

Using the Joint Position Statement on Early Childhood Inclusion to Build Policies, Professional Development, and Practices that Support High Quality Inclusion

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Joint Position Statement on Early Childhood Inclusion (handout)

- http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion

Related resources: Inclusion position statement landing pad (handout)

- http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion

Recommendations for using the position statement to improve early childhood services

1. Create high expectations for every child to reach his or her full potential

Examples

- Write about the concepts in the Inclusion Position Statement
 - *Impact* theme issue on early childhood inclusion
- Use the access-participation-supports language when observing and describing what you see happening in early childhood settings. Use the same language to identify and target priorities for change.
- Watch *Foundations of Inclusion Birth to Five* (http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion). What ideas does the video give you about creating high expectations for every child?

2. Develop a program philosophy on inclusion

Examples

- Nevada AEYC conference program
- Create and display posters that pair the words of the definition with high quality photos of inclusion to underscore your program's philosophy.
- EIEIO – a guide for parents
- *Pennsylvania Preschool Inclusion: Self-evaluation Tool*

3. Establish a system of services and supports

Examples

- Use research as a foundation
 - Just the Facts, Ma'am: An Inclusion Quiz

4. Revise program and professional standards

Examples

5. Achieve an integrated professional development system

Examples

- Use the position statement as the basis for professional development
 - Center for Inclusive Child Care’s podcast Inclusion: The Foundation of Our Practice (handout)
- New Mexico guiding principles (handout)
- Use the position statement to guide changes across professional development sectors
 - Coursework, practica, and program practices in colleges and universities
 - Priorities for training, technical assistance, and other forms of professional development for current personnel and administrators

6. Influence federal and state accountability systems

Example

- Facilitate integration in state Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
 - New Mexico
 - Delaware
 - Idaho
- Australia: Using the statement to develop their own definition of inclusion and to identify outcomes of high quality inclusion

Just the Facts, Ma'am: An Inclusion Quiz¹

Please indicate whether you think each statement is *true* or *false*.

1. High quality inclusive programs adhere to a single national standard.
True *False*
2. Families of young children with disabilities can find inclusive programs in their community if they look hard enough.
True *False*
3. Inclusion can benefit children with and without disabilities, particularly in the area of social development.
True *False*
4. A variety of factors (policies, resources, beliefs) influence the implementation of inclusion. *True* *False*
5. Partners with specialized knowledge and skill are not an important component of quality inclusive programs.
True *False*
6. Collaboration among parents, teachers, and specialists is a cornerstone of inclusion. *True* *False*
7. The quality of early childhood programs is negatively impacted when they include children with disabilities.
True *False*
8. Most teachers feel comfortable and confident about including young children with disabilities.
True *False*
9. There is no national definition of inclusion. *True* *False*

¹ For the answers, go to National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2009). *Research synthesis points on early childhood inclusion*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author. Available at <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/npdci>

Early Childhood Inclusion

tags: [NAEYC](#), [DEC](#), [NPDCI](#), [inclusion](#)

A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)



Two major early childhood organizations, DEC and NAEYC, created a joint definition and position statement on early childhood inclusion through a process facilitated by the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI). Return here often to discover new resources and examples for using these resources to improve early childhood services.

Position Statement Documents

- **Full Version**

- [pdf](#) | [spanish pdf](#) | [large print pdf](#) | [mp3](#) | [spanish mp3](#)

- **Summary**

- [pdf](#) | [spanish pdf](#) | [large print pdf](#) | [mp3](#) | [spanish mp3](#)

How was it developed?

- [Validation Process](#)

Who's talking about it?

Blogs

- ["Short, Sweet, and Useful"](#) by Camille Catlett
- ["DEC/NAEYC Leaders Share Thoughts on Inclusion"](#) by Jeri Daniels and Sarah Mulligan

Related Resources

- [CONNECT: Foundations of Inclusion Birth to Five](#) - a new video on

A Center For Inclusive Child Care Announcement

The CICC is located at Concordia University St. Paul, MN 651-603-6265

New Podcast Episode Released by The Center for Inclusive Child Care

Inclusion: The Foundation of Our Practice (Part one)

Description: In this podcast, we take a closer look at the DEC and NAEYC Joint Position Statement on Inclusion and how its application can help us promote inclusion within our settings. The important elements of access, participation and supports are basic to the needs of all children and staff and become cornerstones for successful inclusive settings.

Length: 9:46 minutes

Available at <http://www.inclusivechildcare.org/podcast.cfm#10>

A variety of subscription options are available including **iTunes**: you can subscribe, listen, and/or download.

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Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Young Children, Birth through Age Eight, in New Mexico's Early Learning System

Every child in New Mexico has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. Early learning programs that support the full participation of every child build on these strengths by promoting a sense of belonging, supporting positive social relationships, and enabling families and professionals to gain advocacy skills that positively impact the life of every child.

We believe that . . .

- Every child has unique gifts and abilities that are to be celebrated and nurtured
- The early years hold enormous promise for every child to reach his or her full potential
- Every child learns within the context of relationships and through playful interactions within their environment
- Every child and his or her family deserve equitable access to appropriate services and supports that acknowledge their uniqueness and enable them to reach their full potential

Therefore, we are committed to . . .

