

Family Engagement Series: Session VI



Hand-in-Hand

ENGAGING FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Our presenters



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Today's objectives

- Explore the rationale for family engagement.
- Understand family perspectives.
- Learn about teacher roles in the process of family engagement.
- Improve abilities to initiate and maintain communication; and to deal with challenging conversations.

Why support Inclusion?



Law: IDEA

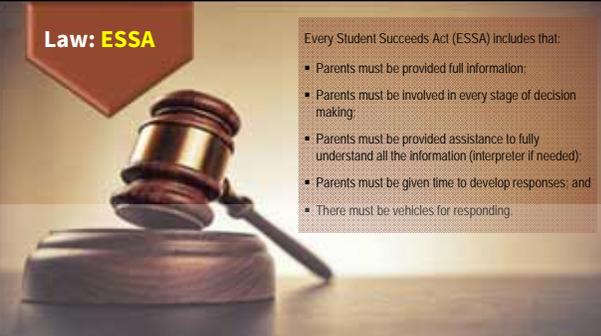


The Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states, "(1) the parents of a child with a disability must be afforded an opportunity to participate in (IEP) meetings with respect to (i) the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child; and (ii) the provision of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) to the child."

Law: ESSA

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes that:

- Parents must be provided full information;
- Parents must be involved in every stage of decision making;
- Parents must be provided assistance to fully understand all the information (interpreter if needed);
- Parents must be given time to develop responses; and
- There must be vehicles for responding.



Research Supports

Research shows that high-quality inclusion can help young children make gains that are not only visible during preschool but also realized much later in life.



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.

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



Improved student outcomes due to consistency and continuity.

Stronger partnerships in which families and schools both have a stake.

Enriched relationships lead to more effective responses to student needs.

Why Involve Families?



How do regulatory bodies support working with families of children with special needs?



AdvancED Standards for Quality Early Learning Schools

Indicator 3.06.012

An established communication system is in place that includes a variety of formal and informal strategies to keep families informed about curriculum, instructional practices, assessment, child caregiving issues, special needs...

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Best Practices

- 1 Generate an inviting and warm school atmosphere.
- 2 Provide parent education and engagement opportunities.
- 3 Connect families with community resources.
- 4 Offer information on developing a supportive home learning setting.
- 5 Promote effective two-way communication with families.

Advanced Standards for Quality Early Learning Schools

Indicator 3.06.021
 The school has developed responsible, supportive and sensitive methods and materials to communicate, help and support staff and families with the responsibility of recognizing children with special needs and to assist in the screening of children for developmental milestones/delays, shared caregiving issues and other information that affects the well-being and development of these children.

Discovery and the Stages Leading to Acceptance

- 01 Grieving Process
- 02 Ostrich Phase
- 03 Special Designation
- 04 Normalization
- 05 Self-Actualization

NAEYC Early Childhood Program Accreditation Standard 7: Families

7.A.10 I-T-P-K
 The program works with families on shared caregiving issues, including routine separations, special needs...

What Families Want

- 01 Empathy
- 02 Impact of particular disability
- 03 Communication
- 04 Support understanding team approach
- 05 Attention and perspective

NAEYC Early Childhood Program Accreditation Standard 7: Families

7.C.06 I-T-P-K
 Program staff use established linkages with other education programs and local elementary schools to help families prepare for and manage their children's transitions between programs, including special education programs...

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NAEYC
Early Childhood
Program
Accreditation
Standard 8:
Community
Relationships

8.A.05 I-T-P-K
Program staff identify and establish relationships with specialized consultants, who can assist all children's and families' full participation in the program. This assistance includes support for children with disabilities, behavioral challenges, or other special needs.

Advanced
Standards for
Quality
Early Learning
Schools

Indicator 4.13.005
Partnerships or other types of professional relationships are made with specialized consultants who may assist children with disabilities or other special needs and their families so that they can participate fully in the school programs.

