

Fostering Dignity and Equality for Every Child: Strategies for Inclusive Placements, Curricula, and Instruction in Early Childhood Programs

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ATTENDANCE





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Erin

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Agenda: Day 1



9:00 - 12:00:	Objectives 1 and 2
12:00 - 1:15:	Lunch
1:15 - 3:45:	Objectives 2 and 3
3:45 - 4:00:	Evaluations

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Agenda: Day 2

9:00 – 11:15:	Objectives 3 and 4
11:15 - 11:30:	Evaluations

BCBA CEUs!

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Objectives

- Participants will identify the importance of inclusivity, respect, and dignity in early childhood education.
- Participants will identify components of curricula that are tailored to meet the diverse needs of all children and foster an environment that celebrates individual differences and promotes belongingness.
- Participants will identify evidence-based strategies and interventions that promote inclusivity and address diverse learning needs.
- Participants will identify practices that foster respectful interactions, collaboration, and advocacy within early childhood programs.

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This summit aims to empower participants with actionable insights and strategies, fostering a more inclusive, respectful, and dignified environment for every child in early childhood programs.

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Expectations for Learning Together



We are safe and healthy

Take breaks as needed
Move if you need to
Stand up for micro-breaks



We are respectful

Listen to understand
Value everyone's ideas
Engage with content



We are friendly and kind

Step up/step back
Be kind

What else?

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Objectives

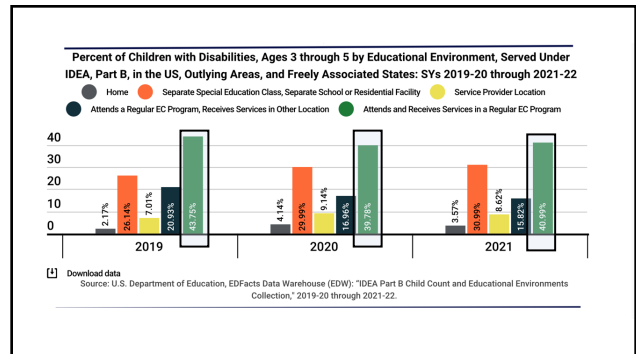
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Participants will identify the importance of inclusivity, respect, and dignity in early childhood education.

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Participants will identify the importance of inclusivity, respect, and dignity in early childhood education.

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COLORADO NUMBERS



92%!

- Colorado is the highest among states for rates of inclusion!



What we don't know:

- actual amount of time that children are in the classroom
- the number of learning opportunities that children have
- policies and procedures are in place to implement high quality inclusive practices

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What you said... CHALLENGES

- Training for staff, time for collaboration and planning with special education providers.
- Teachers struggle with the specialized instruction piece to individualize
- we have encountered challenges in accommodating different learning styles, addressing language barriers, and understanding the individual needs of each child.
- The lack of skilled staff is the biggest issue we encounter.
- Lack of teacher/educator understanding and support.
- Getting teachers to TRULY and DEEPLY engage with parents and children on a deep level to understand the child and families
- At times children with low communication skills tend to use challenging behaviors to meet their needs.
- First and foremost, it is crucial to create an inclusive and supportive classroom setting that accommodates the diverse needs of all students

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What you said...
INCLUSION

- LRE means fitting the routine and schedule to the needs of the student, not the adults.
- We serve a variety of cultures and do our best to acknowledge and provide services within those parameters.
- I am passionate about the proper placements of students. I have had to "push" staff out of their comfort zone when placing children into the ECE classroom and provided support and coaching
- I see both sides of it, they absolutely need to be included, but there are times that we don't have the correct accommodations or staff to help.
- I believe all children should be in a gen ed classroom with their peers! I think the growth of students in the early years is more about peer modeling than the actual teacher teaching academic skills. That is needed because some students are ready to be learners but many students in early education are needing to learn how to be people and friends first.

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Participants will identify the importance of inclusivity, respect, and dignity in early childhood education.

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There is a strong empirical foundation for inclusion.

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If someone asks you about the research to support preschool inclusion how would you respond?

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Research Summary

Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of inclusive education for ALL children

Research consistently shows that inclusive environments promote academic achievement, social competence, and positive attitudes towards diversity.

Children with disabilities in inclusive settings experience cognitive gains, communication development, and social benefits.

Children without disabilities also benefit from inclusive experiences, showing positive academic, developmental, and social outcomes.

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Research Summary

Individualized accommodations and differentiated interventions should be used to promote children's participation in all activities.

Evidence-based services and supports should be provided to foster children's knowledge, skills, behaviors, and social-emotional development.

Services and supports should be provided within daily routines and learning activities, and families should be recognized as collaborative partners.

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Research alone is clearly not changing practice.

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Research 2.0, 3.0...



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Pick one. Review, Read, Discuss



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Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-024-06242-4

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Centering Autistic Perspectives: Social Acceptability of Goals, Learning Contexts, and Procedures for Young Autistic Children

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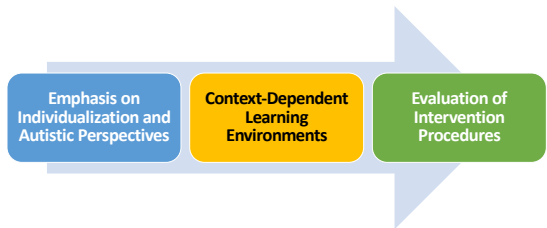
Accepted: 8 January 2024

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Key Findings...



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Key Findings...

