

**Florida Inclusion:
State & Local Strategic Planning**

October 27, 2020

State Level Inclusion Collaboration

DEC NAEYC Definition of Inclusion

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.

The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential.

The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are:

access, participation, and supports.

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FL PDG Strategic Plan, Mission, and Priorities

- **Vision:** Increase quality, coordination, alignment and efficiency of Florida's programs and services to support young children and their families' needs toward readiness and early grade
- **Mission:** Improve child outcomes through coordinated, strategic investments and appropriate accountability.
- **Three Priorities:**
 - 1: Equitable Access to Services for Families
 - 2: Improve Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education
 - 3: Improve Cross-System Collaboration

PDG Strategic Plan, Mission, and Priorities



Services for Preschoolers with Unique Learning Abilities

- Part B 619 services
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)
 - provides diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to districts and families
 - 19 Training Centers and 6 Specialized Multi-disciplinary Centers

Strategic Plan Activity

Develop a strategy for educating ECE partners on inclusive practices, connecting families to services that meet the unique needs of children, and effectively communicating highly sensitive observation data and recommendations with families.

What Inclusion Means

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FLORIDA PDG PRIORTIES

1. Access to Services for Families
2. Improve Quality of Early Childhood Care & Education
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What does inclusion mean to families?

Please respond in the chat

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Pre-K Inclusion State Collaboration Conference

What Comes Next?



Pre-K Inclusion State Collaboration Conference

February 20-21, 2020
Real Time Record

Pre-K Inclusion State Collaboration Conference

February 20-21, 2020

Inclusive Opportunities for Preschoolers

Topic: Sources and Resources to Increase Inclusive Opportunities for Preschoolers

Shared, community partners, and all other community agencies – 24%

Recruiting/retaining high-quality staff and ongoing training – 15%

Other specific timelines, processes, and procedures – 15%

Topic: Sources and Resources to Increase Inclusive Opportunities for Preschoolers

Leaders – 33%

Number of district and community agencies in more inclusive settings – 19%

Special Needs Rate as Incentive, 15%

Transition into community preschools – 15%

Partnering with ELC and other community agencies – 15%

Topic: Sources and Resources to Increase Inclusive Opportunities for Preschoolers

Facilitating meetings. Facilitate brainstorming sessions, School District, ELC, TATS, Early Childhood Assessment, CARD, Head Start, NAMI, etc.

Sharing information on funding and leadership can understand the learning how to appropriate funds across settings – 13%

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Sources and Resources to Increase Inclusive Opportunities for Preschoolers

Alignment of Top Priority Opportunity Areas Across Tracks

- Collaboration: Partnering with district and non-district stakeholders to discover, share and maximize existing resources
- Resource identification:
 - Shared list of resources with acronym indicators
 - Relationship-building: Districts + ELCs, Head Start, Faith-Based organizations, etc.

Collaborating with Families and Early Childhood Agencies for Inclusion

Alignment of Top Priority Opportunity Areas Across Tracks

- Collaborate with other early childhood agencies to:
 - Partner at activities and events (e.g. pre-school resource fair, parent night, meet your teacher, fall fest., donuts with dads, parent liaison)
 - Communicate through regular Pre-K interagency county meetings - learning about what other agencies use and resources available in the community
- Improve accessibility for parents in terms of:
 - Diversify meetings and information sharing times, formats, non-traditional locations
 - Knowing what services/resources are available including plain talk parents should be able to navigate & understand

Professional Development: Preparing Personnel for Inclusion

Alignment of Top Priority Opportunity Areas Across Tracks

- Collaboration across districts and counties for Professional Development & Sharing Resources
- Behavior Training for all personnel
- Training followed by Coaching to increase implementation
- Innovative training opportunities and incentives

Policies and Procedures for Developing High Quality Inclusive Programs for Preschoolers

Alignment of Top Priority Opportunity Areas Across Tracks

- Collaboration in the areas of:
 - Policies and Procedures; Programs; Stakeholders: School board, agencies, ESE, VPK, Head Start, Leadership, Admin, Teachers, Transportation and ELC's
- Funding in the areas of:
 - To aid in classroom ratios; Training and professional development; Programming; Teachers for private schools; Data for inclusion (procurement and analysis) for education of children apart from a self-contained classroom.

