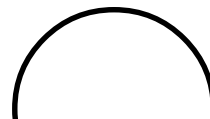
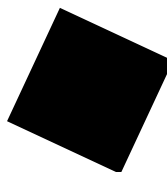
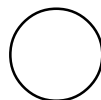


CREATING HIGH QUALITY
INCLUSION PROGRAMS for
PRESCHOOLERS with
DISABILITIES
in NEW YORK CITY

A Guide for Preschool Providers



Written by

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Introduction

“Early childhood research, as well as the law, indicates that children with disabilities need specialized instruction, not specialized settings.”¹

Preschool students with disabilities increasingly receive special education services in preschool programs alongside their typically developing peers. In the past, these young children were educated in segregated special education programs with little, if any, interaction with children who do not have disabilities. Inclusion classes that integrate children with and without disabilities benefit both groups of children and their families, and the Board of Education provides services for children with disabilities who attend community-based preschool programs. But inclusion also presents challenges to preschool providers who traditionally have not served special education students. This *Guide to Preschool Inclusion* is intended to provide community preschools in New York City with information to help them include children with disabilities in their programs. Some of these young children may already be enrolled in preschool programs, but have not yet been referred or evaluated to determine their eligibility for special education services. Others may have already completed the evaluation process and have been found eligible for special education services.

The Guide begins by defining and explaining inclusion. Second, it provides an overview of the special education referral and evaluation process for preschoolers and describes resources that are available to children and their families throughout the process. Third, it explains the services that are available for preschoolers who are evaluated and found eligible for special education. Finally, it offers suggestions to help preschools create and maintain high quality inclusion programs that meet the needs of *all* children in their program.

Section I: UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION

“Inclusion is a commitment that all children regardless of their differences, shall receive support and accommodation to ensure their success and to preserve their right to learn among their peers.”²

Q.1: What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is a philosophy built on the belief that every person is a valued, participating member of the community and that people with and without disabilities benefit when they learn, work, and play side-by-side. For preschoolers, it means placing children with disabilities into classes with children without disabilities, as appropriate, and providing them with the necessary services and supports to enable them to benefit from being there.

Inclusion Does Not Mean³

- “Dumping” children with disabilities into programs without appropriate supports and services.
- Locating special education classes in a separate wing of a regular school or program.
- Teachers and administrators ignoring children’s individual needs and parent’s concerns.
- Exposing children to unnecessary risks.
- Placing unreasonable demands on teachers and administrators.
- Placing children with disabilities into programs for younger children.

Q.2: What is the difference between Inclusion, Mainstreaming, and Integration?

Mainstreaming is an older term and refers to the practice of removing children with disabilities from their segregated special education classes for a portion of the school day to attend regular education classes or the regular gym, arts, or lunch program without additional support services. Inclusion is distinct from mainstreaming in that it involves providing children with the ongoing services and supports that they need to succeed in regular settings. These may include the adaptation and modification of curriculum, activities, materials and schedules; appropriate staffing ratios; integrated related services; innovative instructional strategies; or a team approach to service delivery. Integration is a broader, more general term and refers to the process for actively mixing children with and without disabilities in the same setting.

Q.3: What is the legal rationale for Inclusion?

Several important laws provide the impetus for inclusion, including three Federal acts: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, section 504; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA), which was reauthorized by Congress in 1997. In addition, under a recent settlement order in the Ray M. v. Board of Education class action suit, the New York City Board of Education and the New York State Education Department agreed to place preschool children ages three through five in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their needs. (Appendix B).

- The Rehabilitation Act, Section 504, prohibits discrimination by programs receiving federal funds, including public schools, against individuals with physical and mental disabilities. Its intent is to clear obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from attending school and from participating in the same activities as their typically developing peers. The law protects young people whose physical or mental impairments substantially limit one or more “major life activities,” such as caring for themselves, seeing, breathing, walking, and learning.
- The ADA is a civil rights law that extends the requirements of Section 504 to institutions that do not receive federal money. It prohibits discrimination against people, including three to five-year-olds, with physical or mental disabilities in all programs of state and local government, including public and private, non-parochial schools.
- IDEA provides that children with disabilities are entitled to receive special education services and that such children are placed, to the extent appropriate, in classes with their typically developing peers. This is what is referred to as placing a child with special needs in the “least restrictive environment” (LRE). “Special education” means specially designed individualized or group instruction or special services or programs to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities. Special education services and programs are provided at no cost to the parent for children who meet the New York State eligibility criteria for disability. In New York City, special education services are paid for by the New York City Board of Education.

Q.4: What is the educational rationale for Inclusion?

Studies indicate that inclusion prepares children with disabilities for the real world, results in higher developmental outcomes, develops improved communication and social skills, and promotes relationships with peers. Research also indicates that when implemented properly, inclusion does not inhibit the development of children who do not have disabilities, and that it helps them to be more accepting of diversity.

Section II: THE SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Q.5: At what age are preschoolers eligible for special education?

The eligibility of a child for preschool special education depends upon the date of birth of the child. If a child turns three between January 1 and June 30, s/he becomes eligible for services beginning on January 2. If a child turns 3 between July 1 and December 31, s/he becomes eligible on July 1.

*Q.6: What should a school do if it suspects that a child may require special education?**

If a school suspects that a child in the program may have a disability, school personnel should discuss their concerns with the child's parent(s) and inform them of the availability of special education services for children who are found eligible. If the parents share these concerns, the child should be referred for an individual evaluation to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) to determine his/her eligibility for special education services. A referral is a written statement requesting an evaluation of the child to determine if s/he needs special education services. The referral can be made by a number of people, including preschool staff or parents. Although the preschool has the right to make a referral, even if the parent(s) do not agree, this is rarely advisable. Schools can help parents by telling them about the sources of assistance listed below:

- In New York City, children between the ages of three and five who are thought to need special education services are referred for evaluation to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) in their community school district. Parents who do not know what school district they live in can contact the New York City Board of Education at (718) 935-4566 (www.nycenet.edu). There are 32 community school districts in New York City and there is a CPSE in each (Appendix C).
- There is an Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC) in each borough, funded by the New York State Education Department that can assist with the referral process. ECDCs are information, referral and assistance centers where parents of children from birth to age five and professionals who work with them can call to obtain information about special education services, infant, toddler and preschool programs and services, evaluation and assessment services, transportation, medical, educational and social services, financial assistance, health and therapy services, respite and recreation programs, and parent education and support opportunities (Appendix D).
- Parent Training and Information Centers (PTICs), funded by the United States Department of Education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), can help families obtain appropriate education and services for their children from birth to age 22. They also help connect children with disabilities to community resources that address their needs (Appendix E).

- Special Education in New York State for Children Ages 3-21: A Parent's Guide. (February 2001). This guide is published by the New York State Education Department, Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID). It can be ordered at the VESID website: <http://web.nysed.gov/vesid/special.htm> or by telephone (518-474-2714). VESID's brochure Information for Parents of Preschool Students with Disabilities AGES 3-5 can be downloaded at <http://web.nysed.gov/vesid/brochures/preschool.htm>

- The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) offers an excellent Guide for Parents of children with disabilities from birth to age five. Both English and Spanish versions are available by telephone at 800-695-0285 (Voice/TTY) or through the Internet. NICHCY has produced A Parent's Guide: Accessing Programs for Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers With Disabilities (ages 0-5) <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/parent/pa2.pdf>, also available in Spanish; Guia para Padres Programas para Infantes y Ninos Pre-escolares con Discapacidades at <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/spanish/pa2stxt.htm> Both guides contain links to sites that provide information on specific disabilities.

- A listing of National Organizations with resources for inclusive child care appears in Appendix F.

Q.7: What happens after the referral for an evaluation has been made?

Upon receipt of a request for an evaluation, the CPSE will send the parent(s) a packet of information which includes an explanation of due process rights, a consent for evaluation form, and a list of the New York State Education Department (SED) approved preschool special education evaluation sites. Parents are asked to select an approved evaluator from the list and to give written consent for the child to be evaluated before the CPSE makes arrangements for the evaluation to begin.

Information gathered during the evaluation process is used to determine the child's educational needs and to determine eligibility for special education. A full evaluation consists of a social history, a psychological evaluation, and a physical examination (parents are generally given a form to be filled out by their child's pediatrician). Other evaluations may be performed, if needed, to determine if the child has an educational disability (e.g., speech, occupational or physical therapy evaluations). As part of the evaluation, a member of the evaluation team will observe the child in his/her current setting: preschool, home, or day care. This is arranged for by the CPSE. The evaluation is paid for by the New York City Board of Education. Parents may decide they want an "outside evaluation" or "private evaluation." If so, that they must pay for the evaluation. Each component of the evaluation must be completed regardless of how it is paid for.

Q.8: How is eligibility for special education determined?

When the evaluation is completed, the evaluation site sends the CPSE administrator a summary of the child's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development and behavioral needs as they pertain to his/her education. The evaluation summary must describe

the child's present level of performance, strengths and weaknesses, and indicate whether or not the child is educationally disabled. The CPSE then schedules a Preschool Special Education Review Meeting to determine, based on the evaluation, whether the child is eligible for preschool special education services. In order to be eligible for special education, a child must have a disability that affects his or her ability to learn. If the child meets the eligibility criteria, s/he will be classified as a *Preschool Child with a Disability*.

