



Early Childhood Disability Services, Relevant Laws, and Systems

How Families and Professionals Can Advocate for Access and Inclusion

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Relevant Early Childhood Disability Laws

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

- Early Intervention (0-3): Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP); services delivered in natural environments for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays - <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/ei-overview/>
- Preschool special education (3-21): Individualized Education Program (IEP); Free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for young children with disabilities (13 eligibility categories) - <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/qa1/>

- **Section 504**

- Nondiscrimination based on disability by recipients of federal financial assistance (includes child care, schools, hospitals)

Relevant Early Childhood Disability Laws

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** nondiscrimination based on disability to enable access to “public accommodations;” includes child care, etc. - <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/ada/>
- **Head Start:** 10% of Head Start enrollees should be children with disabilities; children with disabilities can fill these slots regardless of their family's income level, which waives the typical low-income requirements for up to this 10% threshold - <https://headstart.gov/about-us/article/head-start-faqs>
- **Child Care and Development Block Grant:** 2014 amendments strengthened commitment to inclusion of children with disabilities; funds Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies as well as child care subsidies - www.childcareaware.org/our-issues/health-nutrition/inclusivechildcare/

Relevant Early Childhood Disability Laws

- **Title V of the Social Security Act** (Maternal and Child Health Block Grant); federal-state match
 - 30% of block grant funds must be used to support children with special healthcare needs (which includes but is broader than disabilities)
 - Most states have a Title V Director and a Children with Special Healthcare Needs (CSHCN) Director
 - Core outcomes for CYSHCN: early and continuous screening to identify all needs; easy to use community-based services; adequate public and private insurance to pay for needed care; medical home to coordinate needed care; transition to adult systems of care; family engagement at all levels of care (individual, program, and systemic)

Information on Core Outcomes

- **Early and continuous screening: Home visiting**
(<https://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs-impact/maternal-infant-early-childhood-home-visiting-miechv-program>); Help Me Grow (supporting child development) National Center (<https://helpmegrownational.org/>); Learn the Signs. Act Early. (<https://www.cdc.gov/act-early/index.html>)
- **Easy-to-use community services:** child care centers; Pyramid Model (www.challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/overview/basics/); schools; etc.
- **Adequate public and private healthcare financing:** Medicaid/SCHIP (<https://www.kff.org/medicaid/5-key-facts-about-children-with-special-health-care-needs-and-medicaid/>); Affordable Care Act (<https://www.childrenshospitals.org/content/public-policy/talking-point/key-provisions-of-the-affordable-care-act-for-children>); FQHCs (<https://www.fqhc.org/what-is-an-fqhc>)

Information on Core Outcomes

- **Medical home to coordinate all needed care**
(<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/national-center-for-a-system-of-services-for-children-and-youth-with-special-health-care-needs/understanding-the-medical-home-model-for-your-childtipsheet/>)
- **Effective transition to adult systems of care** (for youth/young adults)
(<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/5/e20182587/38577/Supporting-the-Health-Care-Transition-From>)
- **Family engagement at all levels** (www.familyvoices.org)

Family Support/Engagement Organizations

- Family Voices (www.familyvoices.org) and FELSC (<https://familyvoices.org/felsc/>)
- Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F) (www.familyvoices.org/states)
- National Federation of Families (for Children's Mental Health) (www.ffcmh.org/our-affiliates)
- National Head Start Association (www.nhsa.org/our-work/families)
- Parent to Parent USA (www.p2pusa.org/)
- Parent Centers (www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/)
- SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (home to the National Parent TA Center and partner with Family Voices in Family Engagement and Leadership in Systems of Care National TA Center) (www.spanadvocacy.org)

Early Childhood Ambassadors

- Learn the Signs. Act Early. Ambassadors: <https://www.cdc.gov/act-early/about/ambassadors.html>
- DEC Recommended Practices (aRPy) Ambassadors: https://ectacenter.org/decrp/arpy_ambassadors.asp
- Early Childhood Family Data Leaders: <https://dasycenter.org/about/family-data-leaders/>
- STEMIE Family Ambassadors: <https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/news-items/become-a-stemie-family-ambassador/> (new initiative)

Early Childhood OSEP TA&D Centers

- See Center for Parent Information and Resources Early Childhood TA Center webpage at www.parentcenterhub.org/five-earlychildhood-centers-to-contact/ or go to:
 - Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center: <https://ectacenter.org>
 - Early Childhood Personnel Center: <https://ecpcta.org/>
 - DaSy Center (Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data System): <https://dasycenter.org>
 - National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations: www.challengingbehavior.org
 - LEAD IDEA Center: <https://lead-idea.org>
 - STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education Center (STEMIE): <https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/>
- See Supporting Positive Outcomes for Young Children with Disabilities and their Families: The Impact of OSEP-Funded Centers (resource)

Developmental Disabilities Act Entities

- Councils on Developmental Disabilities – National Association of State Councils on Developmental Disabilities <https://nacdd.org/>
- Protection and Advocacy Agencies/Disability Rights Centers – National Disability Rights Network <https://www.ndrn.org/>
- University Centers of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities – Association of University Centers on Disabilities <https://www.aucd.org/about-ucedds> and LEND Programs <https://www.aucd.org/urc/lend2>

Other Early Childhood Disability Resources

- Council for Exceptional Children Division of Early Childhood: Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educator Standards
<https://www.dec-sped.org/ei-ecse-standards>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children: Resources
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources>; Position Statements (including on Inclusion) <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements>
- US Department of Education and US Department of Health and Human Services: Policy Statement on Family Engagement
<https://www.ed.gov/media/document/policy-statement-family-engagementpdf-89342.pdf>

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