1. Partner with stakeholders to discover, share and maximize existing resources
2. Shared list of resources with acronym indicators
3. Cross-sector Relationship-building
4. Partner at activities and events
5. Communicate through Pre-K interagency county meetings
6. Learn about cross-sector resources

7. Improve accessibility for parents
8. Collaborative PD & Sharing Resources
9. Behavior training & coaching for all
10. Incentives
11. Collaborative Policies and Procedures
12. Funding classroom ratios, training & PD
13. Data to drive practices

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- Problem of Practice
- Singular Focus
- **Issues and Assumptions**

- Resources and People
- Team characteristics
- Supports (attitudes, funds, other)

- Concrete Activities
- Add timelines and roles responsible

- Short Term Outcomes (3-9 months)

- Intermediate Outcomes (1-2 years)

- **ULTIMATE OUTCOME VISION**

**Problem of Practice:
Identified Meeting 2-20**

Assumptions:

1. Partner with stakeholders to discover, share and maximize existing resources
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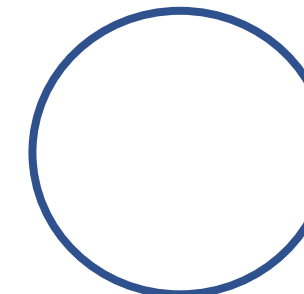
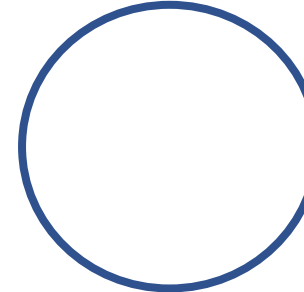
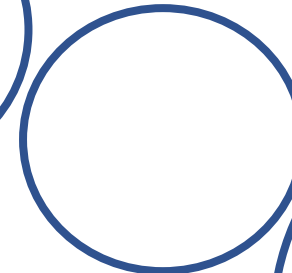
- PDG Grant supporting inclusion
- Cross-sector leadership
- DOE
- FDLERS
- Community Boards
- District commitment

Sources and Resources
Shared list of resources and acronyms

Collaboration
Flyer or info on all programs

Training and PD
Accessible cross sector training, PD and coaching

Policies and Procedures
Coordinated supportive policies and guidance
Braiding funds and programs, placements.



Community Work Plans

Desired Results Video Library
Colorado Department of Education

Win-Win

Early Childhood Inclusion

<https://www.draccess.org/videolibrary> then go to the inclusion tab, it's the first video.

Getting Started

Children don't have to be ready for programs....Programs have to be ready for children.

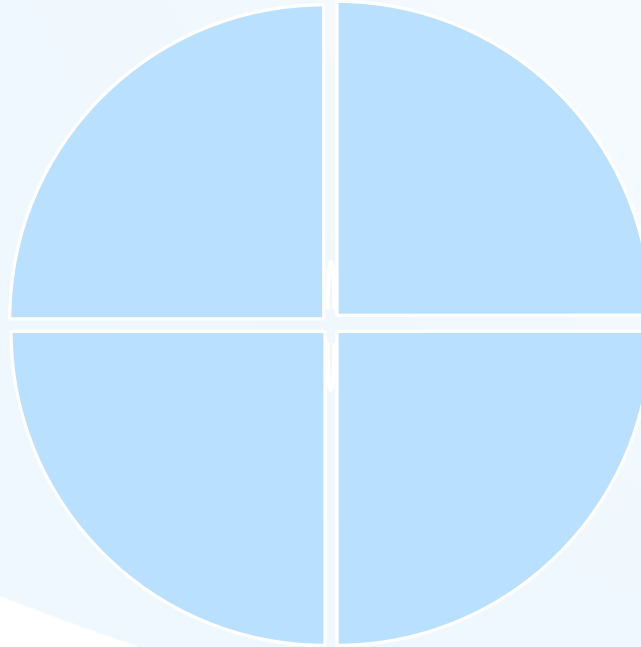


The easiest way to get started is to do everything you can to serve children where they are

