CONNECT Modules:
Springboard for Improving Inclusion Services in Iredell County
Are early childhood inclusive classrooms the “norm” in your community?
Do you and community partners know about each other’s services for children with disabilities and health risks?
Are the needs of families, intervention professionals and child care providers recognized and supported by each other?
Supporting the individual learning needs of all children through inclusive practices
Rationale for Serving Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Settings

• Economic benefits
• Research support
• Laws
• Policies and position statements
Economic Foundation
(as described by Nobel prize winning economist)

Investment return in early education for high needs children is 7-10% per annum...a better return than the stock market.

“The logic is clear ... invest early to remediate disparities and shape the future; or pay later to fix missed opportunities.”

(Heckman, 2011)
Research Synthesis Points on Quality Inclusive Practices

In April 2009, two national organizations working on behalf of young children—the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)—completed two years of historic and collaborative work with the release of a joint position statement on Inclusion. This document provides brief descriptions and supporting references for the evidence-based and promising practices that support early childhood inclusion. These practices are organized into three major sections corresponding to the defining features of high-quality early childhood inclusion as described in the joint position statement:

Access—removing physical barriers, providing a wide range of activities and environments, and making necessary adaptations to create optimal development and learning for individual children;

Participation—using a range of instructions and intervention approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child; and

Supports—creating an infrastructure of systems-level supports for implementing high-quality inclusion.

Citations for each practice include best available research in the form of research reviews or syntheses or, when a summary of the research does not exist, the most recent and relevant individual studies evaluating specific practices. It should be noted that this document does not include an exhaustive list of existing research studies on every practice, nor do all promising practices have a supporting body of rigorous research evidence. This document may be used in a variety of contexts, including professional development, policy development, planning, advocacy, and grant writing.

TROJANIC/DEC, Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, DEC-NAEYC Development Institute.
American with Disabilities Act (1990) – ensures people with disabilities have access to all entities (banks, restaurants, child care), and ensures reasonable accommodations to allow everyone to participate in the services and opportunities offered.
Legal Foundation

IDEA – Rights of Children

- Free, appropriate education to meet individual needs in environments in which the children are educated along their peers without disabilities to the maximum extent possible

- IEP/IFSP (individualized plan) developed by team that includes parents and appropriate professionals
IDEA – Rights of Families

- Review of and access to educational records
- Informed consent before a child is evaluated or placed
- Due process hearing
- Confidentiality
Audio 1.1: Interview with Rud Turnbull

A teacher of young children with disabilities asks Rud Turnbull, one of the nation's leading disability policy experts, about her rights related to supplementary aids and services (embedded interventions) (running time: 2 min. 05 sec).
Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC

Today an ever-increasing number of infants and young children with and without disabilities play, develop, and learn together in a variety of places—homes, early childhood programs, neighborhoods, and other community-based settings. The notion that young children with disabilities and their families are full members of the community reflects societal values about promoting opportunities for development and learning and a sense of belonging for every child. It also reflects a reaction against previous educational practices of separating and isolating children with disabilities. Over time, these values and societal views regarding children birth to 8 with disabilities and their families have come to be known as early childhood inclusion. The most far-reaching effect of federal legislation on inclusion enacted over the past three decades has been to fundamentally change the way in which early childhood services ideally can be organized and delivered. However, because inclusion takes many different forms and implementation is influenced by a wide variety of factors, questions persist about the precise meaning of inclusion and its implications for policy, practice, and potential outcomes for children and families.

The lack of a shared national definition has contributed to misunderstandings about inclusion. DEC and NAEYC recognize that having a common understanding of what inclusion means is fundamentally important for determining what types of practices and supports are necessary to achieve high-quality inclusion. This DEC/NAEYC joint position statement offers a definition of early childhood inclusion. The definition was designed not as a litmus test for determining whether a program can be considered inclusive, but rather, as a blueprint for identifying the key components of high-quality inclusive programs. In addition, this document offers recommendations for how the position statement should be used by families, practitioners, administrators, policy makers, and others to improve early childhood services.
Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.

The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include:

- a sense of belonging and membership,
- positive social relationships and friendships,
- development and learning to reach their full potential.

