



**Partnerships for Inclusion:  
Ensuring Access to High Quality  
Evaluations and Services**

Series on High Quality Inclusion  
Webinar #1

 NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning

 ECTA  
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**Partnership for Inclusion**

- Webinar series will focus on building high quality inclusion through collaboration

**ACCESS  
PARTICIPATION  
SUPPORTS**

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**Learning Outcomes**

1. Understand federal screening, referral, evaluation, and eligibility policies that ensure children with suspected delays or disabilities are referred for evaluation and services.
2. Understand what Response to Intervention (RTI) is and its relationship to screening, referral, and evaluation.
3. Understand the Head Start policy that requires that at least 10% of enrollees are children with disabilities identified under IDEA.
4. Understand each sector's role in ensuring that young children with disabilities receive the evaluations, services, and supports they need.
5. Learn about resources associated with screening, referral, evaluation, and inclusive services.

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## Introductions



Presenter: Sangeeta Parikshak  
Office of Head Start



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## Setting the Context

- Early identification and provision of services to children with disabilities does improve outcomes
- Fully inclusive options do work for children across disability groups and levels of severity
- It “takes a village” to ensure that young children with disabilities have high quality inclusive options

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## Federal Policy Statement

### Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs

[www.ed.gov/early-learning](http://www.ed.gov/early-learning)  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd)

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### Referral to Part C or Part B of IDEA

- If a parent, physician, or early childhood provider has concerns about a child's development, the child should be referred to Part C or Part B of IDEA as soon as possible.
  - An infant and toddler, birth through 2 years, should be referred to the local early intervention service provider
  - A child ages 3 through 5, should be referred to their local elementary school or local educational agency (LEA)



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### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Early Intervention
  - Part C of the IDEA provides grants to States to implement a comprehensive, coordinated, statewide system that provides early intervention services to children with disabilities or at risk for disabilities from birth through age 2 and their families
  - Administered by the Lead Agency in the State



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### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Preschool Special Education
  - Part B, Section 619 of the IDEA provides grants to States to provide special education and related services in the least restrictive environment to children with disabilities ages 3 through 5
  - Administered by the State Educational Agency



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### Public Awareness & Child Find

- **Public Awareness:** Each State is required to have an ongoing effort to inform families, referral sources, and the general public about early intervention and preschool special education services.
- **Child Find:** Each State must identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities in the State who need early intervention, preschool special education and related services. To do so, States conduct child find activities.



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### Screening

- Screening includes activities to identify children who may need further evaluation in order to determine a developmental delay or disability
  - Under IDEA Part C, States have the option to adopt screening procedures.
  - Under Part B, screening may be conducted as part of child find activities.



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### Parental Consent

- **Under IDEA, Part C or Part B, Section 619 programs must obtain parental consent for:**
  - Screening procedures that are used to determine whether a child is suspected of having a disability
  - All evaluations and assessment of a child
  - Early intervention and preschool special education services



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### Part C – Evaluation and Assessment

- Each child under the age of 3 who is referred for evaluation should receive, within 45 days of receiving parental consent, –
  - A timely comprehensive evaluation
  - A multidisciplinary assessment of the unique strengths and needs of the infant or toddler and identified services to meet those needs
  - A family directed assessment



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### Part B –Evaluation

- Each child ages 3 through 5 who is referred for evaluation should receive, within 60 days (or within State-established timelines) of receiving parental consent, an evaluation that –
  - Assess the child needs in all areas related to suspected disability
  - Is used to determine if the child is a “child with a disability” as define by IDEA 2004
  - Gathers information that will help determine child’s educational needs
  - Can guide decision making about an appropriate educational program for the child



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### Evaluation and Assessment

- Must use a variety of approaches and variety of sources to get an adequate picture of a child’s strengths and needs:
  - Approaches: Observations, interviews, standardized assessments, etc.
  - Sources: Parents, early childhood providers, specialists, etc.



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### Head Start and Early Head Start

- A minimum of 10% enrollment of children with disabilities is required program-wide since 1972.
- In 2015, cumulative enrollment was 1,099,078 and 12.3% of enrollees were children with disabilities (133,136).
- Required hearing, vision and developmental screenings.