Inclusion Model

Included

Just There



Specialized
Instruction &
Supports

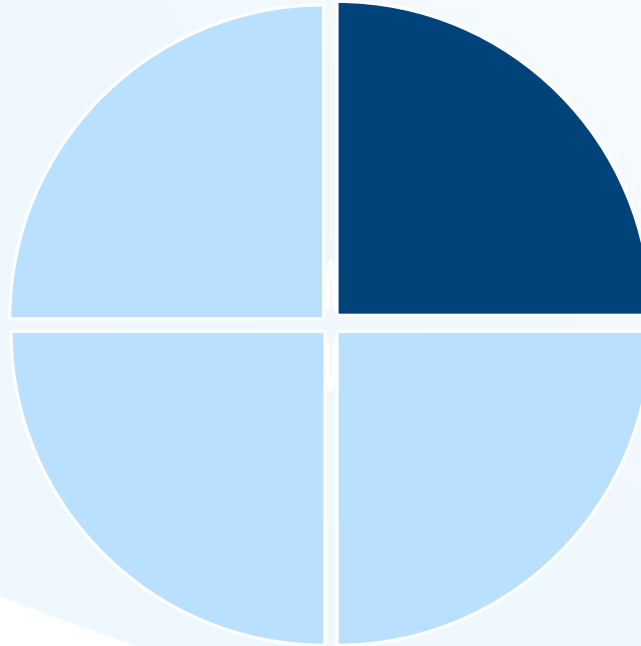
Segregated

Don Bailey

Inclusion Model

Included

Just There



Specialized
Instruction &
Supports

Segregated

Don Bailey

Community Plans

- **Access** – Children have to have programs to go to – it requires planning
 - Do you have itinerant teachers?
 - Are you allowed to serve children in the community?
 - Know how many children to expect throughout the year
- **Participation** - Participation can look different for different children
 - Each child should participate at his/her level
 - It's what families want, children deserve and IDEA requires
- **Support** - An IDEA required consideration
 - Front load IEPs w support
 - Assigned paraprofessionals to children are restrictive

Resources

Brief Fact Sheet of Research on Preschool Inclusion

Brief Summary: Fact Sheet of Research on Preschool Inclusion

Erin E. Barton & Barbara J. Smith

June, 2014

- 1** In 27 years, the practice of providing special education and related services in regular early childhood settings to preschoolers with disabilities has increased only 5.7% and many young children with disabilities continue to be educated in separate settings.^{1,2}
- 2** Inclusion benefits children with and without disabilities.^{3, 4, 5, 6, 7}
- 3** The quality of preschool programs including at least one student with a disability were as good as or better than preschool programs without children with disabilities. However, traditional measures of early childhood program quality might not be sufficient for assessing quality of programs that include children with disabilities.^{8,9}
- 4** Children with disabilities can be effectively educated in inclusive programs using specialized instruction.^{10, 11, 12, 13}
- 5** Parents and teachers influence children's values regarding disabilities.^{14, 15, 16}
- 6** Individualized embedded instruction can be used to teach a variety of skills, including those related to early learning standards, and promote participation in inclusive preschool programs to children with and without disabilities.^{17, 18, 19, 20, 21}
- 7** Families of children with and without disabilities generally have positive views of inclusion.^{22, 23}
- 8** Inclusion is not more expensive than having separate programs for children with disabilities.^{24, 25}
- 9** Successful inclusion requires intentional and effective collaboration and teaming.^{26 *}
- 10** The individual outcomes of preschool inclusion should include access, membership, participation, friendships, and support.^{27 *}
- 11** Children with disabilities do not need to be "ready" to be included. Programs need to be "ready" to support all children.^{27 *}

Note. A sample of empirical citations are provided for each "fact." Thus, this fact sheet does not provide a comprehensive list of the references for each "fact." The citations were intentionally identified to include recent references, representation across disabilities when possible, and studies using rigorous methods.

*These facts are based on principles guiding the field of early childhood special education, recommended practices, and our collective knowledge and experiences.

Page 1

Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion

These four sets of indicators were designed by a group of [national partners](#) to support state leaders, local administrators and front-line personnel in the early care and education system providing programs and services to children, ages birth through five and their families.