Teachers' Role



- IFSP/IEP process **01**
- Listen to family **02**
- Understanding **03**
- Resources **04**
- 05** Establish linkages with other agencies
- 06** Partner with family
- 07** Support

Role of the Parent



- Be the Parent
- Know rights
- Learn more
- Build support network
- Participate
- Collaborate



Build Relationships Ask Questions **Start the school year right.** Share Expectations

Hard Conversations

- Introspection and Planning
- Positives and Strengths
- Describe Behaviors
- Allow Processing Time

TIPS



Hard Conversations



 **Be a Good Listener**

 **Ask Parents for Input**

 **Confirm Understanding**

 **Reach Out to All**
(including non-custodial)

Maintain Engagement



- Know Child & Share Details
- Frequent Communication
- Ask Questions & Listen Actively
- Involve Parents
- Parent Support Network
- Resources

Communication Channels



Family's perspective

Acknowledge attachment depth

Families talk to each other

Difficult Situations



- Schedule Time to Talk**
- Validate Concerns**
- Avoid Conversations In Front of Children**



TOGETHER

EVERYONE

ACHIEVES

MORE

Resources

- 1** **Harvard Family Research Project**
Family Engagement and Children with Disabilities
<http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/family-engagement-and-children-with-disabilities-a-resource-guide-for-educators-and-parents>
- 2** **NAEYC**
Partnering with Families of Children
<https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200909/FamiliesOfChildrenWithSpecialNeeds0909.pdf>
- 3** **Center for Parent Information and Resources**
Q and A about IDEA: Parent Participation
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/qa2/#summary>

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Resources

- 4 Special Education Guide**
The Role of the Parent in Early Intervention
<http://www.specialeducationguide.com/early-intervention/the-role-of-the-parent-in-early-intervention/>
- 5 RTI Action Network**
Engaging Families in Early Childhood Education
<http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/family/engagingfamilies>
- 6 Special Education Advisor**
Top 10 Reasons why Parent Involvement is Crucial for IEP Success
<http://www.specialeducationadvisor.com/top-10-reasons-why-parent-involvement-is-crucial-for-iep-success/>

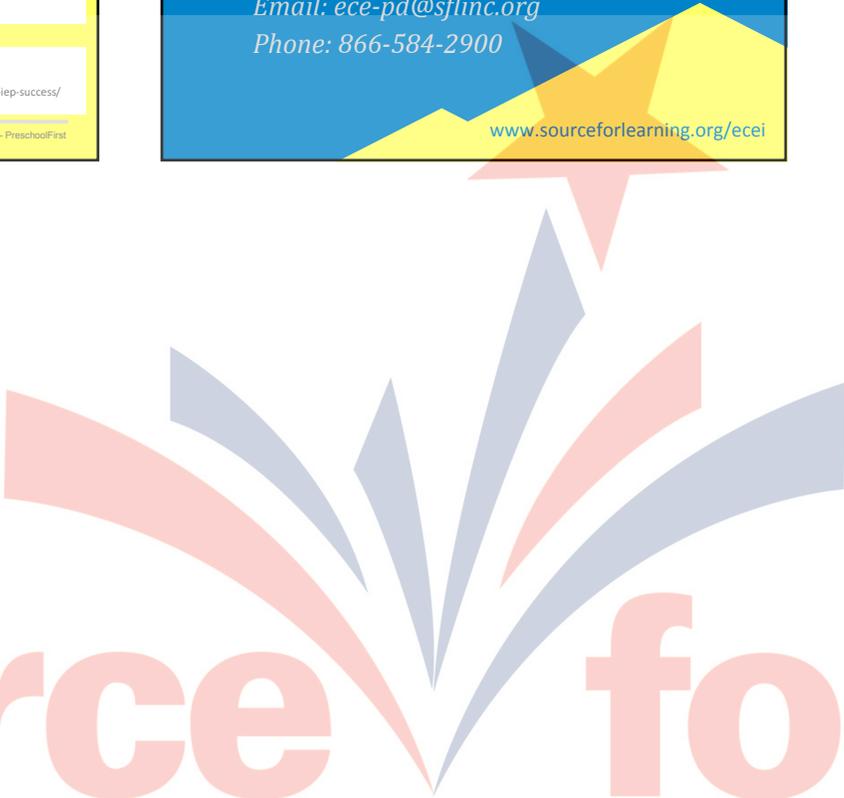
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Questions?

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