Q.9: What happens if the child is found eligible for special education services?

If, based on assessments, a child is found to have a disability that requires special education supports and services, the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will develop an appropriate *Individualized Education Program (IEP)*. The IEP is developed based on a meeting with parents which includes a discussion about the type and intensity of the special education services that are needed and how the child's needs may be met in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The IEP describes the child's present levels of performance (academic, social/emotional and health/physical development), the goals toward which the child should be working, and expected outcomes, the special education services and adaptive equipment required to help the child meet those goals. If transportation is needed, including any special transportation requirements, it will be documented on the IEP. The CPSE will recommend the appropriate placement and services from the continuum of services described in the next section.

Section III: Special Education for Preschoolers with Disabilities

Q.10: What special education services are available based on the New York State Education Department's approved service models?

The Board of Education is mandated to provide eligible children with a continuum of services or range of alternative placement options (from the least restrictive to the most restrictive). They include (a) related services only, (b) special education itinerant teacher (SEIT) services only, (c) related services in combination with SEIT services, (d) a special class in an integrated setting, and (e) a special class in a segregated setting. The CPSE may recommend that services and/or program placements be provided year-round if deemed necessary to prevent regression and to maintain developmental levels.

Preschool children may receive these services in Board of Education-run programs, or special nonprofit and private schools that contract with the Board to provide special education programs (known as Section 4410 schools). They also may receive related services and/or SEIT services paid for by the Board of Education while attending regular community-based private or nonprofit schools selected by the parents; however, in these circumstances the Board does not cover the regular tuition costs.

Q.11: What are "Related Services"?

Related Services are defined as "*developmental, corrective and other support services*" that are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from instruction. They are provided by an appropriately certified or licensed professional and included on the child's IEP. These services include, but are not limited to, speech and language therapy; physical therapy; occupational therapy; vision services; counseling; assistance from an aide or nurse; specialized equipment; technology and/or materials; and transportation. Related Services are given to the child by a service provider from a list of providers maintained by the New York City Board of Education (Office of Related and Contractual Services). The CPSE will determine the provider, as well as the number of hours of service to be delivered each week. If two or more related services are recommended, the CPSE administrator will designate one of the related service providers as the coordinator. Some children may receive "*Related Services Only*." Others may receive "*Related Services*" in conjunction with placement in a special education preschool program.

- For children who are found eligible for "*Related Services Only*," these services can be provided in the child's home, a related service provider's office, or at a "regular education" site that has been arranged for the child by the parent (e.g., a preschool program, Head Start). If the child is already enrolled in such a program, the CPSE should be told and specific language should be placed in the child's IEP mandating the provision of special education services in this setting. If a child is not enrolled in such a program, the related services will be provided in the child's home or at the office of the related services provider. If a child has been receiving services at home and the parent subsequently secures a preschool program placement for the child, the CPSE should be told and asked to transfer the services to the preschool. The same process applies for

children who transfer from one regular education preschool program to another. Schools may wish to remind parents that they may contact the CPSE administrator or the ECDC in their borough if they need help.

- Children who are found eligible for “*Related Services*” in conjunction with placement in a preschool special education program receive related services as part of their program. These preschool special education programs (referred to as the “Section 4410 schools” after the section of state law which governs provision of this service) are fully funded and regulated by the New York State Department of Education. The CPSE currently places children with disabilities only in those preschool programs that are operated by approved 4410 providers. Placement in a “Section 4410 school” is considered by the CPSE only when they have determined that the child cannot be appropriately served in a less restrictive setting — i.e., by receiving “*Related Services Only*” (discussed above) and/or “*Special Education Itinerant Teacher Services*” (discussed below). Additional information on the two types of classes operated by SED approved special education providers is available in Appendix G.

Q.12: How are Related Services provided in an inclusion program?

Related services are generally provided within the child’s classroom (“*push-in*” services) although some children receive their related services outside of the classroom (“*pull-out*” services). “*Pull-out*” programs can interfere with the child’s participation in classes lead to scheduling difficulties, and disrupt the child’s activities or peer interactions. Conducting one-to-one related services sessions within the classroom, however, can have the effect of isolating the child within the classroom. Schools should encourage related services providers to collaborate with classroom teachers to integrate the special services into the natural context of the preschool setting. Schools can arrange classrooms so that services are provided in small group formats, rather than one-on-one. The small group formats emphasize that all the children have a relationship with all the adults who work in the classroom. Studies have found that all children can then benefit from the enhanced learning opportunities provided when related services are offered within the classroom using small group formats.

Q.13: What are “Special Education Itinerant Teacher Services”?

Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) services are provided by a certified special education teacher who is an employee of a New York State Education Department approved preschool special education program provider (a 4410 provider). They are provided on an itinerant basis (i.e., teachers travel among schools) in order to support the preschool child with a disability. As with the provision of “*Related Services Only*,” SEIT services can be provided in the child’s home or at a “*regular education*” site that has been arranged for the child by the parent (e.g., a preschool program, Head Start). If the child is already enrolled in such a program, the CPSE should be told and specific language should be placed in the child’s IEP mandating the provision of special education services in this setting. If a child is not enrolled in such a program, the services will be provided at the child’s home or day care provider. If a child has been receiving services at home and the parent subsequently secures a preschool program placement for the child, the CPSE should be told and asked to transfer the

services to that site. The same process applies for children who transfer from one regular education preschool program to another. Schools may wish to remind parents that they may contact the CPSE administrator or the ECDC in their borough if they need help.

SEITs are a valuable resource for inclusion programs. They can be a school's most important program support. They have extensive knowledge about: children with special needs, developmentally appropriate curriculum, teaching and classroom management strategies, materials and supplies, and working with parents. They can provide invaluable assistance with program planning. The SEIT will visit the setting at least two hours per week. During these visits, s/he may provide direct instruction to the child to help him/her achieve the goals outlined in the IEP. S/he may also work with the regular classroom teacher to address the child's current educational program or to adjust the learning environment and/or instructional methods to meet the educational needs of the special needs child. Schools, however, should think about the role they would like to see the SEIT play in their school. In a high quality inclusive program, the SEIT supports the teacher and the special needs students in the classroom, rather than by separating the child. This support can be realized through serving as a co-teacher for whatever parts of the day s/he is there, or by having the SEIT work with individuals or small groups to bolster certain skills.

Q.14: Can children receive both SEIT Services and Related Services?

Yes. In such cases, the CPSE identifies both the SEIT and the related services provider for the child. The CPSE should coordinate the services for each child and assign personnel from the same service providers whenever possible to maximize consistency in personnel which is beneficial to children. If SEIT services and one or more related services are recommended, the SEIT teacher serves as the coordinator of all the services.

Q.15: How important is it for specialists and classroom teachers to get together to collaborate and co-plan?

Collaboration between preschool staff, related services providers, and SEIT providers is vital to meeting the educational needs of children, as well as the learning needs of their teachers. With inclusion, everybody in the preschool setting participates in the learning process. Classroom teachers should view specialists as participants in their educational program and not just as temporary visitors. Specialists should not work apart from teachers or in isolation from the classroom. Instead, specialists and teachers should share their expertise and support each other to ensure that the preschool program adequately accommodates the abilities of the various children in the group. The classroom teacher knows the curriculum materials; the special education teacher may know how the special needs child learns best. In a planning session, they can put their heads together and discuss the class objectives and content and modifications that may be required for particular children. By combining their skills, specialists and teachers can make sure that children with special needs are included in all ways in the program without having a negative impact on other children. It may take some effort to develop a cooperative/ collaborative relationship, but time is worth it.

Q.16: What can schools do to facilitate coordination of services?

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) identifies both the SEIT teacher and the related service provider. These service providers are responsible for the special education planning of all the children assigned to them. The preschools do not hire the related services providers and/or the SEIT teachers, but they should establish a policy requiring the SEIT and related service providers to meet with the child's teacher and preschool administrator on a regular basis. Preschool administrators may also wish to establish a collaborative relationship with the provider who employs SEIT teachers and inform them of their expectations regarding coordination of services.

Q.17: Who arranges and pays for SEIT Services and Related Services?

Special education services and programs are provided at no cost to parents for children who have been evaluated and found eligible for special education. In New York City all special education services are included on the child's IEP, arranged for by the CPSE, and paid for directly by the New York City Board of Education (Central Bureau of Contract Aid). If the child attends a community preschool, the Board provides and pays for the SEIT or related services recommended on the IEP. The Board pays for the full educational costs if the child is in a Board of Education-run program or has been placed in a 4410 school. Related service and SEIT costs are paid for by the Bureau of Contract Aid directly to the approved service provider. They are not the responsibility of the preschool programs.

Q.18: Some children may need "Assistive Technology" or barrier-free facilities. How is this accessed?

A small percent of preschoolers with disabilities may need assistive technology to maintain or improve their functional abilities (e.g., a modified toothbrush handle, a hearing aid, a Braille printer, a talking computer). Some children may also need an assistive technology service to help them obtain and use such devices. As with other "related services" assistive technology devices and services must be approved by the CPSE and listed in the child's IEP and are purchased and paid for by the New York City Board of Education (Central Bureau of Contract Aid).⁵

An even smaller number of children with disabilities may also require "barrier-free" buildings and/or ramps to assist them. Others are unable to play outdoors because many available playgrounds are not physically accessible to them. The cost of creating barrier-free buildings and accessible playgrounds is not currently funded by the New York City Board of Education. Some programs, however, have obtained funding from private or special government sources.⁶

Section IV: IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Q.19: What are the implications of inclusion for curriculum and instruction at my school?

