



THE PRESCHOOL NETWORK IS
FUNDED BY THE NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT, SPECIAL
EDUCATION BUREAU

Preschool Network NETWORK NEWS

<http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/psn>



Volume 4

MARCH 2005

Issue 2

In This Issue:

Feature Article:	
Inclusion: Part One.....	1
Harriet's Corner.....	2, 3
Book Review.....	3
Classroom Activity.....	3
Professional Development Opportunities.....	4

INCLUSION: PART ONE

By Sophie Bertrand

The Preschool Network's mission is: *The full inclusion of young children in family and community life through access to quality services and systems of care. We envision welcoming communities for all families and children that support each of us to reach our full potential.* One of our primary objectives is to support school districts to provide increased opportunities for preschool children with disabilities to spend the majority of their time in inclusive settings.

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) offers the following position statement on inclusion: *"Inclusion as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of abilities, to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. Natural settings are those in which the child would spend time had he or she not had a disability. These settings include, but are not limited to, home, preschool, nursery schools, Head Start programs, kindergartens, neighborhood school classrooms, child care, places of worship, recreational (such as community playgrounds and community events), and other settings that all children and families enjoy.... As young children participate in group settings (such as preschool, play groups, child care, Kindergarten) their active participation*

should be guided by developmentally and individually appropriate curriculum. Access to and participation in the age appropriate general curriculum becomes central to the identification and provision of specialized support services..."

Inclusion for preschool children is supported by IDEA and state regulations under Least Restrictive Environment. [See NM Special Education Regulations 6.31.2.11C(2) (a).] Since many school districts do not have programs for typical preschool-age children, they must partner with community providers who offer these programs. For preschool children "regular classes" may include school programs for typical four-year-olds, Head Start, private and public preschool programs, etc. If a child is referred from a Head Start program or a preschool program, and is found eligible to receive special education and related services, the IEP team explores the use of supplementary aids and services in the Head Start or preschool program as the first option of service delivery.

In order to support individual needs of children and their families, school districts must offer a continuum of options of services for preschool. The options are in support of individual children. Many districts and their community partners have been creative in their approaches. Some examples of options that currently exist in our state are: children receiving all services in Head Start and Preschool Centers by itinerant special education teachers and therapists; a co-teaching model of a Head Start teacher and a special education teacher combining and sharing their classroom and students through team teaching; and an early childhood center that braids funding (IDEA, Title 1, tuition, bilingual, Head Start, subsidized child care, etc.) and serves all children inclusively.

In our next issue (May 2005), Part II will highlight models of inclusion.

Harriet's Corner...Notes from Harriet Forman, Preschool Consultant, Special Education Bureau, New Mexico Public Education Department

Dear Colleagues,

*H*appy Anniversary! It's been 30 years since the passage of Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act). This law became the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) about 10 years later and included several amendments – Part B: Section 619 (providing services for children with disabilities ages 3-5) and Part C (providing services for children birth to 3). Some of you no doubt were rather young prior to 1975, and may not remember that children with disabilities had been served institutionally, totally segregated from their typical developing peers, prior to this landmark legislation. Following the passage of P.L. 94-142, the best practices were state-of-the-art separate classrooms in the public schools.

On this anniversary, we contemplate the changes that IDEA 2004 will bring and consider the possibilities that the passage of the Governor's Pre-K legislation might produce. We need to do some serious review of how well we are implementing best practices for children with disabilities in 2005, and how well we are implementing Least Restrictive Environments (LRE).

Additionally, the New Mexico Public Education Department (NM PED), Special Education Bureau, is under order from the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to provide, in our Annual Performance Report, "...data and analysis demonstrating continued compliance with placement in the LRE including: (1) that removal of child with disabilities from the regular education environment occurred only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in the regular classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot not be achieved satisfactorily..." This poses a particular



challenge for 619. We know that: (A) not having publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs makes meeting LRE for preschoolers more difficult; (B) though many wonderful activities leading to skill/knowledge building are occurring, they are in segregated classrooms that house only children with IEPs; and (C) there are shortages of certified personnel.

As a state we must do better. For those districts that are serving children in inclusive settings, congratulations! This might be a good space to share your success stories in future issues. *

Our goal must be to serve young children with disabilities in natural (least-restrictive) environments, where children would be if they had no disabilities. We know that they learn enormously from their typically developing peers and that they must have access to the general curriculum. Our expectations tend to get depressed when working with children with disabilities in segregated settings.

..... We have all heard the arguments for preserving the current status quo (non-inclusive/segregated practices) in our preschool programs: (1) because parents prefer it; (do they really know the alternatives?); (2) it's more efficient (is efficiency our ultimate goal?); (3) we can't get support from principals, administrators, teachers, etc. (no one ever said it would be easy...sorry.); and (4) it's too expensive (the loss of opportunity is more expensive, and we're not sure every district is actually spending all of it's designated 619/preschool monies. Check it out in your district.)

We also must consider a continuum of options for offering services when determining placement and designing an IEP. Be aware that children transitioning from Part C early intervention services have been served largely in natural environments. Entering Part B and moving into segregated settings causes tension and anxiety in many children and families. That tension and anxiety resurfaces

....(Continued on next page)

(Continued from Page 2)

when they rejoin their typical peers in kindergarten.