Emphasis on Individualization and Autistic Perspectives:

- The study underscores the importance of tailoring educational practices for autistic children based on individual needs and preferences, with a particular focus on incorporating the perspectives of autistic individuals themselves.
- Autistic adults and other stakeholders consistently advocated for educational goals that prioritize communication, autonomy, and reducing challenging behaviors, while rejecting practices that encourage masking autistic traits.

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Key Findings...

Context-Dependent Learning Environments:

- Respondents emphasized the variability of appropriate learning environments, stressing that decisions should be based on the specific needs and comfort levels of each child.
- While inclusive settings were generally favored, autistic adults highlighted potential challenges and overstimulation in group contexts.

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Key Findings...

Evaluation of Intervention Procedures:

- The social acceptability of intervention procedures varied among stakeholders, with antecedent interventions receiving the highest ratings and extinction procedures eliciting the most negative responses.
- There was consensus among respondents, including autistic adults, against procedures that restrict bodily autonomy or employ intrusive methods, indicating a need for nuanced approaches in behavior analytic interventions that prioritize the well-being and preferences of autistic individuals.

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Behavior Analysis in Practice
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-024-00907-3>


ABAI
 Association for Behavior Analysis International

DISCUSSION AND REVIEW PAPER

Affirming Neurodiversity within Applied Behavior Analysis

Sneha Kohli Mathur¹ · Ellie Renz² · Jonathan Tarbox³

Accepted: 8 January 2024
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Key Takeaways...

Acknowledging Criticisms and Historical Impact

Centering Autistic Voices and Perspectives

Embracing Neurodiversity and Collaborative Approaches

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Key Takeaways...

Acknowledging Criticisms and Historical Impact:

- The authors emphasize the importance of recognizing and addressing criticisms against applied behavior analysis (ABA), including its historical use in practices such as conversion therapy and the use of aversive techniques.
- ABA practitioners must acknowledge the pain caused by past practices and commit to doing better in the future, even if they don't fully agree with all criticisms.

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Key Takeaways...

**Centering
Autistic
Voices and
Perspectives:**

- Autistic individuals should be considered the primary stakeholders in ABA services. Their experiences and perspectives must be listened to, believed, and integrated into solutions.
- A shift from the medical model to the social model of disability is advocated, encouraging collaboration between behavior experts (practitioners) and autism experts (clients) in treatment planning and delivery.

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Key Takeaways...

**Embracing
Neurodiversity
and
Collaborative
Approaches:**

- ABA practitioners should embrace the neurodiversity paradigm, recognizing that ABA is not the only form of support for autistic individuals. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is encouraged to address the diverse needs of clients.
- Practitioners must acknowledge the trauma experienced by many in the autistic community within therapeutic and medical systems, and work towards building trust through compassionate and inclusive practices.

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Pick one. Review, Read, Discuss



Growing Together: Developing a Sense of Belonging for Children of Color With Disabilities

Re-Imagining Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice in EI/ECSE

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Key Takeaway...


Key Takeaway

Why is this important?

What will you do differently or more of now?

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Pick one. Review, Read, Discuss



Strategies to Support Community Inclusion of Young Children With Disabilities

Responding to Difference: Enacting Inclusive Early Childhood Education Through the Social-Relations Approach

Rationale for Change: Reconceptualizing Inclusive Early Childhood Education Through Practice

Administrators as Heterotopia Architects: Supporting Expansive Possibilities of Inclusive Early Childhood Education

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Key Takeaways...

Key Takeaway #1

Why is this important?

What will you do differently or more of now?

Key Takeaway #2

Why is this important?

What will you do differently or more of now?

Key Takeaway #3

Why is this important?

What will you do differently or more of now?

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Legal

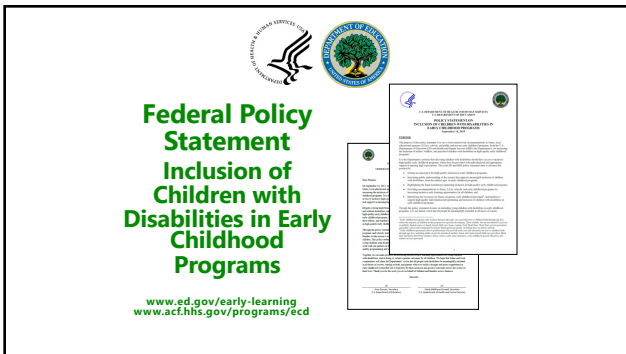
Current laws endorse full inclusion of every child in high-quality environments

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There is a strong legal foundation for inclusion.

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Federal Policy Statement Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs

www.ed.gov/early-learning
www.act.hhs.gov/programs/ecd

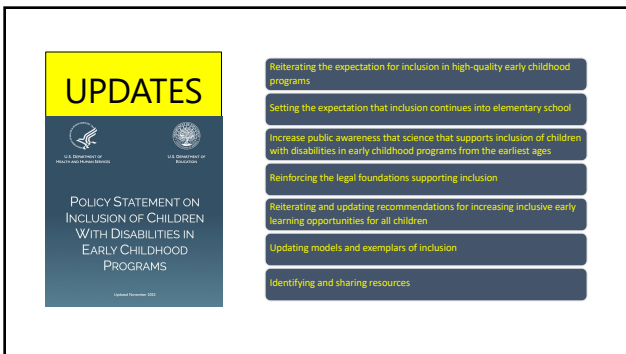
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POLICY STATEMENT ON
INCLUSION OF CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAMS

Updated November 2013

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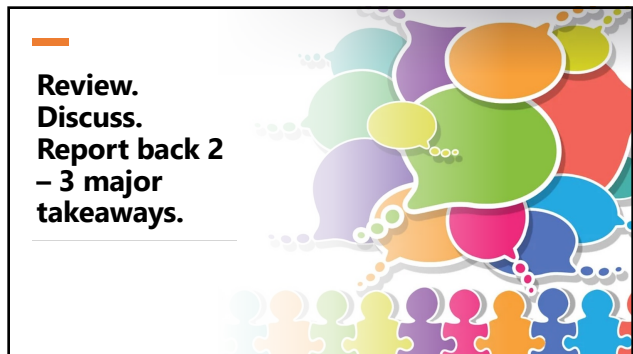


UPDATES

POLICY STATEMENT ON
INCLUSION OF CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAMS

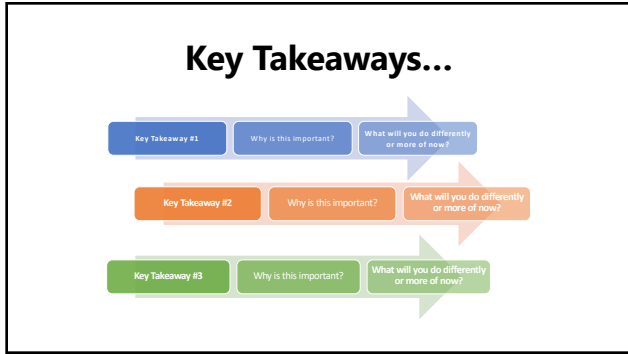
- Reiterating the expectation for inclusion in high-quality early childhood programs
- Setting the expectation that inclusion continues into elementary school
- Increase public awareness that science that supports inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs from the earliest ages
- Reinforcing the legal foundations supporting inclusion
- Reiterating and updating recommendations for increasing inclusive early learning opportunities for all children
- Updating models and exemplars of inclusion
- Identifying and sharing resources

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Review. Discuss. Report back 2 – 3 major takeaways.

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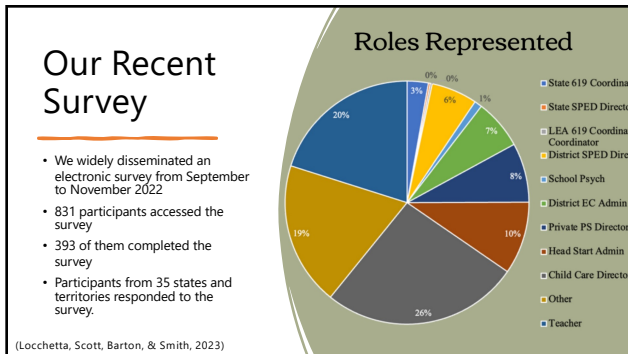
Laws

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): This federal law mandates that children with disabilities have the right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). IDEA emphasizes the importance of inclusion and requires schools to provide supports and services to enable students with disabilities to participate in general education settings to the maximum extent possible.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: This law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. It requires schools to provide reasonable accommodations and supports to ensure equal access to education for students with disabilities, which often includes inclusion in general education classrooms.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including education. It emphasizes the importance of providing reasonable accommodations and removing barriers to participation for people with disabilities, which aligns with the principles of inclusion in education.

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Challenges to Inclusion

56% of survey respondents indicated that attitudes and beliefs were no longer the greatest challenge to preschool inclusion. Instead, they cited the following as the primary barriers they experience:

- 35% resources
- 13% other
- 8% policies and procedures

44% of respondents still feel that attitudes and beliefs are the greatest challenge to preschool inclusion.

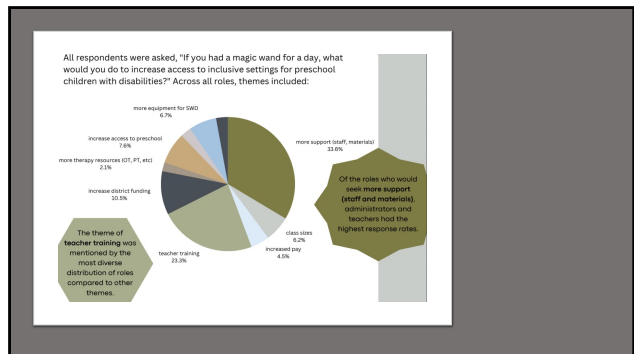
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When asked how these attitudes and beliefs showed up in their roles, the themes were:

- childcare being undervalued
- a belief that not all students can be included and those with disabilities should be separate
- teachers feeling unprepared
- parent attitudes, beliefs, or reluctance toward evaluation
- misaligned beliefs about how to provide supports
- bias or deficit mindsets
- insufficient support, coaching, or resources for behavior

"Perceptions about what inclusion can and should look like (is a barrier, as well as), attitudes surrounding pull-out services, and lack of experience or training of people in the field."
-Special education teacher, Colorado

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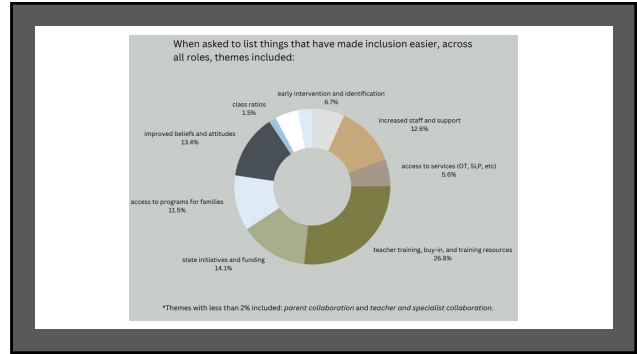