Three Defining Features of Inclusion

ACCESS  PARTICIPATION  SUPPORTS

Access – means providing a wide range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development.
Participation – means using a range of instructional approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child.
**Supports** – refer to broader aspects of the system:
- incentives for inclusion,
- collaboration with families
- collaboration with professionals
- professional development
Helping Learners Move from Policies to PRACTICE?
What are two things you think should happen in your community to improve inclusion services?
Current “frameworks”

• Evidence based/evidence informed
Current “frameworks”

- Evidence based/evidence informed
- Family engagement
Current “frameworks”

- Evidence based/evidence informed
- Family engagement
- Community of practice
Partnership staff

• Quality Support Services:
  – Jennifer Griffith, Director of QSS
  – Missy Jablonski, QSS Specialist
  – Christina Faust, QSS Specialist
Partnership staff

Quality Support Services:
– Jennifer Griffith, Director of QSS
– Missy Jablonski, QSS Specialist
– Christina Foust, QSS Specialist

• Child Care Health Consultant:
  – Pam Sailors, CCHC
Child Care Solutions

• Paula Cline, Director of CCSOL
• Lisa Pullis, Professional Development Coordinator
• Shaina Pearce, Referral Specialist
Child Care Solutions

• Paula Cline, Director of CCSOL
• Lisa Pullis, Professional Development Coordinator
• Shaina Pearce, Referral Specialist
• Alicia Shell, Region 9 Infant/Toddler Specialist
• Rhonda Hamby, Region 9 HSB Specialist
• Linda Curtis, Region 9 School-Age Specialist
School Readiness

• Pearl Dowell – Director of School Readiness
• Joyce Capps – NCPK Education Specialist
• Kim Mitcham – NCPK Education Specialist
School Readiness

- Pearl Dowell – Director of School Readiness
- Joyce Capps – NCPK Education Specialist
- Kim Mitcham – NCPK Education Specialist

Early Learning & Family Engagement Resource Ctr
- Glenda Lambert – ELFERC Coordinator
- Viviana Dorantes – ELFERC Specialist
Parents as Teachers

• Sylvia Plaza Garcia – Parent Educator
• Marnie Reber – Parent Educator
• Stephanie Clark – Parent Educator
The CONNECT Team

Pam Winton
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University of Kentucky

Dale Epstein
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Cici Sidor
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Patti Singleton
University of Kentucky

Dawn Ellis,
Project Officer
Context: Increased Focus on Individualizing for Each and Every Child
Context: Focus on High Quality, Standards-Based TA
Context: Child Care Professionals are Expected to Use Evidence-Based Practice
Context: TA Practitioners are Expected to Incorporate EBP into their Work
Context: Increased Attention to TA Quality & Impact

- Effective technical assistance
- Increase in teachers’ knowledge and use of evidence-based practice
- Improved child and family outcomes
Evidence-Based Practice is......

A decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family & professional wisdom & values

identified specific research-based practices that have been validated through a rigorous review process. Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005

Buysse & Wesley, 2006; Buysse, Wesley, Snyder, & Winton, 2006
Two Components of Evidence-Based Technical Assistance

The TA **content** focuses on specific research-based teaching and intervening practices.

The TA **delivery process** focuses on effective methods for building child care professionals’ knowledge and application of evidence-based practices.
Innovation: An Approach for Organizing Content to Incorporate EBP into TA

5 Step Learning Cycle - Process for Making Evidence-Based Practice Decisions
CONNECT Modules: Free practice-focused approach

Research-Based Practices
Available Modules

Module 1: Embedded Interventions
Module 2: Transition
Module 3: Communication for Collaboration
Module 4: Family-Professional Partnerships
Module 5: Assistive Technology Interventions
Module 6: Dialogic Reading
Module 7: Tiered Instruction (Social emotional development & Academic learning)
Module 1: Embedded Interventions
Foundations of Inclusion Birth–Five

http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect
The 5-Step Learning Cycle

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

5 Step Learning Cycle - Process for Making Evidence-Based Practice Decisions
Step 1: Dilemma

Teacher’s Perspective (Jackie)

Family’s Perspective (Christine)

Step 1: Dilemma  >  Step 2: Question  >  Step 3: Evidence  >  Step 4: Decision  >  Step 5: Evaluation

CONNECT
Step 2: Question

For children who have developmental delays, are embedded interventions effective in promoting learning in the areas of communication and social development?
Step 3: Evidence

- Research
- Policies
- Experience-based knowledge

Definition/
Demonstration of Practice

Evidence

Teaching Component
Research Evidence on Embedded Interventions

Source: CONNECT Module 1
Policies Related to Embedded Interventions

Source: CONNECT Module 1
Jon learned best from his peers and the providers were often the guiding tools. He loved to watch his peers and to do as they did. Early on it was his peers that taught him how to use the monkey bars in the playground – something his therapist had not been able to do.

