



Standing United: Preventing Suspension & Expulsion in Early Childhood

For Early Intervention Practitioners



HeartWired Video

<https://youtu.be/ZacejFXeQ4?si=RULjiMY69em2ReND>

Standing United Preventing Suspension & Expulsion in Early Childhood



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heartwired

EI Practitioners' Role in Preventing Preschool Suspension and Expulsion

Early Interventionists are dedicated to supporting children in their natural environments. For many children receiving Early Intervention (EI) services, their childcare or preschool setting is a vital and integral part of their daily routine.

However, childcare providers often face challenges in effectively supporting children with delays or developmental needs due to factors such as limited training opportunities or insufficient staff support. While national, state, and local systems continue to work toward fostering more developmentally appropriate programs for all children, we, as EI practitioners, have an essential role to play.

By collaborating with families and childcare teams, we can provide the guidance and resources needed to address these challenges and promote better outcomes for young children.

Maximize the Coaching Partnership:

- Take the opportunity to connect with the administration team, classroom teachers, or childcare providers when discussing progress, updates, and strategies. This fosters a collaborative team approach to supporting the child.
- Provide centers with opportunities for professional development where appropriate. Leverage your system's developmental specialists to offer short training or "lunch and learn" sessions to better equip childcare staff in working with young children.

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Utilize Your Peers

Make use of teaming or mentoring opportunities with fellow providers. These moments can offer valuable perspectives and developmental considerations for provider visits.

El Practitioners as Advocates

As Early Intervention (EI) Practitioners, serve as both a representative and advocate for families during communications with child care centers. By participating in meetings at the family's request, EI Practitioners can help strengthen the relationships between families, school staff, and early childhood providers.

With the shared goal of the child's success, team meetings can focus on discussing strategies and support. Key questions to consider include:

- What is going well with Sarah during her day?
- How does Sarah learn best in the classroom?
- How does Sarah learn best at home?
- What times or situations are most challenging for Sarah at home and school?
- What might be contributing to these challenging times?
- What strategies have been tried at home or school? Were they successful or less effective, and how consistent have these methods been?
- What new approaches can we explore at home, school, or with practitioners?
- How can my role—whether as family, school staff, or EI Practitioner—best support the team in this situation?

Support with Resources

There may be times where a family will need to explore different child care options. The following are specific programs or tools to aid families in the search for the most appropriate programs for their children:

Child Care Resources and Referral (also known in some areas as Child Care Assistance and Referral)

This organization provides resources related to accessing and finding a variety of child care programs. Representatives from each regionally-run program can assist families with contact information for different providers that match specifications of what a family may be looking for. This can include licensed home-care providers as well as providers who may be established in assisting children with special needs. You can start with the national Child Care Aware site to begin your search - <https://www.childcareaware.org/about/child-care-resource-referral/>

Easterseals

The local chapter serves the Washington DC, Virginia, and Maryland areas. They offer several child development center programs for children under the age of 5 where their mission is to provide a fully inclusive setting. <https://www.easterseals.com/DCMDVA/programs-and-services/childrens-services/child-development-centers.html>

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The Arc

The Arc “promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community...”The ARC provides advocacy consulting as well as their own child care and learning centers in some of the local chapter areas. You can find more information on your regional program here - <https://thearc.org/>

The Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5) system is Virginia’s framework for assessing and improving the quality of early childhood education programs. It evaluates programs based on teacher-child interactions and curriculum quality, using tools like the CLASS system. VQB5 also offers ongoing feedback, support for educators, and public access to quality profiles to help families make informed decisions. <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/early-childhood-care-education/quality-measurement-and-improvement-vqb5>