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"I would have everyone understand the importance of inclusion and buy into that framework and [identify] what we can do to get kids the support to help them thrive in their current classroom."
-Head Start Admin, Indiana

"[I would] increase the number of teachers who are well-trained to implement inclusion that promotes belonging and dignity for all students. [I would] increase the number of teachers, make teaching a more respected profession, increase wages, improve and increase teacher-prep programs that promote inclusion, and build capacity to train other individuals."
-Early Childhood Special Education Teacher, Colorado

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"One of the biggest things has been the giant push to train new and current educators on the benefits of inclusion [and] having seminars and courses that are required that help to open the inclusive dialogue [and] help bridge the gap between generational stigmas."
- Graduate Student and Educator, Nevada

"There is more inclusion training available for teachers. Training gives them the know how to include children within all activities."
-Child Care Director, Georgia

"[One thing is the] awareness and an understanding of what inclusion is [and] offering preschool to ALL children and creating a learning environment that is welcoming to ALL."
-Special Education director, Colorado

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THE FUTURE OF INCLUSION

Nearly 10 years after the last survey (Barton & Smith, 2014), **mindsets about inclusion are still a barrier** for many in the field, and many are still encountering a belief that not every student can be successfully included.

Many directors and admin are reporting that **teachers feel unprepared to successfully include students** and have misaligned approaches to providing accommodations and behavioral supports.

Admin and educators are seeking more support (in the areas of staff and materials/resources) and **all roles reported the need for increased teacher training** and reported that teacher training and buy-in has made inclusion easier for them. Many also desire greater support for inclusion and funding from their district leaders.

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Opportunities for schools and centers:

- survey teachers on barriers specific to your setting
- share data on the benefits of inclusion for both disabled and non-disabled children
- develop an inclusion policy statement and ensure that inclusion is foundational to existing statements
- provide mentorship and coaching that supports teachers as they implement high-quality inclusive teaching practices

Opportunities for district leaders:

- re-evaluate budgets to allow for an increase in teacher training, support, and coaching
- prioritize inclusion and work to reduce bias toward children with disabilities across all initiatives

Opportunities for community partners and policy makers:

- increase (or write to leaders to request) funding for staffing for inclusive settings
- discuss the importance of inclusion with your fellow advocates and leaders
- collaborate with district leaders to develop initiatives for inclusion

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So what **CAN** we do?

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Objectives

2

Participants will identify components of curricula that are tailored to meet the diverse needs of all children and foster an environment that celebrates individual differences and promotes belongingness.

2

Participants will identify components of curricula that are tailored to meet the diverse needs of all children and foster an environment that celebrates individual differences and promotes belongingness.

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Understanding Dignity and Respect to move towards Acceptance and Celebrating Diversity

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A RIGHT TO DIGNITY

Educators and practitioners must respect the inherent dignity and worth of all children



All children should be included and supported to fully participate in their family routines, classrooms, and communities

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UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY

What is a disability?
A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions). (CDC)

What is a developmental delay?
Any of a variety of disabilities in infants and young children indicating that they are significantly behind the norm for development in one or more areas (ex: motor development, socialization, independent functioning, cognitive development, or communication)


What is "at risk" for a disability?
There is a high probability that the child will develop delays based on results from a screening assessment. This term should be carefully used for children who have scored in a certain range on a screening tool to ensure they receive appropriate follow-up testing and supports rather than based broadly on the child's environmental or biological characteristics.

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A PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS DIGNITY

Children with disabilities do not need to be repaired or fixed. Just like all children, they need support to succeed.

All children are entitled to developmentally appropriate materials and exemplary classroom practices that honor each child's strengths and areas of development.



There are no one-size fits all practices for children, and we must work to understand the strengths and needs of each child and family.

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DIGNITY & DISABILITY EXPECTATIONS

It is important to set high expectations for children with disabilities.

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Importance of Expectations

Children thrive when we set high expectations and provide the support needed to meet them.




Children with disabilities, specifically intellectual disabilities, are likely to be perceived as less capable than their peers (Woodcock, 2011).

Expectations influence goals, instruction, and skill acquisition.


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Equitable and Comprehensive Assessments

Considerations for Assessing Children

-  Use multiple forms of assessment (observational, normed, parent/teacher report)
-  Measures should be valid, reliable, and normed on the population being assessed
-  Assessments should be culturally responsive (ex: sensitive to language, dialect, values, cultural norms)

Check your assessment manual for reliability, validity, and usability information



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Strengths-Based Approach

A shift in thinking:
A strengths-based approach focuses on what the child can do rather than what the child cannot do (deficit approach)

A framework for support:
Children grow from their strengths and abilities. When instructors teach from the child's strengths, children are better able to learn and develop.

These are positive, realistic expectations and goals:

1. What the child can do right now.
2. What the child can do with support.
3. What the child will do one day.



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DIGNITY & DISABILITY IDENTITY-FIRST LANGUAGE

Use the words disability and disabled when referring to disabled individuals to reduce stigmatization of disability and promote a positive disability identity.


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IDENTITY-FIRST LANGUAGE

Say:
(Disability) Individual

Examples:

- Autistic person
- Disabled individual
- Deaf person



Avoid:
Euphemisms

Examples:

- Differently Abled
- Handicapable
- Special needs

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WHY

Why the shift to identity-first language?
Language is ever-evolving. Identity-first language acknowledges disability as an identity and promotes acceptance.

Is person-first language bad?
No, some disabled people still prefer person-first language, and most of the community interchangeably uses identity-first and person-first language.