—Lourdes Rivera-Putz
Step 3: Evidence

- Research
- Policies
- Experience-based knowledge

Definition/Demonstration of Practice

Evidence

Teaching Component
Definition of the Practice

Embedded interventions are specially designed practices that are used to promote children’s engagement, learning, and independence in everyday activities, routines, and transitions in the classroom, home, and community.
Examples of Embedded Interventions (Handouts 1.1 and 1.2)

Handout 1.1

Examples of Environmental Modifications

Handout 1.2

Examples of Peer Support

Source: CONNECT Module 1
Demonstrations of Practice – Peer Support

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation
Demonstrations of Practice – Combination of Strategies
Step 4: Decision and Implementation

Plan

Step 1: Dilemma
Step 2: Question
Step 3: Evidence
Step 4: Decision
Step 5: Evaluation

Unique Perspectives & Contexts of the Dilemma

Evidence
- Research
- Policies
- Experience-based knowledge

Integrate

Decision

- Plan for implementation
- Identify, review and select strategies
## Implementation Plan

### Child Activity Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Schedule</th>
<th>Embedded Interventions Addressing Goal #1</th>
<th>Embedded Interventions Addressing Goal #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival/Free Choice Play</td>
<td>Speech therapist engages peers to sing with gestures familiar songs with Luke (e.g., &quot;Eye of the Tiger&quot;); Spider, Twinkle, Twinkle, etc. (PS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large group (e.g., circle or story time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Play</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Small groups (e.g., activity centers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Teacher encourages Luke's use of his sign language board to request more food and to communicate when he is finished. (EM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Step 5: Evaluation

Determine if the intervention was implemented?

Determine if the intervention was effective?

Summarize and use assessment results to determine if the goal(s) are met.
# Observation Form

**Child:** Luke  
**Date:**

## Goal
Communication - Luke will use any means to communicate across a range of communication functions (requesting objects, actions and information, commenting, getting attention, acknowledging)

## Measurable Objectives
1. Luke will initiate interaction with familiar adults for requests and showing (commenting) using sounds, gestures and actions and his SpringBoard at least 3 times in each of 5 daily routines.
2. Luke will consistently acknowledge initiations by others with any communicative means (7 of ten times when his attention to the speaker is already established).
3. Luke will use his SpringBoard to engage in 3 conversational reciprocal turns (at least 3 times in each of 5 daily routines).
4. Luke will link 2 words through gesture, sign and SpringBoard to request and comment (at least 5 times in each of 5 daily routines).
5. Luke will use any communicative means to comment (3 times in each of 5 daily routines).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>1 initiate</th>
<th>2 acknowledge</th>
<th>3 reciprocate</th>
<th>4 2 words</th>
<th>5 comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mealtime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Play</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Notes
Today I observed and tallied during Breakfast and Circle Time. Luke was in his usual good mood.

- Luke is still getting used to the classroom environment and the new adults and struggles to initiate.
- Luke will generally acknowledge adult interaction but rarely with a peer.
- Luke did use two reciprocal turns during breakfast several times.
- Luke was able to request milk on his device "I want more milk please."
- Luke struggled to remain engaged in Circle Time today. I will observe another day.
Next Steps

• Notebook of Iredell Service Providers
Next Steps

• Notebook of Iredell Service Providers

• Workshop for directors on transitioning children into their centers with special emphasis on the process when a child or family has a special need
Next Steps

• Notebook of Iredell Service Providers
• Workshop for directors on transitioning children into their centers with special emphasis on the process when a child or family has a special need
• ICPYC TA includes components of successful transitioning/ welcoming new children
Next Steps

• CONNECT information = “tool kit” for TA in assisting child care providers to have children be successful in their classroom environments
Next Steps

• CONNECT information = “tool kit” for TA in assisting child care providers to have children be successful in their classroom environment

• CONNECT forms as templates for situations as communication between parents, teachers and therapists
Next Steps

• Workshop for child care providers about Parent Rights and laws
Next Steps

• Workshop for child care providers about Parent Rights and laws

• Workshop on communications – listening and having “difficult” conversations
Next Steps

• Workshop for child care providers about Parent Rights and laws
• Workshop on communications – listening and having “difficult” conversations
• Workshop series featuring different service providers
Next Steps

- Workshop for child care providers about Parent Rights and laws
- Workshop on communications – listening and having “difficult” conversations
- Workshop series featuring different service providers
- Workshop for child care providers explaining IEPs and IFSPs
Next Steps

• “I have this child....” workshop
Next Steps

• “I have this child....” workshop

• Showcase of service providers (for child care center directors & staff, community partners)
Next Steps

• “I have this child....” workshop
• Showcase of service providers (for child care center directors & staff, community partners)

• Engage community partners to plan, implement and evaluate “next steps”...