The best practices of 30 years ago were a great beginning. However, just as we wouldn't continue seeing a physician whose knowledge of medicine was out-dated, we can't serve our children based upon best practices out-dated by thirty years. Deferring the opportunity to interact, learn, play and grow with their peers does our children a disservice. Inclusion of children with disabilities is essential in their ultimate preparation for employment and a productive adult life. At the recent OSEP Early Childhood Conference in Washington, D.C., Stephanie Lee, Director of OSEP, stressed LRE for preschoolers as a primary goal, so that young children with disabilities could experience "rich language environments and grow up being a part of things."

We pledge our resources to help your district build best practices into everyday routines. LRE is the law, even for preschoolers.

**We are about to distribute a videotape that features the Bloomfield Family Learning Center (Bloomfield, NM), and A Child's Garden Preschool (in partnership with Albuquerque Public Schools), both of which have worked collaboratively with their colleagues across systems to build model environments, where all children learn and play together.*



BOOK REVIEW

The Inclusive Early Childhood Classroom: Easy Ways to Adapt Learning Centers for All Children

Gould, P. & Sullivan, J. (1999). Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House.

This book is written by practitioners (an occupational therapist and an early interventionist) who have extensive experience in inclusive services and in collaborating with day care providers and preschool teachers. It is a valuable resource that demonstrates the "how to" of adapting and modifying typical early childhood classroom activities, materials, and environments for children with special needs. It offers concrete suggestions of making modifications with everyday objects that are easy to use, and offers checklists to support individualization. Information is presented visually as well as in text. This book is highly recommended as a tool to support efforts in partnering with early childhood providers in offering inclusive services for young children.



Classroom Activity



1. *Dramatic Play: Beauty Salon/Barber Shop*

- Roles: hairdresser, barber, receptionist, customers, etc.
- Props: makeup, brushes, curlers, combs, play hairdryers, barber coats, plastic capes, wigs, beards, mustaches, scarves, telephone, mirrors, towels, appointment books, magazines, shampoo bottles, nail polish bottles, hair nets, clips, barrettes, cash register, money, etc.

Possible Adaptations: built-up tool handles for brushes, communication boards, pictures of the steps of play, adaptive seating, etc.

2. *Art:*

- Create a mural or collage together
- Materials: butcher paper, markers, crayons, scissors, paint, brushes, construction paper, glue, sponges, etc.



Possible Adaptations: built-up tool handles for markers and brushes, taping paper on large table or on a wall, use of pre-cut, double-sided tape instead of glue, adaptive scissors, scented markers, clothes pins to hold sponges for painting, etc.

3. *Outdoor Time:*

- Pull/push each other in wagons
- Roll a ball or throw a ball, beanbag, sponge football, balloon, etc. back and forth
- "Monkey see, monkey do": take turns being the monkey and imitating
- Create a string spider web on playground equipment with a partner

Possible Adaptations: adaptive swings, support in sitting, large balls, etc.

Professional Development Opportunities

Check out the early childhood training calendar on the CDD Early Childhood Division website at:
<http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/calendar.html>

Project SET Seminar: Outcomes and Goals for Young Children with ASD. April 6, 2005, 9 AM—12 PM. Videoconference in Albuquerque, Farmington, Las Cruces, and Roswell. To register call (505) 272-3012.

Preschool Network: Me and You Together, Creating Inclusive Supports for Young Children. April 15, 2005, 9 AM—12 PM. Videoconference in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Las Vegas. To register call (505) 272-9924 or email mbarnhart@salud.unm.edu.

Special Education Law Conference IDEA 2004—What Every Educator Needs to Know. April 11 and 12, 2005 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Sponsored by High Plains REC. For more information, visit www.hprec.com.

Strategies, Tips, and Techniques for Individuals with ASD. April 20, 2005, 8:30 AM—3:30 PM in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information call (505) 272-1852 or 1 (800) 270-1816.

Preschool Network Staff

Mette Pedersen
 Division Director
 (505) 272-1040
mpedersen@salud.unm.edu

Jeanie McNabb
 Early Childhood Development
 Specialist
 (505) 272-8192
jmcnabb@salud.unm.edu

Holly Harrison
 Program Consultant
 (505) 272-0403
hharrison@salud.unm.edu

Sophie Bertrand
 Program Manager
 (505) 272-1506
sbertrand@salud.unm.edu

Kathleen Trumbull
 Training & Development
 Consultant
 (505) 525-9673
katrum@zianet.com

Preschool Network Fax: (505) 272-0384
 Website: <http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/psn>

Alison Noble
 Division Coordinator
 (505) 272-2756
anoble@salud.unm.edu

Melanie Barnhart
 Training Support Analyst
 (505) 272-9924
mbarnhart@salud.unm.edu




 THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO • HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
 SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Preschool Network
 Division of Early Childhood and
 Specialized Personnel Development
 Center for Development & Disability
 2300 Menaul NE
 Albuquerque, NM 87107