- Valuing and embracing all children and their families
- Involving families and communities as partners and decision makers
- Suspending biases to build trust and establish collaborative partnerships that benefit children, their families and the professionals who work with them
- Providing choice, flexibility, and continuity of services and supports for families within communities
- Making a variety of services and support available so all children have access to and can participate in opportunities that are both respectful of and responsive to their family experiences, culture, beliefs, abilities, and circumstances
- Advancing advocacy efforts for inclusive practices that build upon unique child, family, and community strengths and are accountable to every child and their family

We will . . .

- Promote every New Mexico citizen's understanding of the importance of high quality inclusive early childhood programs and practices
- Support interactions and relationships that foster self reflection
- Utilize information about the growth, development, and experiences of individual children and families for program and curriculum development and improvement
- Continuously improve services and supports by evaluating current practices and incorporating effective methods, models, and research in our work with children and families
- Promote the establishment of aligned services and supports that build on both the unique assets of each child and acknowledge the strengths of children's and families' heritage, language, and culture
- Ensure that services and supports are provided by people who reflect the diversity of the community, are well educated, and are well compensated
- Establish an integrated, multi-disciplinary system of professional development, training, and technical assistance that supports the design, implementation, and evaluation of practices that are respectful of and responsive to each child and family

The Guiding Principles were developed at the New Mexico Summit on Early Childhood Inclusion on March 30-31, 2010.

Activity: Benefits of Inclusion

A friend with a 3-year old who seems to be developing typically is planning to enroll her daughter in a high quality local program that is fully inclusive. She knows nothing about inclusion and is asking you about the benefits of a quality inclusive program. What will you say?

- What facts would you want to emphasize?
- What research could you highlight?
- What resources (articles, videos, websites) could you share?

Facts:

Research:

- Research Synthesis Points
<http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/NDPCI-ResearchSynthesis-9-2007.pdf/view>

Articles:

- Sedlack, J. (2009, Summer/Fall). How inclusion is benefitting one child without disabilities: Dillon's story. *Impact*, 22(1), 12.
<http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/221/>

Videos

- *Marvin and Jack* (SpecialQuest video)
- *I Wanna Be and More* (SpecialQuest video)
- *I'm Tyler* <http://www.imtyler.org>

Website

- What the Children of Jowonio Know
<http://www.jowonio.org/What%20the%20Children%20of%20Jowonio%20Know.htm>

How Inclusion is Benefitting One Child Without Disabilities: Dillon's Story

by Jennifer Sedlack

In 2006, my husband and I enrolled our son Dillon in Coralwood, an early childhood public school that provides an inclusive education setting for children aged three to six. Dillon is a typically-developing child, and his exposure to children with special needs has had a significant impact on our family. In addition to benefiting from a quality education, Dillon's behavior has shown marked improvement. He is kinder, more compassionate, and does not limit his friendships to children with abilities similar to his.

As a former director of a non-profit serving people with disabilities, I was aware that my life experience was void of interaction with the client base I served. I wanted my son to have experiences that would enable him to understand and accept the differences, as well as the similarities, of people with special needs. Coralwood School has given our family the skills and understanding I was after.

Dillon's classes at Coralwood range from 16 to 18 students; six to eight of the students in each class have special needs. Other than the students with physical disabilities, Dillon is generally unaware of who those six to eight students are. Students are not labeled; in the classroom, the children are peers.

One common misconception in an inclusive classroom setting is that students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) absorb more of the teacher's time to the detriment of students without IEPs. That has not been our experience. Teachers and administrators create an environment that expects all children, regardless of their abilities, to be their best.

In his first year at Coralwood, Dillon made fast friends and had a weekly play date with Michael. What Dillon didn't realize was that these play dates were in fact sessions with specialists who were



working with Michael on various skills. Michael and Dillon both learned appropriate social behavior while improving their communication skills, unaware they were being taught.

Dillon's education at Coralwood is a similar seamless coupling of educating students with IEPs alongside students without IEPs. This past year Kendra, who is blind, was in Dillon's class. Dillon learned how Kendra navigates with her cane, the types of birthday presents appropriate for her, and how she uses a Perkins Braille to write. The Braille-writer fascinated the children and they eagerly asked to use it to write her notes.

When I was invited to read to Dillon's class, he suggested I bring his Halloween book with built-in sounds because he knew Kendra would like it. And while driving to a party for a classmate, Dillon and his friend spent the journey discussing inventions that would allow Kendra to play without injury on the inflatable toys they had heard would be there.

Parents often join the students in the cafeteria during lunch, participate in

classroom reading programs, and generously volunteer for special events. This atmosphere of openness and acceptance is a tone set by our principal. She makes it clear on day one that parents are welcome at the school and are expected to be engaged, and that families with children who have special needs and those with children who are typically developing are embarking on an education partnership that cannot succeed without parental involvement.

Our family's inclusive education experience has been enlightening and life-changing. We now advocate for inclusive education and have signed Dillon up to continue the program at the partnering elementary school in the area. We are grateful to the parents of students with special needs for participating with us in this educational journey, allowing our son and us to expand our understanding and grow from the relationship.

Jennifer Sedlack, her husband Phil, and son Dillon live in Atlanta, Georgia.

Retrieved from the Web site of the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota (<http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/221>). Citation: Catlett, C., Smith, M., Bailey, A. & Gaylord, V. (Eds.). (Summer/Fall 2009). Impact: Feature Issue on Early Childhood Education and Children with Disabilities, 22(1). [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration].