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## Read About It

### Successful Inclusion: What Makes It Work?

*Teachers in inclusive classrooms teach all children, including those with special needs, and they adapt the curriculum and environment appropriately. Several things make inclusive classrooms successful, including positive attitudes about inclusion and access to itinerant, or visiting specialists such as special education teachers or therapists. It's also important to have time for planning, curricula that promotes child interaction with activity-based teaching, communication among team members, and consistent parent involvement.*

Are you doing all you can to make inclusion work better in your program? In this article from *Exceptional Children*, **Putting Inclusion into Practice: Perspectives of Teachers and Parents**, you'll learn what administrators, teachers, and parents can do to ensure that important elements are present and strong. These sections are useful starting points: Successful Inclusion, and Implications for Practice. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and Sage Publications have allowed free access to this article through June 30, 2015.

## Take a Look



### I See and I Understand

Many itinerant special education teachers recommend using visual pictures to show children what the expectations are in their classrooms. It's often difficult to know where to find the right photos. You could take photos of your classroom activities and transitions.

You can also use the **Classroom Visuals & Supports** page in the National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) portal on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC). To support children in building friendships, download the Building Social Skills or

Friendship Kit illustrations.

## Try It Out!



### Three Great Ideas

This month we spoke with Dr. Laurie Dinnebeil from the University of Toledo. We asked for her three favorite tips to help Head Start teachers and itinerant teachers work together to support the inclusion of children with disabilities. Here's what she said:

1. **Use time wisely.** Arrange to meet, plan, and work with itinerant teachers during a regular visit. Ask to sit down and problem-solve together, rather than having them spend all their time working with the child. Learn from each other to help the child make the most progress between visits.
2. **Collaborate.** Identify the learning goals that the child will work on during specific classroom routines or activities. Share strategies and concerns about what is working well and where you need support.

3. **Spread learning opportunities over time.** Children learn better (and retain more) when learning opportunities happen throughout the day, not grouped together in a long session. Between itinerant teaching visits, plan chances to keep working on the child's IEP goals every day. Ask for help with scheduling if needed.

## Improve Your Practice

### **Check out a 15-minute In-service Suite from the NCQTL: Curriculum Modifications: Activity Simplification**

Even with thoughtful lesson plans and well-structured classrooms, some children still struggle to participate or reach their potential. When teachers modify activities and materials based on individual needs, they ensure that children are not bound by a single way of participating. Modifications to the curriculum, such as simplifying the activity, can help some children progress. This **in-service suite** shows how to simplify a complicated task by breaking it into smaller parts or reducing the number of steps. Check out the **Tips for Teachers** for ideas on how to simplify activities for individual children.

## Families Too!

### **Making the Transition to Preschool**

Early Intervention (EI) is a system of services that helps babies and toddlers who have developmental delays or disabilities. The **Overview of Early Intervention** page on the **Center for Parent Information and Resources** website offers answers to many questions and concerns. There's a lot of information, so a good place to start for parents of toddlers is the **Transition to Preschool** page. If your child needs continued support after age 3, this page explains the transition process to a preschool program from EI services or a birth to 3 program.

## Special Events

The next **Disabilities Dialogue** is Friday, April 17, 1–2 p.m. EDT. This monthly webinar series for Head Start disabilities coordinators is hosted by NCQTL staff. Expert guest speakers share information that supports the work of providing services to children with disabilities and their families. Email [ncqtl@uw.edu](mailto:ncqtl@uw.edu) to learn more.

The **12<sup>th</sup> Annual National Training Institute on Effective Practices** takes place in St. Petersburg, FL, at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club, April 21–24.

The **2015 National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute** takes place in Chapel Hill, NC, at the Friday Center, May 12–14.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children's conference, **National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development**, takes place in New Orleans, LA, June 7–10.

## We Want to Hear from You!

The Head Start Disabilities Services Newsletter is produced monthly by NCQTL. Email Kristin Ainslie at [ncqtl@uw.edu](mailto:ncqtl@uw.edu) to submit questions or suggestions for future newsletter topics.

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Select this link to view previous **Head Start Disabilities Services Newsletters** on the ECLKC.

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