For preschoolers, the term curriculum is used to refer to the kinds of educational experiences that are planned and designed to facilitate children's construction of concepts, development of skills, and engagement in the learning processes. The curriculum in effective inclusion programs is developmentally appropriate – planned for the age span of the children in the group (age appropriate); and implemented with attention to the different needs, interests, abilities, learning styles, and developmental levels of the individual children (individually appropriate). Developmentally appropriate curriculum guidelines have been established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for all early childhood programs, including those that include children with disabilities (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).⁷

In addition to having developmentally appropriate curriculum, high quality inclusion programs strongly encourage collaboration between professionals. Effective collaborators can expect: (a) changes in the schooling system such as team teaching, (b) changes in the skills, attitudes, and behaviors of parents and teachers who are collaborating together, and (c) improvements in both academic and social skills of children and youth with special needs.⁸

Q.20: What about our concern that children with disabilities may take up too much of the teacher's time at the expense of the other children?

Many teachers have expressed this concern at the beginning stages of implementing an inclusion program. It has been found, however, that when adequate supports and services are provided, there is no negative impact on the education of the other children. Many classroom teachers report that children without disabilities benefit from being part of an inclusive classroom.⁹ But, schools and parents need to ensure that all children are getting the services that they need to succeed. The provision of adequate supports and services requires collaboration between the school administrators and teachers and the special education teacher and related service providers (e.g., occupational therapist, speech and language clinician, physical therapist). SEIT providers should work with classroom teachers to implement effective inclusion strategies. The University of Maine, Center for Community Inclusion monograph, [Building a Foundation for Cooperative Behavior](#) provides some excellent strategies designed to prevent problems through the creation of environments which build community, emphasize respectful, responsive relationships, foster friendships, and teach children to develop skills for conflict resolution and problem solving.¹⁰

Q.21: Is Inclusion the “Least Restrictive Environment” for all children with disabilities?

The legal requirement for placement in the “least restrictive environment,” does not mean a “one size fits all” approach is appropriate. Placement decisions should be governed by individual needs and reevaluated over time. There is a small percentage of preschool children with disabilities who may not function well in inclusion classes; their emotional and learning characteristics may require individualized and/or small group experiences in smaller self-contained classes. This may be the “least restrictive setting” for these young children at this point in time. The LRE is not a place; it is a set of services designed to meet the needs of individual students and, whenever possible, to ensure education of those students in general education classes.

Q.22: What about training and staff development?

Professional development programs will help achieve the goal of inclusion by building the capacity of teachers to offer “challenging and supportive educational experience for all children”.¹¹ Training and staff development are vital and should be ongoing. Pre-service and in-service training may take the form of courses, workshops, on-site consultation, mentoring, release time to observe other programs, and informal meetings that focus on curriculum, problem-solving, or support for providers. Training should also be provided about specific disabilities. One option is the Early Intervention Training Institute (EITI) at the Rose F. Kennedy Center in the Bronx (718) 430-8525. This Institute is funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities and provides workshops for professionals. Programs may also wish to contact the Early Childhood Direction Centers (Appendix D), the Parent Training Information Centers (Appendix E), local colleges/universities (e.g., Bank Street College of Education), or the InterAgency Council of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities Agencies (212) 645-6360 for additional information. Whenever possible, special and regular educators should participate in the same staff development activities.

Q.23: What other activities will help ensure that all children are properly served?

Addressing diversity and a wide span of abilities is also enhanced when there is a climate of mutual respect; teamwork; support from the program director; and opportunities for professional development.¹²

- A climate of mutual respect among staff members and parents ensures that each person has the opportunity to share knowledge and insights about the children, curriculum, and special services.¹³ Programs and services are enhanced when they are respectful and supportive of children with and without disabilities and their families.
- Since teamwork is crucial to building quality inclusive programs, it is important to involve the entire staff as well as parents in all phases of the process. Many programs have contacted the Parent Training Information Centers (PTICs) to provide training for parents on a variety of topics. Some schools have made inclusion one of those topics (Appendix E).

- Support from the program director helps preschool inclusion. Program directors play a crucial role by supporting teachers' efforts to collaborate, and encouraging experimentation and new ideas. Program directors can also help teachers by providing them with staff development opportunities and access to resources that are available.
- Training and staff developing are vital and should be ongoing. Pre-service and in-service training may take the form of courses, workshops, on-site consultation, mentoring, release time to observe other programs, and informal meetings that focus on curriculum, problem-solving, or support for providers. Training should also be provided about specific disabilities.