What is wrong with euphemisms (ex: differently-abled)?
Euphemisms were created by non-disabled individuals for disabled people. It reinforces the stigma that disability is something to be ashamed of or covered up.

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WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK

Ask the person their preference of identity or person-first language.

If the person is not available to ask, you can alternate between both.

Seek out and listen to disabled voices.

Disabled people are the authority on what language they identify with.

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WHY WE CARE ABOUT LABELS

Practitioners

Families may express hesitance regarding diagnoses or educational eligibility labels for their children. Awareness of perceived disadvantages and advantages allows you to advocate for the early identification and intervention, reduce stigma, and mitigate negative perceptions.

Families

A diagnosis or educational eligibility may bring up new feelings and concerns for your child. Understanding the advantages of early identification can ease these emotions. Learning ways to advocate can mitigate the potential negative impact labels may have.

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WHAT ARE LABELS?

Diagnostic labels are used by clinicians and practitioners to identify and communicate aspects of a condition to determine support and treatment.

In special education, educational eligibility is the category under which students receive the supports they need to succeed in their environment.

Medical diagnoses are separate from educational eligibility. Students receive educational services if they qualify based on supports needed rather than a diagnosis.

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REDUCING NEGATIVE EFFECTS

INSTEAD OF:	TRY TO:
Generalizing about a group of people based on label	Seek to understand individual strengths and areas of support
Assuming the diagnosis is the reason for not succeeding	Assume every child can fully participate and succeed with correct support
Stigmatizing diagnoses and groups of people	Actively work against personal and societal biases
Dismissing labels as entirely harmful	Use labels as tools to provide services and advocate for groups of people

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RESPECTING INDIVIDUALS

Put the person before the label

Recognize personal biases and actively work to know each child as an individual rather than a diagnosis or educational eligibility category.

Cultivate a welcoming environment

Support children with and without disabilities to build a positive view of disability and eliminate bias and stigma surrounding disability.

Building Identity

Seek to understand and help children form their identity by asking questions, exposing them to a variety of media, and engaging in conversations about identity.

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DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

Talking to People

Talk to people with disabilities just like those who do not have disabilities. Never assume cognitive or physical functioning based on appearance or disability.

Talking about People

People with disabilities should not be talked about as "brave," "heroic," or "inspirational" for completing everyday activities (e.g., going to the store or having a job). Hold people with disabilities to the same expectations as those without disabilities.


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DO NOT:	DO:
Talk down to people	Speak to people at eye level
Use a baby voice, talk louder/slower	Use a regular tone to speak to individuals
Touch someone's mobility device	Consider accessibility when arranging the environment
Assume the individual needs help	Give help if the person asks for it
Remove/control an alternative augmentative communication (AAC) device	Assure a person's AAC is always accessible and charged

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DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

Emphasis on the Person



Respect individual identity

When referring to a person with a disability, use language that reflects the way that person identifies (i.e., person-first or disability-first)

Listen to individual wants and needs

Avoid generalizing about a group of people based on one person's experience

Graciously accept being corrected, even if the mistake was unintentional

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DIGNITY & DISABILITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR COMPLIANCE GOALS

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WHAT IS COMPLIANCE?

Definition
A child's acceptance and execution of an adult-delivered instruction to engage in a specific behavior. Execution is usually required immediately but can also be delayed. (Radley & Dart, 2015)

Compliance as a Goal
Compliance is often identified as a goal for children with disabilities (ex: IEP goal). However, there are many considerations to ensure compliance goals are appropriate and the child learns and maintains self-advocacy skills.



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EXPECTATION GAP

Children with disabilities are often expected to comply with more adult instructions than children without disabilities.

Ex: Child will comply with 80% of adult instructions across 3 days...

80-100%	60-70%
Expected compliance for children with disabilities	Average compliance for children 4-12 years old

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EVALUATING NONCOMPLIANCE

Before programming a compliance goal, consider other factors that may be contributing to noncompliance and motivating adults to implement this goal.

Ask:

1. Is there a **problem with the environment?** (ex: lack of motivation, unreasonable demands, ineffective teaching strategies, unclear expectations)
2. Is the goal to **benefit the learner** or make life easier for adults?
3. Does the noncompliance **significantly inhibit the learner's ability to participate** in their environment?
4. Are the **standards for compliance reasonable?**
5. Is the objective compliance or appropriate behavior that needs to be taught in a **variety of contexts?**
6. Is this goal being chosen as a **cure-all**? (McDonnell, 1993)

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WHEN PROGRAMMING A COMPLIANCE GOAL

1 Measure Efficacy of the Intervention


- Set individualized criteria for intervention inefficacy
- Re-evaluate often
- Assure the compliance intervention is not inadvertently reinforcing noncompliance

2 Teach Self-Advocacy Skills

- How to not comply
- When it is okay to not comply
- When it is dangerous to comply
- When to initiate without adult directions
- How to make choices
- How to independently monitor and regulate their behavior

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THE ABILITY TO SAY "NO"



Saying "no" is an important skill that we want every child to have. When programming for compliance, assure the child has a means for communicating their wants and needs (ex: asking for a break).

Self-reflect to consider how to make the environment more motivating and reinforcing. What supports can you provide to help the child succeed? How can you incorporate their interests into activities?

Incorporating self-advocacy when programming compliance goals teaches children to advocate for themselves and follow instructions.

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DIGNITY & DISABILITY

VALUING CHILDREN'S INTERESTS




Asking children about themselves and incorporating their interests shows respect and fosters positive relationships.

