

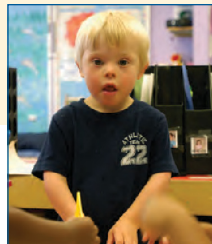
Including Children with Disabilities in Connecticut Early Childhood Programs

Vision

Each young child has the opportunity to benefit from meaningful participation and learning in high-quality inclusive early care and education settings.

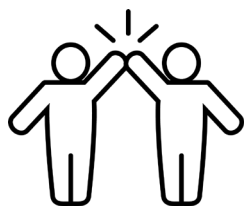
Mission

The Connecticut Early Childhood Strategic Planning Team exists to promote equitable access to high-quality early care and education programs that value and support each child and family's culture, and creates a strong foundation for participation, relationships, and learning in home, school and the community, leading to success for all.



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 childcare. 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.

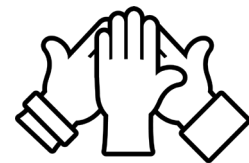
Equal Access

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 & 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.



Inclusion Resources

Connecticut

- [Supporting All Children Using the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners](#)
- [Children Who Attend Childcare Programs and Receive Support Services](#)

Federal

- [U.S. Department of Education Early Learning Website](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U. S. Department of Education Joint Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs \(2015\)](#)
- [US DOE Dear Colleague Letter on Preschool Least Restrictive Environments](#)
- [Response to Intervention RTI and Preschool Services](#)

Technical Assistance Centers

Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center

- [ECTA Inclusion page](#)
- [National Inclusion Webinar \(2016\)](#)
- [Inclusion Finance Toolkit \(2018\)](#)

ECTA & The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)

- [National Early Childhood Inclusion Indicators Initiative](#)
- [NCPMI's Inclusion page](#)

