



Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion: A Comprehensive Set of Tools

Alissa Rausch, EdD, University of Denver

Phil Strain, PhD, University of Denver

Megan Vinh, PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

October 15, 2019

National Center for
**Pyramid Model
INNOVATIONS**

ChallengingBehavior.org

1

National Early Childhood Inclusion Indicators Initiative

- The initiative is co-led by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center and the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) and includes partners from across the early care and education system. ECTA Center is leading the development of the state and local program leadership indicators and the NCPMI is leading the development of the early care and education environments indicators.



2

Who are the Inclusion Indicators for?

- The inclusion indicators are designed 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.



3

Inclusion Indicators Stakeholders

- US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Child Care State Capacity Building Center (SCBC)
- National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning (NCECDTL)
- National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (NCECQA)
- National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement
- Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes
- Early Childhood Personnel Center
- Early Childhood TA Center
- National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations
- IDEA Infant & Toddler Coordinators Association
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE)
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) 619 Affinity Group
- The Children's Equity Project, Arizona State University
- Nevada Department of Education, Office of Special Education
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Head Start Collaboration Office
- North Carolina Early Learning Network (NC-ELN)
- Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)
- Santa Clara County Office of Education, Inclusion Collaborative
- University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies (CCIDS)
- Vermont State Agency of Education



4

State and Local Program Indicators



STATE INDICATORS OF HIGH QUALITY INCLUSION

July 19, 2019

INDICATOR 1: Cross-Sector Leadership

A state level cross-sector leadership team exists with the ability to implement a shared mission, vision, strategic plan and recommendations to support high-quality inclusion across the early childhood system.

INDICATOR 2: Policy/Guidance

State early care and education agencies have aligned policies and procedures that promote high-quality inclusion.

INDICATOR 3: Family Engagement

State early care and education agencies engage families as essential partners when developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and initiatives that facilitate inclusion.

INDICATOR 4: Accountability, Data Use and Continuous Quality Assurance Systems

State early care and education agencies require and support local programs in collecting and using data to evaluate and improve how well children with disabilities are accessing and participating in inclusive early childhood programs.

For more information, visit <http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion>

The contents of this document were developed under a cooperative agreement #H328P170001 (ECTA Center) and #H328B170003 (NCPMI), from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.
ECTA Center Project Officer: Julie Martin Eile



LOCAL PROGRAM INDICATORS OF HIGH QUALITY INCLUSION

July 19, 2019

INDICATOR 1: Program Inclusion Leadership Team

The program participates in, or establishes, an inclusion leadership team comprised of administrators, program staff, family member(s), and community partners who implement action plans that guide, support, and ensure the availability of high-quality inclusive settings and the implementation of evidence-based inclusion practices.

Indicator 2: Vision

The program develops, implements, and widely shares a written vision statement on the inclusion of children with disabilities that embraces and affirms the unique contributions and identities of all children and families.

Indicator 3: Family Engagement and Partnerships

The program ensures families of children with and without disabilities participate in the development and implementation of policies and initiatives related to inclusion.

Indicator 4: Awareness and Commitment

The program intentionally promotes among staff, families, and the community an awareness about and commitment to inclusion.

For more information, visit <http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion>

The contents of this document were developed under a cooperative agreement #H328P170001 (ECTA Center) and #H328B170003 (NCPMI), from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.
ECTA Center Project Officer: Julie Martin Eile



5

Early Childhood Education Environment (ECEE) Inclusion Indicators

- Indicator 1- Promotion and Acceptance of Individual Differences
- Indicator 2- Family Partnerships
- Indicator 3- Social Emotional Learning and Development
- Indicator 4- Meaningful Interactions with Peers
- Indicator 5- Curriculum
- Indicator 6- Instruction
- Indicator 7- Collaborative Teaming
- Indicator 8- Assessment
- Indicator 9- Culturally Responsive and Disability Affirming Practices



6

INDICATOR 1: PROMOTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Personnel **promote acceptance and appreciation** of children's individual differences and **varying abilities with a focus on children's strengths and contributions** to an enjoyable, engaging and positive learning environment.



7

INDICATOR #2: FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Personnel **develop authentic and culturally responsive relationships with families** that involve daily communication about children's learning and development and **frequent celebrations of the child**. Families are provided with multiple and varied opportunities to provide input into their child's learning and supports.

“The intention of the actor does not matter; how the actions feel to those acted upon does matter.”

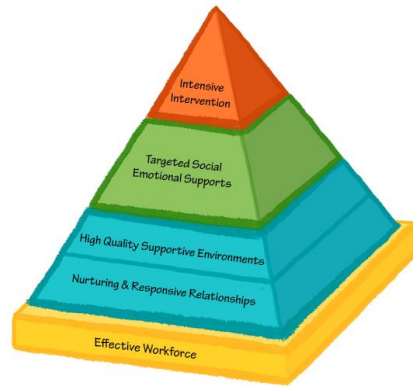
Colker, 1987, p. 67



8

INDICATOR 3: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Personnel **foster** positive and culturally responsive adult-child relationships, establish predictable routines, and intentionally teach a range of social emotional skills. When children engage in challenging behavior, **a team-based approach is used to understand** what the child is communicating, how to adapt the environment, and what social emotional skills to teach and/or strengthen.