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GETTING TO KNOW CHILDREN

Children with disabilities have interests, likes and dislikes, and values that make them who they are. It is important to find out and support individual interests to develop a positive self-identity.



Asking about individual interests builds rapport, fosters a positive relationship, and allows you to incorporate their interests into activities. When possible, ask children directly or observe them.

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ASK CHILDREN ABOUT THEMSELVES

Ask children questions to get to know them and support a positive self-identity.

ASK: what they feel they are good at

what name they want to be called (ex: nickname) what they like to do

how they want people to refer to their disability (ex: person vs disability first)

what they feel they need more support doing what they want to be when they grow up


what pronouns they use

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INCORPORATE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

Incorporating individual interests into activities increases motivation and shows the child that you value their input.

ASK: what they want their reinforcers to be



what peers they like to work with where they prefer to complete work

what their favorite and least favorite things to learn are how they feel about interventions they are receiving

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DIGNITY & DISABILITY

INCLUSIVE CONVERSATIONS

Having conversations with children about disability at an early age is essential to decreasing biases and creating a welcoming, inclusive environment.

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TALKING ABOUT DISABILITY

Why?
Children learn biases as early as the age of 3 years old (Huckstadt & Schutt, 2014), and we can reduce negative biases and stereotypes by intentionally facilitating and promoting positive dialogue about disability identity. Talking about disabilities in a respectful, factual way normalizes it so that children are able to see children with disabilities as peers, playmates, and friends.

Reinforce the importance of diversity by focusing on people and their strengths.



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HOW?

1 Encourage and answer questions. Children asking questions (ex: "Why does he have that in his ear?") is a great opportunity to teach about disabilities and discuss how everyone needs different supports. Instead of "shushing," engage in conversation about disability.

2 Talk simply and factually. Give facts children can use to understand disability without negative connotations (ex: "He uses the device in his ear to hear").

3 Discuss similarities and differences. Acknowledge that all bodies are different and give reasons behind different supports provided for different children.


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ANSWERING QUESTIONS

What is wrong with him?

Answer questions about disability in a factual way without negative connotations.

Nothing is wrong with him. He uses a tablet to talk because his brain works differently than yours. He uses a tablet to speak, and you use your mouth. Let's go ask him his name!




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ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Answer questions about a person's supports in a simple, factual way.

Why does Jackie get a special chair during circle time?

Jackie has a special chair because it helps her focus and follow along during circle time. Is there something that would help you focus during circle time? Just there are things that help you, sitting in a chair helps Jackie focus. We all need different things to help us learn!



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ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Why are they in that chair? (staring at a person using a wheelchair)

Avoid "shushing" children and use their curiosity as an opportunity to learn and talk about disability.

Shhh! Don't stare! Just keep walking. ❌

They use a wheelchair to move. Many people use wheelchairs because it is the best way for their bodies to move. Do you have any questions? Would you like to go talk to them and introduce yourself? ✅

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DISABILITY AWARENESS & ACCEPTANCE

Show dignity and respect by including individuals with disabilities across contexts and conversations.

- Humanize individuals by asking name, interests, strengths
- Adapt activities so that everyone can meaningfully participate
- Initiate interactions with individuals with disabilities
- Include media with people with disabilities
- Ask how they want people to refer to their disability (ex: person vs. disability first)
- Have open conversations about disability

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More New Ideas That Might Support Inclusion and Acceptance...

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When connecting with children, you need to change.

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It's probably not about the child's power...

94

Demanding a child use a coping skill is bizarre.

95

Have we asked the child? Why or what or how?

96

Do you see the child
or just the behavior?

97

Who is the
behavior
challenging?

98

Children learn new skills
the same way they learn
challenging behaviors.

99

The function of the
behavior is a small part
of the **solution**.

100

If the child isn't
learning, it's on the
system, not them

101

If even one child isn't
thriving the environment
needs to change

102

Complaining ≠ Advocating
Advocating > Complaining

103

Joy > Progress

104

Not every moment
has to be a teaching
opportunity.

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IEP goals are not the only
goals children need to
learn!

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The way we
practice should be
always evolving

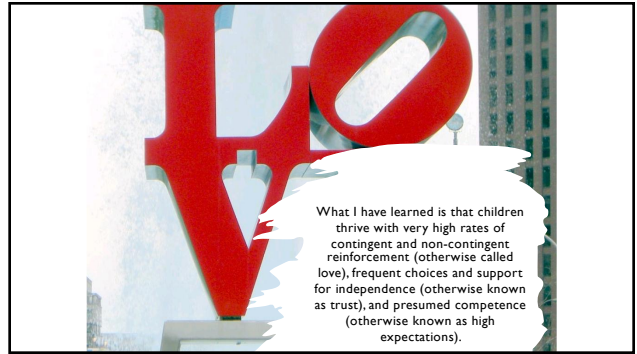
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They are ALL our
children.

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Professional practices are the responsibility of the entire system.

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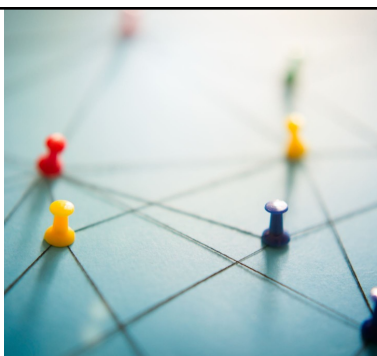


What I have learned is that children thrive with very high rates of contingent and non-contingent reinforcement (otherwise called love), frequent choices and support for independence (otherwise known as trust), and presumed competence (otherwise known as high expectations).

