 522-3272 ■ www.scoe.org





A team approach

Our teachers and specialists have strong backgrounds in early childhood development and extensive, specialized training in effective autism interventions. They provide ongoing training, direction, and support to the autism assistants who are assigned to deliver individualized instruction.

InSHAPE teachers and specialists work in collaboration with other services providers, such as home visitors, behaviorists, occupational therapists, speech/language specialists, and medical professionals to provide the child and family with needed support. We recognize the important, central role parents play in their child's learning and development. Parents are key members of the instructional team.

Team meetings attended by the parents, teacher, teaching assistant, and support staff are held on a regular basis to coordinate services and provide consistency.

Instructional methodology

The InSHAPE program applies a range of methodologies based on careful analysis of each child's learning style and instructional needs. Techniques and approaches may include:

- Behavioral analysis
- Ecological analysis
- Discrete trial
- Sensory integration
- Behavioral modification
- Structured teaching
- Social communication strategies
- Emotional and relationship intervention

Services

One-on-one home-based instruction is provided by special education teachers and trained teaching assistants. Some instruction may take place in group or community settings to generalize skills and help the child transition. For example, visits to a preschool targeted for the child to attend at age three may be planned, along with play groups arranged by the instructional team.

What happens when the child reaches age three?

This program serves children from the time they are referred for or receive an autism spectrum diagnosis and obtain an Infant and Family Service Plan (IFSP) recommendation for InSHAPE services until they are three years old. Program staff work with the family to plan a supportive transition to a preschool program when InSHAPE services conclude.

Education options include specialized preschool classes that serve children with autism and other developmental disorders. Parents may also choose a community preschool or Head Start program instead of—or in combination with—a special education class. Whatever the family's choice, staff will continue to provide support during the transition to ensure that each child's first school experiences are successful.

At age three, some children may be eligible for the Sonoma County Office of Education's SHAPE program, which extends school and home support through age five.