Q.24: How can parents be involved?

There is a great deal to be gained from parents and teachers communicating and collaborating. Over the years, teachers and service providers change, while the family will remain a constant influence in the child's life. Parents can identify strengths and needs of their child and family and provide insights into the child's abilities in a variety of environments. Parents have worked with their child for years and have learned a great deal which can benefit the teacher. They know what tends to work for their child and what does not better than anyone else. They are a resource not to be ignored. Parents can make an important contribution to program decision making. They can also assist in developing policy, organizing social and fundraising events, and evaluating and reviewing program activities. Schools should invite them in, ask for their ideas, and give them opportunities to be involved. Not all will respond, but many will, and schools will have strengthened the program while demonstrating the flexibility and openness needed in inclusive education.

Conclusion

This Guide is aimed at stimulating change at the community level that supports the placement of children with disabilities in the schools and classrooms they would attend if they did not have a disability. Inclusion is a worthwhile goal because of the social and educational benefits to be gained from educating children with disabilities alongside their peers. Preschool providers in New York City can help expand these opportunities for children. By opening your preschool doors to children with disabilities, enhanced supports follow them into the preschool program, and all children will benefit. This guide is intended to help enhance the capacity of preschools to create programs that recognize, value, and support diversity among children.

APPENDIX A: Glossary of Terms

| | |
|---------------|---|
| ADA: | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| CPSE: | Committee on Preschool Special Education |
| ECDC: | Early Childhood Direction Center |
| IDEA: | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act |
| IEP: | Individualized Education Program |
| LRE: | Least Restrictive Environment |
| PTIC: | Parent Training and Information Centers |
| SEIT: | Special Education Itinerant Teacher |
| SED: | New York State Education Department |
| VESID: | Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (a statewide department) |

APPENDIX B: The Legal Rationale for Inclusion

Several important laws provide the impetus for inclusion, including:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA, P.L. 102-119) – formerly the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHA, P.L. 94-142) – guarantees that children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The IDEA provides that preschoolers with disabilities are entitled to receive special education services and that such children are placed in classes with typically developing peers to the extent appropriate. All states must ensure that “to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities...are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment **occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily** (emphasis added).¹

The integration of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of society is also fundamental to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA, P.L. 101-336). This landmark civil rights legislation sent a clear message to people in the United States that people with disabilities are entitled to the same rights and privileges that others enjoy. It also requires that private establishments such as stores, playground, libraries, and day care centers provide goods and services in an integrated setting, unless separate or different measures are necessary to ensure equal opportunity. The ADA has stipulated that enrollment in regular child care settings cannot be denied to children with disabilities because of their disability. The ADA is based in part on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination in any program or activity that received federal funds.

| Summary of Legislation for Children with Disabilities | | |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Date</i> | <i>Legislation</i> | <i>Provisions</i> |
| 1968 | The Handicapped Children’s Early Education Assistance Act (P.L. 90-538) | Established The Handicapped Children’s Early Education Program (HCEEP), which developed early intervention demonstration models. |
| 1973 | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act | Prohibits discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in federally funded schools and preschools (e.g., Head Start) |
| 1975 | The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) (P.L. 94-142) | Free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities (ages 5-21): Individualized Education Program, least restrictive environment, parent’s participation. |
| 1986 | Amendment to EAHCA (P.L. 99-457) | Extended services to children ages 3-5; Individualized Family Service Plan. |
| 1990 | Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (P.L. 101-336) | Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all settings, including community child care, after-school programs, and private schools. |
| 1990 | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476) | Reauthorized P.L. 94-142, rights to children ages 3-21, used child-first language. |

Adapted from: Winter, S. (1999, p.28), *The Early Childhood Inclusion Model: A Program for all Children*. Olney, MD: Association for Childhood Education International.[800-423-3563 or www.udel.edu/bateman/acei]

Ray M v. NYC Board of Education and NYS Department of Education, et al.: The Ray M. suit was brought in 1994 by the parents of preschool children with disabilities in New York City and alleged that these children were denied their right to appropriate educational services under law. The suit alleged that preschoolers with disabilities were wrongfully denied timely referrals and evaluations to special education services and were automatically placed in restrictive classroom settings in violation of law. It also claimed that preschool students with disabilities who had limited English proficiency were denied timely special education evaluations in the appropriate language and were also automatically placed in restrictive classroom settings in violation of law. Ray M. was settled in July 1999 and brought relief and assistance to approximately 25,000 three- to five- year old preschool children with disabilities in New York City. As a result of this case, thousands more preschool children are placed in the least restrictive environment.

¹ 20 U.S.C. Section 1412(5)(A)

APPENDIX C: NYC Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

To find out what school district a child lives in, call the NYC Board of Education, Office of Zoning and Integration at (718) 935-4566.