110

Where is your mind right now?


Share.



111

Practice in Humility

Self-awareness	Open-ness to learning
Respect for others	Admission of mistakes
Gratitude	Service orientation



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3


Participants will identify evidence-based strategies and interventions that promote inclusion and address diverse learning needs.

3

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Pick one. Review, Read, Discuss



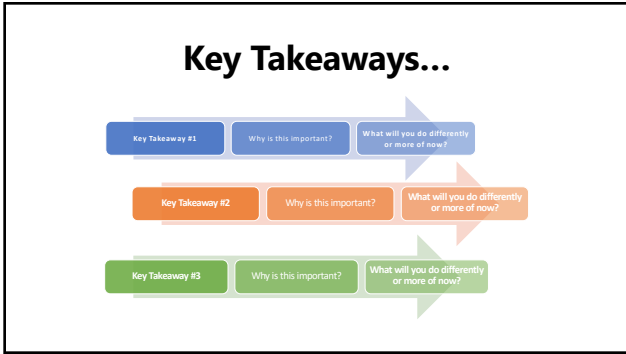
Supporting Language Acquisition and Peer Interaction Through Guided Play in a Multilingual Classroom

Circle Is for Everyone: Using UDL to Promote Inclusion During Circle Times

Teaming to Design Tangible Symbol Communication Systems for Children With Multiple Disabilities

Visual Cues Using Mobile Technology to Support In-Class Transition for All Children

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Become familiar with...

Early Childhood
Technical Assistance Center

National Center for
Pyramid Model
INNOVATIONS

Early Care and Education Environment Indicators and Elements of High-Quality Inclusion

<https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators.asp>

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Pick your top 3 priorities

- INDICATOR E1: Physical Environment
- INDICATOR E2: Children's Autonomy and Child-Centered Approaches
- INDICATOR E3: Family Partnerships
- INDICATOR E4: Social Emotional Learning and Development
- INDICATOR E5: Meaningful Interactions with Peers
- INDICATOR E6: Curriculum
- INDICATOR E7: Instruction
- INDICATOR E8: Supporting Dual Language Learners with Disabilities
- INDICATOR E9: Collaborative Learning
- INDICATOR E10: Assessment
- INDICATOR E11: Anti-bias, Culturally Responsive, Sustaining, and Identity Affirming Practices

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Identify the priority

- Review examples.
- For each, loosely rate yourselves:
 - Fully Implementing
 - Partially Implementing
 - Not Implementing
- For each that you are partially or not, how might you implement?
 - Develop a plan with:
 - A clear goal
 - Specific action steps
 - Timeline
 - Person responsible

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INDICATOR E1: Physical Environment

Providers arrange and adapt the learning environment and materials to allow children with disabilities to fully participate, learn, play, and socialize.

Providers structure the learning environment to:

1. Encourage participation and interaction. Partial
2. Ensure children with wheelchairs and other mobility devices can safely navigate the space. Not
3. Provide children multiple ways to engage with the materials, lessons, educators, and peers. This includes visual, verbal, auditory, and so on. Partial
4. Integrate the range of communication formats (for example, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and languages (including sign language) used by children into all routines, instructional, and social interactions both indoors and outdoors. Full
5. Make materials accessible for children to explore interests and curiosity. Partial
6. Adapt materials so that children with disabilities can manipulate them easily and independently. Not
7. Use learning materials that represent children with disabilities in non-stereotypical ways. Children are shown as racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse, complex, and not defined solely by their disability. Partial

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Action Plan Example

GOAL	Action Step(s)	Timeline	Person(s)
Encourage participation and interaction in all centers.	-Use visual cues at the science and art center -Use individual supports for Joseph and Kieran at the block center.	Start next week and check in after two months	Ms. Erin and Ms. Claire
Arrange physical environment so Joseph can move around everywhere.	-move wheelchair around every corner of the space -observe as he moves around the space (where does he get stuck, need help?) -move furniture to ensure ample space	Start immediately and check in every first of the month	Ms. Erin
Provide children multiple ways to participate in all centers.	-review current centers for accessibility for all 18 children. -add different ways to participate and associated visual supports -Add a section to lesson plan to make sure	Start next week and check in each week	Ms. Claire

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Universal Design

- Multiple Means of Representation:** Providing information in various formats (visual, auditory, tactile).
- Multiple Means of Expression:** Allowing children to demonstrate their knowledge in different ways (speaking, drawing, acting).
- Multiple Means of Engagement:** Offering choices in learning activities to maintain interest and motivation.

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Differentiated Instruction

- Content:** Varying what is taught.
- Process:** Varying how children engage with the content.
- Product:** Varying how children demonstrate what they have learned.

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Effective Instruction

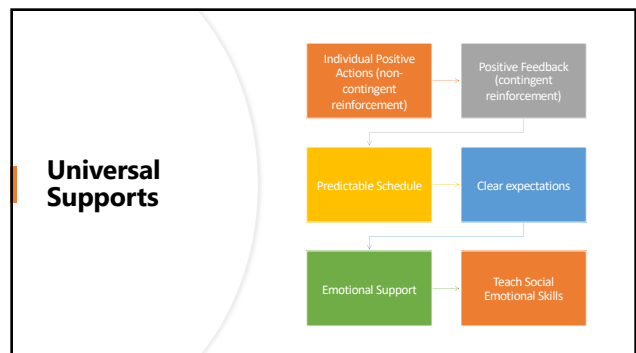
- Address all stages of the learning cycle such as acquisition, fluency, maintenance and generalization for children with disabilities in targeted goal areas.
- Use data-based decision-making processes to understand and adapt instruction
- Collaborate
- Prevent challenging behaviors and address with support
- Teaching is always the CORE