State Indicators



Community Indicators



Local Program Indicators

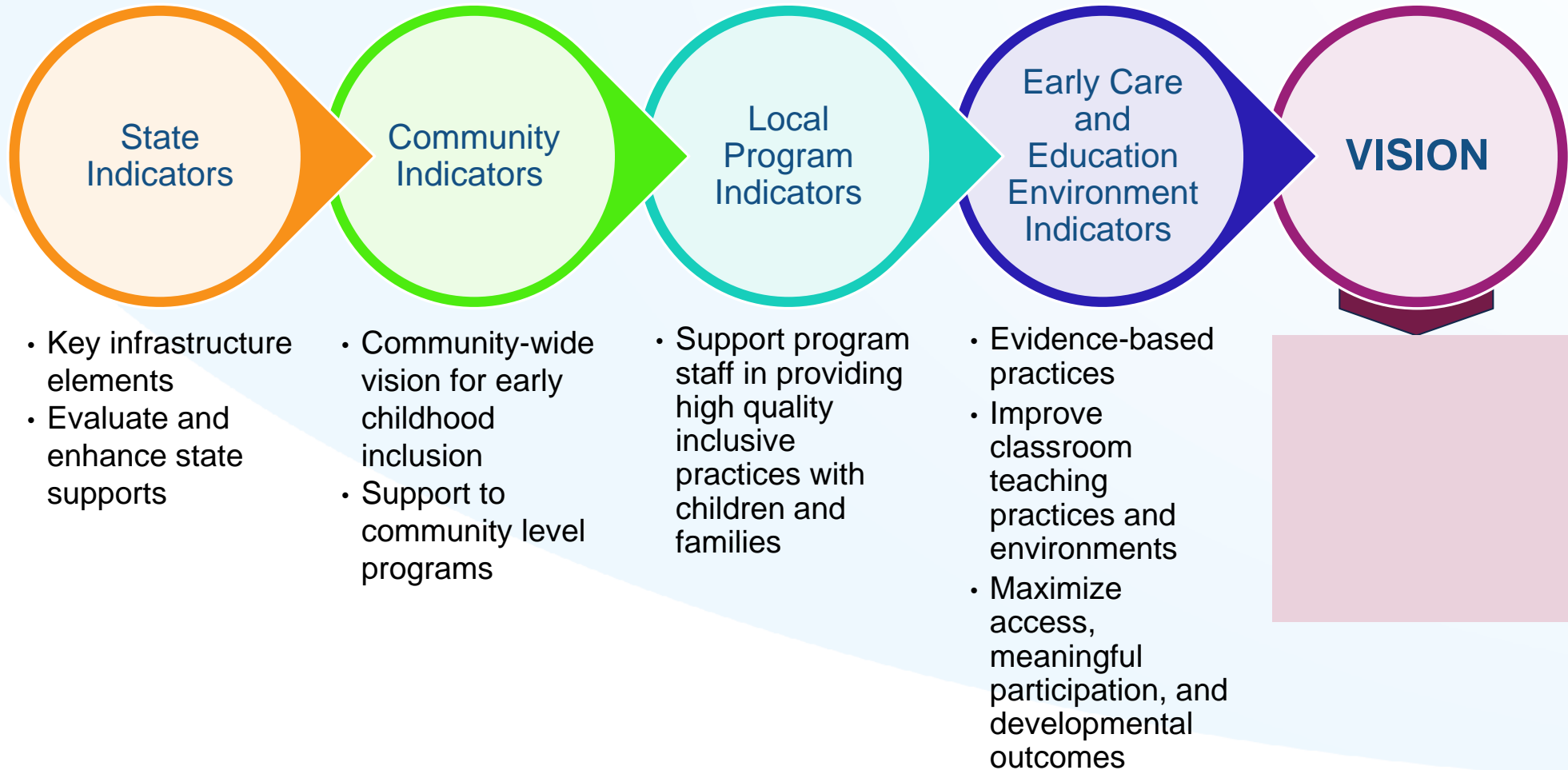


Early Care and Education Environment Indicators



Glossary

GOAL: To Increase Access to High Quality Programs that Include and Actively Support the Participation of Children with Disabilities



“All young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in meeting high expectations.”

~U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education, September 2015
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf>



Plan: Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each preschool aged child with a disability has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed by a group of educators and the child's parent. The team documents the child's strengths and areas of need, develops yearly goals and plans services that will enable the child to reach their goals. The final step in developing the plan is for the team to determine the type of placement where the child will receive their services. The first consideration is discussion of the supplementary aids, and special education and related services the child would need to be successful in a regular early childhood setting.

Settings: Settings might include programs such as Head Start, State Pre-K, preschool, Title I, Kindergarten, or child care. Consideration should be given to an early childhood program the child is attending. If the plan can be delivered in that setting, it would allow the child to remain with his peers and avoid unnecessary transitions. Only when a child's educational needs cannot be met in an early childhood program should other placement options be considered.