MANHATTAN

DISTRICT 1

(212) 598-3700
100 Attorney St.
New York, NY 10002

DISTRICT 2

(212) 330-9547
333 7th Avenue 8th Floor
New York, NY 10001

DISTRICT 3

(212) 245-3541
243 W. 61st St.
New York NY 10023

DISTRICT 4

(212) 876-9760/55
421 East 106th St.
New York, NY 10029

DISTRICT 5

(212) 491-5550
175 West 134th St., Rm. 109
New York, NY 10030

DISTRICT 6

(212) 781-3198
516 West 181st St
New York, NY 10033

BRONX

DISTRICT 7

(718) 292-1202
778 Forest Avenue, (Rm. 415C)
Bronx, NY 10456

DISTRICT 8

(718) 409-9004
2750 Lafayette Ave.
Bronx NY 10465

DISTRICT 9

(718) 731-2590
1887-95 Bathgate Ave.
Bronx, NY 10457

DISTRICT 10

(718) 584-8002
5500 Broadway
Bronx NY 10463

DISTRICT 11

(718) 904-5722
750 Baychester Ave.
Bronx NY 10475

DISTRICT 12

(718) 861-5538
1000 Jennings St., Rm. 309C
Bronx, NY 10460

BROOKLYN

DISTRICT 13

(718) 802-0653
57 Willoughby Street
Brooklyn NY 11201

DISTRICT 14

(718) 384-7600
101 Walton St
Brooklyn, NY 11206

DISTRICT 15

(718) 222-6241
362 Schermerhorn St
Brooklyn, NY 11217

DISTRICT 16

(718) 574-0800
990 Dekalb Ave
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11221

DISTRICT 17

(718) 270-6546
842 Lefferts Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11203

DISTRICT 18

(718) 649-7101
8814 Foster Ave

DISTRICT 19
(718) 498-6902
301 Vermont Street
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

DISTRICT 20
(718) 630-2302
6323 7th Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11220

DISTRICT 21
(718) 758-7040
110 Elmwood Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11230

DISTRICT 22
(718) 375-1231
3301 Quentin Rd. 4th Fl.
Brooklyn, NY 11234

DISTRICT 23
(718) 922-4794
1665 St. Marks Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11233

DISTRICT 32
(718) 919-0049
797 Bushwick Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11221

QUEENS
DISTRICT 24
(718) 628-1083
72-52 Metropolitan Ave
Middle Village, NY 11379

DISTRICT 25
(718) 445-1213
46-21 Colden St
Flushing, NY 11355

DISTRICT 26
(718) 423-8398
218th St. & 67th Ave
Bayside, NY 11364

DISTRICT 27
(718) 641-1337
11549 118th St., So.
Ozone Park NY 11420

DISTRICT 28
(718) 526-5956
109-20 Union Hall St.
Jamaica, NY 11433

DISTRICT 29
(718) 978-7588
Cross Island Plaza
Rosedale, NY 11422

DISTRICT 30
(718) 472-7845
2976 Northern Blvd.
Long Island City, NY 11106

STATEN ISLAND
DISTRICT 31
(718) 351-3557
465A New Dorp Lane
Staten Island, NY 10306

APPENDIX D: NYC Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDC)

The Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDC), funded by the New York State Education Department, provide free confidential information and referral to parents, professionals, and agencies about service for young children with diagnosed or suspected special needs. In New York City, there is an Early Childhood Direction Center in each borough; children and families referred to the ECDC should reside in the borough and be between birth and five years of age.

ECDC staff provide information about and referrals to:

- Diagnostic and Evaluation Services
- Infant and Toddler Early Intervention Services
- Preschool Special Education Services
- Habilitation Services
- Daycare and Head Start Programs
- Respite Programs
- Summer Programs
- Parent Support Groups
- Counseling
- Advocacy
- Medical/Dental Services
- Entitlements
- Family Support Services

Services provided by the ECDC include:

- Linking children and families to available services and programs in New York City.
- Referrals to agencies and professionals providing services to young children with special needs and their families.
- Referrals of infants and toddlers to the New York City Early Intervention Program (EIP).
- Referrals of children to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).
- Follow-up telephone contact with families until their child reaches age five.

| BRONX | BROOKLYN | MANHATTAN | QUEENS | STATEN ISLAND |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| ECDC 2488 Grand Concourse #4-5 Bronx, NY 10458 | ECDC 160 Lawrence Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11230 | ECDC 435 E.70 th St.,#2A New York, NY 10021 | ECDC 82-25 164 th Street Jamaica, NY 11432 | ECDC 1 Edgewater Plaza 6 th fl. Staten Island, NY 10305 |
| (718) 584-0658 | (718) 437-3794 | (212) 746-6175 | (718) 380-3000 Ext. 465 | (718) 226-4885 |

Appendix E: NYC Parent Training Information Centers (PTIC)

Parent Training Information Centers (PTICs), funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), serve families of children and young adults from birth to age 22 with all disabilities: physical, mental, learning, emotional, and attention deficit disorders.

