

**Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in
Early Childhood Programs:
*A Review of the Federal Policy Statement***
Reflection Guide

Section 1: Overview

This section begins by reviewing what inclusion is, why it is important and what it means to you and the children and families you serve. When you are finished with section 1 you will have an understanding of the research and laws that support inclusion. You will also be able to recognize the importance of including children with varying abilities in early childhood programs.

General Resources:

- [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#)
- [Full Policy Statement](#)
- [Executive Summary](#)
- [DEC Recommended Practices](#)

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Resources:

- Determining LRE Placements for Preschool Children with Disabilities Reference Points and Discussion Prompts: <http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/determining-lre-placements.pdf>
- Understanding Least Restrictive Environments online training module: <http://www.eclre.org/good-to-know/understanding-lre.aspx>

My notes on inclusion and LRE:



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Reflection Activity - Preparing Your Response on Inclusion

Reflect on what you know about inclusion. Recognize that your personal views from your own educational experiences as a learner and/or teacher impact your beliefs. Use the following prompts to help you script out a response that you could give if one of your peers, a practitioner, a parent, or another key stakeholder asked you why you believe in inclusion.

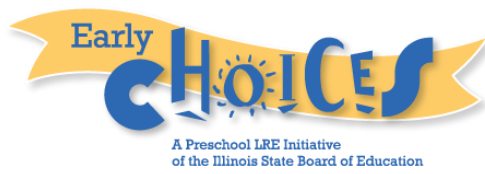
1. What do you believe to be the benefits of including all children with varying abilities in early childhood programs?
2. How can this educational experience shape young children for classroom activities and other lessons in life for years to come?

Use the space provided below to document your reflection. Consider sharing this reflection with a supervisor or peer if you'd like to reflect further. When you are ready, please return to the presentation to document one thing you learned from this overview on inclusion.

My Response:

Section 1 Final Reflection:

One thing I learned from this section is...



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Section 2: Overcoming Challenges

This section will review some of the reported challenges with inclusion and strategies to overcome them. When you are finished with section 2 you will be able to identify some strategies you'd like to implement as you work to overcome challenges with inclusive high quality early childhood practices.

Reflection Activity – What Challenges Have You Identified?

Identify some challenges to inclusion you have encountered and how you have overcome them or ideas you have to overcome them. Use the space provided below document your reflection. Consider sharing this reflection with a supervisor or peer if you'd like to reflect further. When you are ready, please return to the presentation.

My Response:

Challenges Reported in the Federal Policy Statement pertain to the following:

- ✓ Attitudes and Beliefs
- ✓ Interpretation of IDEA and Perceived Barriers
- ✓ Lack of staffing, training and expertise of the early childhood workforce
- ✓ Lack of comprehensive services
- ✓ Limited time and commitment to build partnerships



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Reflection Activity – Strategies I Might Consider

Keep this handy as you proceed through the presentation and learn about strategies to overcome challenges with inclusion. Use the space provided below document any strategies, tools and/or resources you think you might like to try as it pertains to the challenges identified in the Federal Policy Statement. Please note the resources included below.

Attitude & Beliefs:

Resources to overcome this challenge include

- [Team Members Assist One Another to Grow and Learn](#)
- [What's My Attitude?](#)

Interpretation of IDEA and Perceived Barriers:

Lack of staffing, training and expertise of the early childhood workforce:

Lack of comprehensive services:

Limited time and commitment to build partnerships:



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Reflection Activity: Rate yourself!

Reflect for a moment on each of these core knowledge components and rate your knowledge and skill level for each of them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being best. Then reflect on what your strengths are and what you would like to improve upon.

Child Development	1	2	3	4	5
Early Childhood Pedagogy	1	2	3	4	5
Individualizing Instruction	1	2	3	4	5
Managing Challenging Behavior	1	2	3	4	5
Promoting Social-Emotional Development	1	2	3	4	5
Scaffolding Learning	1	2	3	4	5

Self-Reflection:

Building Partnerships & Coordinating Efforts

Take a moment to reflect on the ways you work to build partnerships and coordinate efforts with families, team members and other programs. Use the following questions to help you consider the things you do or would like to do with regard to partnerships.

1. Are there things you'd like to try that will enhance your ability to build partnerships? If so, how do you find time to make this a priority?

2. In what ways do you learn about a child and family's involvement in other programs and services? How do you communicate with these other programs and services to support a more comprehensive approach for the child and family?

Section 2 Final Reflection:

Reflect on the challenges you identified at the beginning of this section. Make note of any strategies you learned or plan to use to help overcome them. Remember to connect with a peer or supervisor if you feel you need additional support.



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Section 3: Building a Nationwide Culture of Inclusion

This section will review current and future initiatives that are being implemented to help build a nationwide culture of inclusion.

State and Local Initiatives Supporting Inclusion

Take a few minutes now to reflect on what you know about the state and local initiatives happening to help ensure children and families have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs. Now consider your role and what you do to support these initiatives.

State Initiatives I am aware of include:

Local initiatives I am aware of include:

I contribute to a nationwide culture of inclusion in the following ways:

How will you support a nationwide culture of inclusion?

Use the space provided to document the things that you are already doing, the things you would like to know more about and the things that you would like to try as you develop and further your skills. This could include questions you have for an administrator or supervisor as you seek more information and/or support. Or perhaps this includes activities and/or initiatives you want to be more involved in moving forward. Then, set a date to complete them by and check in with a peer or supervisor as needed.

Things I am already doing include:

Things I would like to learn more about include:

Things I would like to try include:

Questions I have include:

Date I would like to try something new by:

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Closing Summary

This closing summary will provide a brief recap of each of the sections in this module, which reviewed the Federal Policy Statement on Inclusion.

Reflection Activity: Rate yourself!					
<p>Reflect for a moment on how confident you are with your knowledge and skills as it pertains to the learning objectives set out here on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being best. Then reflect on your strengths, identify ways you might be able to support others, and/or connect with a peer or supervisor who can help you in the areas you feel you need additional support.</p>					
1. Understand the research and laws that support inclusion	1	2	3	4	5
2. Recognize the importance of including children	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explain what inclusion is and why it is important	1	2	3	4	5
4. Identify & implement strategies to overcome challenges	1	2	3	4	5
5. Identify and foster strategies within your program	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Reflection:					

Resource Guide Reflection

Please download a copy of the Resource Guide which can be found on the Early CHOICES website via the following link: <http://www.ecdre.org/good-to-know/inclusion-policy-statement-module.aspx>. Then use the space provided below to identify one resource you would like to further explore as it may support you in your practice.

This could include, but not be limited to the following activities:

- ✓ Reading an article or position statement and reflecting on your practices
- ✓ Sharing an article or resource from this list with your supervisor, peers, and/or families
- ✓ Becoming a member of a professional organization at the state or national level (such as IDEC, DEC, CEC)
- ✓ Connecting with other members of your professional association by perhaps joining a special interest group (SIG) such as the DEC Inclusion SIG
- ✓ Watching a video
- ✓ Reflecting on a practice guide or performance checklist

One resource or activity I plan to engage in after reviewing the resource guide is...

Date I plan to complete this by:

Person who will help me follow through with this goal is:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this module. Please remember to share your feedback with us via the following survey link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/InclusionPolicyStatementModule>