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### Head Start Program Performance Standards

#### **Strong, Targeted Services for Children with Disabilities**

- Ensure that programs include all children including those with an IEP and IFSP.
- Providing supports for children with significant delays who are not eligible for IDEA
- Transition services to support children with disabilities moving to Kindergarten
- Coordinated approach to serving children with disabilities and their families



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### Head Start Program Performance Standards

#### **Additional Services for Children with Disabilities**

- Provide individual services and supports to the maximum extent possible to children awaiting determination of IDEA eligibility
- Parent engagement



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### Head Start and LEA Partnerships

- Receiving services in a timely manner
- Partnership between the HS/EHS agency and the Local Education Agency (LEA)
- Variation across LEAs
- Implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI)



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### ED & HHS Polices

- Have increased Referrals
- Have strengthened community relationships
- Have begun to implement high quality inclusive practices
  
- Issues with Head Start referrals to Part B preschool programs because some are told to delay referral until teacher has tried RTI approach.



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### Response to Intervention (RTI)

- **Framework of providing high-quality teaching through a multi-tier system of supports for all children**
  - A continuum of evidence-based and systemic practices to quickly respond to a child's needs
  - Programs implement a core curriculum and layered on top are tiered instructional strategies or interventions to help children who need more intensive support
  - Type and intensity of support is matched to a child's needs
  - Ongoing assessment and continuous progress monitoring are used to gather data to inform instruction and guide decisions
- Collaborative problem-solving process



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### RTI Misconceptions

- Children must go through an RTI process before being referred to special education
  - **FACT: IDEA does not require or encourage an LEA or preschool program to use an RTI approach prior to a referral for evaluation or as part of determining eligibility for IDEA services**



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### RTI Guidance Letters

- **FACT: An RTI process cannot be used to delay or deny an evaluation for early preschool special education under IDEA**
- **FACT: Once an LEA receives a referral from a preschool program, the LEA must initiate the evaluation process**
- June 2, 2010:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-2/brekken060210rti2q2010.pdf>
- April 29, 2016:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltr/oseprt preschoolmemo4-29-16.pdf>



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### Eligibility for IDEA Services

- A team of qualified providers and parents review the results of the evaluation. Together they decide if a child is eligible for services.
  - For Part C of IDEA: Eligibility criteria for each State is different and can change. The latest criteria for IDEA Part C eligibility is at [http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/earlyid/partc\\_elig\\_table.pdf](http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/earlyid/partc_elig_table.pdf)
  - For Part B of IDEA: The child must meet IDEA's definition of a child with a disability (has one of the disabilities listed in the law).



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### Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

- Assessment of child and family needs
- Child and family goals
- Services and strategies for meeting goals
- Settings for which the services are provided with a preference for natural environments (home, child care, Early Head Start)



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### Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Assessment of child needs
- Child centered goals
- Services and strategies for meeting goals
- The placement or setting where services will be provided



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### Least Restrictive Environment

- IDEA presumes that the first placement option considered for each child with a disability is the regular classroom the child would attend if he or she did not have a disability, with appropriate supplementary aids and services
- LEAs may provide special education services in a variety of settings, including their local public preschool program or other community-based settings, such as Head Start or child care programs
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcitrs/reschoollre22912.pdf>



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### Head Start Challenges

- EHS/Child Care Partnerships
- Meeting the 10% enrollment requirement
  - Relationships between HS/LEAs
  - Delays in obtaining evaluations to determine if a child has a disability
- Obtaining IFSPs and IEPs for eligible children within a program year
- Children who have delays but don't qualify for services under IDEA



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### Head Start Success Stories

- Stories range from working with kids with delays in speech or motor development to helping children with multiple disabilities.
- 3 generation program – helps children, parents as well as grandparents
- The better the relationships and collaboration, the better the chance of delivery of high quality comprehensive services
- **We want to hear from you!**



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### Contacts

- Part C Coordinators:  
<http://ectacenter.org/contact/ptccoord.asp>
- Part C Programs:  
<http://ectacenter.org/contact/contacturl.asp?gc=101>
- Part B, Section 619 Coordinators:  
<http://ectacenter.org/contact/619coord.asp>
- Part B, Section 619 Programs:  
<http://ectacenter.org/contact/contacturl.asp?gc=102>
- Parent Training and Information Centers:  
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/>



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## Thank You!

Please stay tuned for the following webinars in this series on **High Quality Inclusion**:

➤ **Participation** – January 2017

➤ **Support** – April 2017



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We want to partner to build a culture of inclusion

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<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching>  
[www.ectacenter.org](http://www.ectacenter.org)



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