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Peer-Mediated Interventions

- Buddies:** Pairing children to support each other's learning. ALL children can be buddies.
- Cooperative Learning Groups:** Small groups working together on a common task, promoting cooperation and mutual support. For preschool children, must be supported and taught.
- Celebrate Diversity:** All children can contribute.
- Self-Advocacy Skills:** Teach all children self-advocacy skills to help them express their needs and rights including saying they don't want to participate.
- Adapted Materials:** Provide materials in various formats (e.g., braille, large print, audio) to accommodate different types of engagement.
- Leadership Opportunities:** Provide opportunities for all children to take on leadership roles in the classroom.
- What else?**

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Action Plan Share Back

GOAL	Action Step(s)	Timeline	Person(s)

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4

Participants will identify practices that foster respectful interactions, collaboration, and advocacy within early childhood programs.


4

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Respectful Interactions

- **Active Listening:** Listen actively to children's ideas, concerns, and feelings without interrupting or dismissing them.
- **Positive Communication:** Use positive, affirming language when speaking with children and colleagues.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Celebrate the diverse cultural backgrounds of children and their families.
- **Modeling Respect:** Demonstrating respectful behavior in all interactions.



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Group Discussions: Provide opportunities for children to share their thoughts and feelings in a group setting, fostering a sense of community and respect.

Social Problem Solving: Teaching and modeling social problem solving strategies that emphasize empathy and understanding and clear solutions.

Inclusive Language: Using language that is inclusive and non-discriminatory, reflecting a respect for all individuals.

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Collaboration

- **Team Planning:** Regularly scheduled team meetings to plan, discuss, and coordinate activities and interventions.
- **Family Engagement:** Involving families in the planning and decision-making process, recognizing them as integral partners in their child's education.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Collaborating with other professionals, such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and counselors, to provide comprehensive support for children.
- **Shared Goals:** Establishing common goals and objectives that all team members work towards collectively.

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All teachers and staff need strategies, time, and space to support communication of information regarding children's needs, interests, and goals.

All teachers and staff need to meet to plan lessons and curricular activities, make adaptations, determine effective instructional strategies and review data.

All teachers and staff need time and space to engage in informal and ongoing conversations to exchange knowledge and ideas.

All teachers and staff engage in dispositions that demonstrate their willingness to share their role with other team members and accept the responsibilities of other team members.

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Collaboration: Examples

- Joint Activities:** Planning and implementing group art projects or cooperative games.
- Review Family Engagement:** Use multiple types of family communication methods including several that are bi-directional.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** Forming PLCs where educators can share best practices, discuss challenges, and support each other's professional growth.

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Advocacy

- Educating Stakeholders:** Informing parents, community members, and policymakers about inclusion and its benefits including for the community.
- Resource Mobilization:** Seeking out and securing resources, funding, and support.
- Policy Involvement:** Participating in policy development and advocacy efforts at local, state, or national levels.
- Empowering Families:** Providing families with information and tools to advocate for their child's needs and rights effectively.

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- All staff articulate and demonstrate their commitment to and knowledge of the benefits and legal foundations of high-quality inclusion.
- Administrators provide regular and consistent opportunities for personnel to share information about their inclusion experiences.
- All staff and administrators engage and partner with families in activities such as advocacy efforts, public awareness, inclusion forums, and conferences and obtains families' input and feedback throughout the implementation of the action plan.
- Families are included as a regular part of the program improvement and problem-solving processes.
- All staff and administrators intentionally connect families to the Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and other family support programs and resources in their communities.
- All staff and administrators implement systematic data collection and analysis related to family satisfaction with and perceptions of inclusion to inform their efforts.

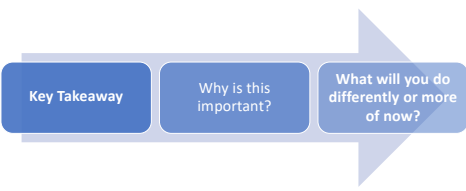
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Advocacy: Examples

- Workshops for Parents:** Offering workshops that educate parents about their rights and the resources available to them.
- Community Partnerships:** Establishing partnerships with local organizations and agencies to provide additional support and resources for families.
- Advocacy Campaigns:** Organizing or participating in advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the needs and rights of young children and their families.

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Key Takeaway...

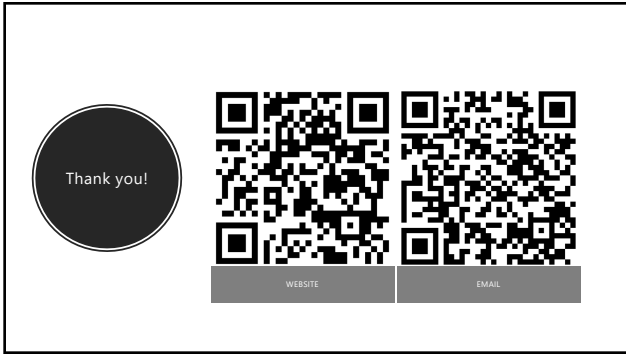


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Next steps...

- Attitudes**
 - Work together to reshape attitudes and beliefs about inclusion and expectations for children
- Implement**
 - Implement policies, budgets, and practices that prioritize access to and participation in high-quality early childhood programs for all children
- System**
 - Create a comprehensive system that sees the whole child and supports all professionals

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