9

INDICATOR 4: MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS WITH PEERS

Personnel **use various strategies to promote interactions between children without disabilities and children with disabilities.** This includes organizing the environment and teaching specific social skills to children that **promote peer interactions for all children,** encourage peer interactions with multiple exchanges, and increase the complexity of peer interactions.



10

Red Light, Green Light- CONNECT MODULE



11

INDICATOR 5: CURRICULUM

Personnel **develop, or modify and implement teaching plans** that optimize the amount of time all children spend engaged in activities (small and large group, play, and other routines (e.g., arrival, snack)) and across all domains of learning. The planned activities **consider the specialized equipment, assistive technology (low and high tech), and materials** needed for children with disabilities.



12

INDICATOR 6: INSTRUCTION

Personnel use child-led, culturally responsive, embedded, and other evidence-based instruction during naturally occurring routines (e.g.: small and large group activities, play, adaptive) to provide all children with sufficient opportunities to learn and practice the skills that the team, including the family, has identified as important for the child's learning. Individualized adaptations and instructional supports are provided for children to access learning opportunities.



13

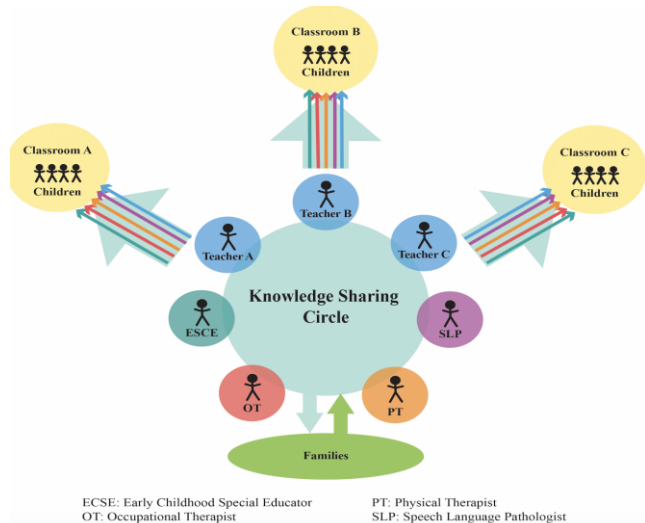
Rolling with Friends-CONNECT MODULE



14

INDICATOR 7: COLLABORATIVE TEAMING

Personnel use communication and collaboration strategies with interdisciplinary team members (e.g., special educator, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist) and families to share information, review data, plan, and implement instructional supports and adaptations for individual children completely within the natural environment.



15

INDICATOR 8: ASSESSMENT

Personnel use ongoing observation and assessment practices that span all areas of development and are culturally responsive, non-biased, and in children's primary language to understand children's learning and development. Data about individual children's learning are monitored and inform the use of adaptations or additional supports for children.



16

INDICATOR 9: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE AND IDENTITY AFFIRMING PRACTICES

Personnel use **culturally responsive and identity affirming practices**, including: (a) **being conscious** of the ways in which race, ethnicity, social class, language, immigration status and disability are constructed and the impact of various intersecting identities (e.g., race and disability) on individual children and families' experiences, (b) **learning about and improving their own awareness of implicit and explicit biases**, (c) **forming relationships** with children and families from various cultures, and (d) **providing learning activities that connect to children's experiences, funds of knowledge, and cultural/familial norms.**



Personnel use various strategies to promote interactions between children without disabilities and children with disabilities. This includes organizing the environment and teaching specific social skills to children that promote peer interactions for all children, encourage peer interactions with multiple exchanges, and increase the complexity of peer interactions.

Indicator	Assessment Items	4 Practice is implemented in an exemplary manner (No action item is necessary)	3 Most (around 75%) Opportunities Captured Across People, Places, and Circumstances	2 Some (around 50%) Opportunities Captured Across People, Places, and Circumstances	1 Few (around 25%) Opportunities Captured Across People, Places, and Circumstances	0 No evidence available	Evidence: Practice directly observed, interview, permanent product, other	Action Item/Priority
	Personnel include peer social interaction goals on the IEP.							
	Personnel teach appropriate peer social skills through group lessons to all children (large and small group) and role-playing opportunities.							
	Personnel teach children a variety and complexity of play skills to support participation and peer interactions across all children in the early care and education environment.							
	Personnel select and arrange activities that promote interactions.							
	Personnel select and arrange materials that promote interactions.							
	Personnel plan for consistent social opportunities within routines (e.g.: table captain, clean-up partner, snack set up, etc.).							
	Personnel model phrases children can use to initiate, respond, and continue interactions.							