Equal Access: Young children with disabilities have equal access to early care and education programs, as detailed in the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If a child is otherwise eligible to attend a public or private program, the child cannot be denied access based on disability and must be considered for enrollment in the same manner as their peers.

Programs and Services: Children with disabilities may attend publicly funded programs such as Head Start, State Pre-K, Title I, or other inclusive program at no cost to families. If a child attends a publicly funded preschool program, the child's placement is funded through that entity. Special education and related services are provided through the school system. In addition, Special education funds may be used to provide supports for the child and teachers, including training for those working with the child. If a child's IEP team decides an inclusive setting is needed, and a public program is not available, the district is responsible for providing the inclusive setting. School districts should work with their community partners to create inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities.

One Page Flyer on Inclusion in Community Programs

Plan
Settings
Equal Access
Programs & Services

Key Principles Underlying the IEP Process

Key Principles Underlying the IEP Process:

Supporting Family Participation, Inclusive Practices and Positive Outcomes for Preschool Children with Disabilities

Developed by the NECTAC Workgroup on Principles and Practices for the IEP Process

May 2012



The overarching **goal** statement is intended to reflect the broad purpose of services provided under Part B, Section 619 of IDEA to support positive outcomes for children with disabilities, ages three through five, and their families. The **principles** are the foundation necessary to support the system of services and supports and are intended to reflect key values for the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

Goal	Preschool special education is to enable young children to be active and successful participants in home, school, and community settings resulting in positive outcomes for children and their families.
Principle 1	Preschoolers learn best through meaningful everyday experiences and interactions within developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate routines, play, and activities in inclusive settings.
Principle 2	All families, with appropriate supports and resources, promote their children's learning and development.
Principle 3	The primary role of preschool special educators and related service providers is to provide and support high quality services in collaboration with families, teachers, and caregivers to promote positive outcomes for children and families.
Principle 4	Throughout the preschool special education process, the child's individual strengths and needs, along with the family's culture, priorities, and preferences, are respected and reflected.
Principle 5	IEP goals based on multiple sources of information, including family concerns and authentic assessment, support and promote access to and participation in the preschool curriculum.
Principle 6	Professionals build partnerships with families and support them as the primary decision makers for their children.
Principle 7	Preschool learning experiences are developmentally appropriate and based on recommended practices.

Background: NECTAC convened a workgroup of diverse stakeholders including researchers, higher education faculty, state policy makers, regional and local program administrators, family representatives, service providers, and technical assistance providers to develop through a consensus process an overarching goal statement and related principles for preschool special education services.

NECTAC Workgroup on Principles and Practices of the IEP Process: Hilary Bonnell, Kimberly Brancato, Linda Brekken, Janet Cornwell, Sandra Erickson, Kate Gallagher, Sherry Halley, Vivian James, Jennifer Kalis, Robin McWilliam, Phyllis Mondak, Cindy Ramagos, Ruth Ann Rasbold, Sandy Smith, Pat Snyder, Judy Swett, Verna Thompson, Carol Trivette, Gaye Tylika, Gwen Van Ark, Lisa Wagley, Pam Winton.
Facilitators: Debbie Cate, Shelley deFosset, Martha Diefendorf, Kathi Gillaspay, Joicey Hurth, Christina Kasprzak, Grace Kelley, Mary Peters, Robin Rooney, Kathy Whaley

Resources: The preschool principles build upon the work and products developed for early intervention services: Agreed Upon Mission and Key Principles for Providing Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments, Workgroup on Principles and Practices in Natural Environments, November 2007. Other resources guiding the work include: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), DEC Recommended Practices, NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice, and Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO).

Citation: NECTAC Workgroup on Principles and Practices for the IEP Process, May 2012. *Key Principles Underlying the IEP Process: Supporting Family Participation, Inclusive Practices and Positive Outcomes for Preschool Children with Disabilities.*

Reaffirming Key Early Childhood Practices During a Pandemic



Partnering with Families



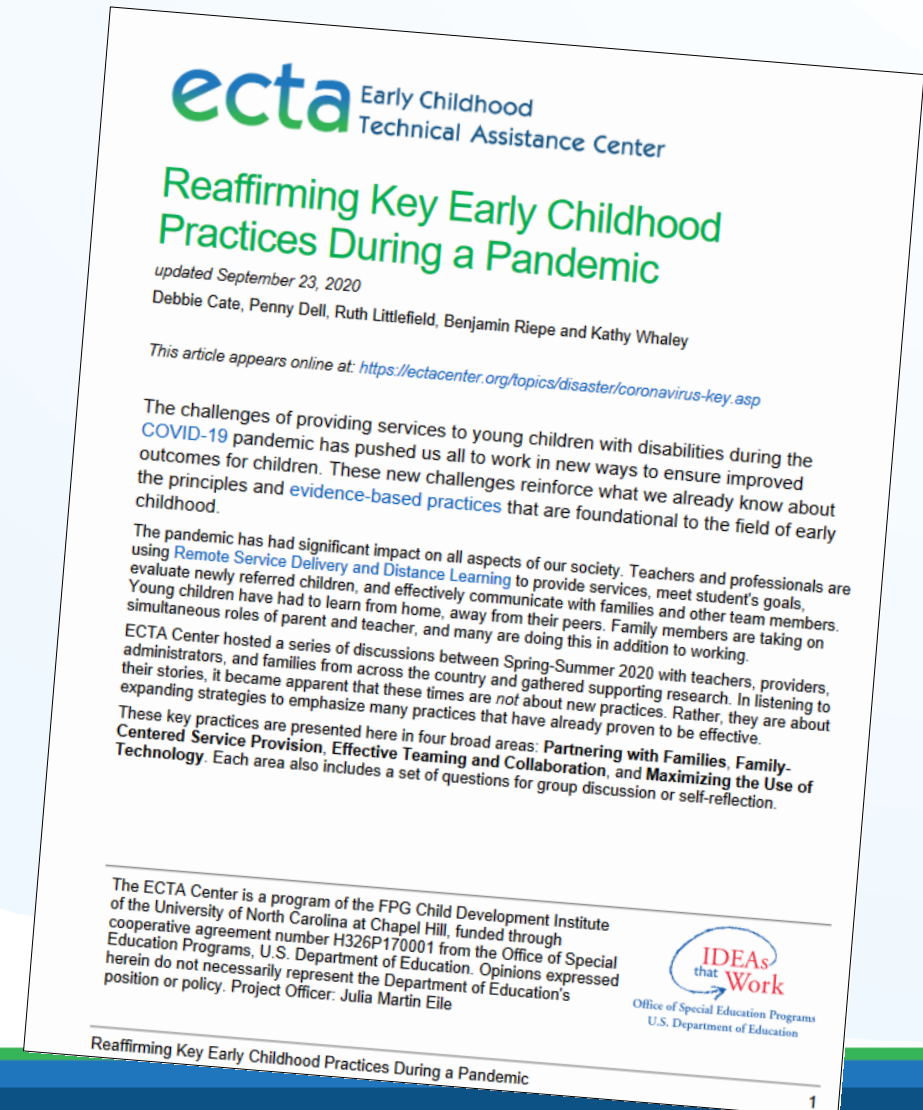
Family Centered Service Provision



Effective Teaming & Collaboration



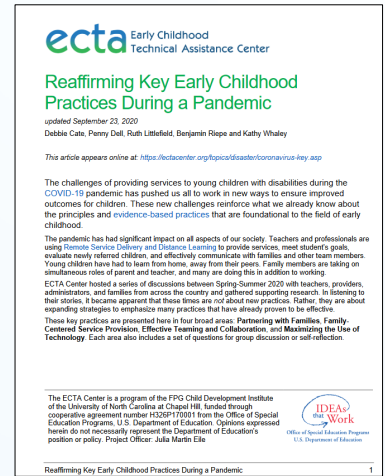
Maximizing the Use of Technology



Reaffirming Key Early Childhood Practices During a Pandemic

Questions on Effective Teaming and Collaboration

1. What have you learned as you had to change how you teamed and collaborated with others during COVID-19?
2. What key policies and practices on effective teaming and collaboration do you believe are working well and should be maintained in future work practices?
3. What do you need to do to make that happen?
4. What advice or key take-aways do you have for others on effective teaming and collaboration?



Magic Wand Intended Outcomes

What is an outcome you hope to see from this work?

Please take a minute and write in the chat
one thing you will do to increase inclusive
opportunities for young children with disabilities.

Thank you!



ecta Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

Find out more at ectacenter.org

- The ECTA Center is a program of the FPG Child Development Institute of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, funded through cooperative agreement number H326P170001 from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the Department of Education's position or policy.