Services provided by the PTICs include:

- Train and inform parents and professionals.
- Help families obtain appropriate education and services for their children with disabilities.
- Work to improve education results for all children.
- Resolve problems between families and schools or other agencies.
- Connect children with disabilities to community resources that address their needs.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Advocates for Children of NY</i> Jill Chaifetz, Executive Director</p> <p>Anna Espada, PTI Director 151 West 50th Street, 5th Floor New York, NY 10001 212-947-9779 (X13) 212-947-9790 FAX aespada@advocatesforchildren.org www.advocatesforchildren.org</p> | <p><i>Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc.</i> Karen Schlesinger, Executive Director</p> <p>200 Park Ave. South, Suite 816 New York, NY 10003 212-677-4650 212-254-4070 FAX info@resourcesnyc.org www.resourcesnyc.org</p> |
| <p><i>Sinergia/Metropolitan Parent Center</i> Donald Lash, Executive Director</p> <p>15 West 65th St., 6th Floor New York, NY 10023 212-496-1300 (X317) 212-496-5608 FAX dalsinergia@worldnet.att.net www.sinergiany.org</p> | <p><i>United We Stand*</i> Lourdes Rivera-Putz</p> <p>312 South 3rd Street Brooklyn, NY 11211 718-302-4313, ext. 562 718-302-4315 FAX uwsfnyc@aol.com www.taalliance.org/ptis/uws/</p> <p>*This center is a Community Parent Resource Center (not funded under PTIC).</p> |

APPENDIX F: SCIS and SC Classes

(Operated by Approved 4410 Special Education Program Providers)

Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS): These classes have at least 50% typically developing children and the remainder consist of children with disabilities and are provided by approved preschool special education program providers (a 4410 provider) at locations approved by the New York State Education Department (SED). Generally, SCIS classes are at the provider's own school site, but they can be located at other settings (e.g., day care, nursery school). Regardless of location, all SCIS classes are operated by the approved Section 4410 provider, and personnel must meet the same standards. Classes are approved by the New York State Education Department with specific ratios determined according to the total number of children in the class. There is a full-time special education teacher in the class, one or more paraprofessionals, and in some cases, a regular early childhood teacher. The CPSE will identify the SCIS setting and authorize either half-day (2.5 hours or more) or full day (up to 5 hours) classes. Children may also receive related services as part of their program.

Special Class (SC): When a Special Class in an Integrated Setting is not deemed appropriate, a Special Class (SC) will be considered. All Special Classes are provided by approved preschool special education providers (a 4410 provider) at the provider's own school site. They cannot be offered in alternative settings. Special Classes offer no contact with age-appropriate, typically developing peers. They are considered by the CPSE only when the nature and severity of the child's disability is such that education in a less restrictive environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Each class size and ratio are specifically approved and regulated by SED. The CPSE will identify the Special Class setting and authorize either half-day (2.5 hours or more) or full day (up to 5 hours) classes. Children may also receive related services as part of their program.

Note: For details on the funding streams supporting Section 4410 programs that integrate typically developing children under the Universal PreKindergarten (UPK) program see "Integrated Funding for Integrated Programs" published by the InterAgency Council of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities Agencies (212) 645-6360.

APPENDIX G: National Resources for Inclusive Child Care

Clearinghouse on Disability Information

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)
Room 3132, Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202-2524
(202) 205-8241 (Voice/TTY)
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS>

Council for Exceptional Children — Division for Early Childhood (CEC — DEC)

1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
(703) 620-3660
(800) 8456-CEC

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 424-2460
(202) 232-8777
<http://www.naeyc.org>

National Child Care Information Center (NCCI)

243 Church Street, NW, 2nd Floor
Vienna, VA 22180
Phone: (800) 616-2242
TTY: (800) 516-2242
E-mail: agoldste@nccic.org
<http://nccic.org/>

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NEC*TAS)

500 NationsBank Plaza
137 East Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 962-2001 (Voice); (919) 966-4041 (TTY)
E-mail: nectasta.nectas@mhs.unc.edu
<http://www.nectas.unc.edu>

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)

PO Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013
(202) 884-8200
(800) 695-0285
E-mail: nichcy@aed.org
<http://www.nichcy.org>

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) ADA Regional Technical Assistance Centers

U.S. Department of Education
2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 525-3268
(800) 949-4232
adapac@cessi.net

APPENDIX H: Endnotes

- ¹ Noonan, M.J. & McCormick, L. (1993). *Early intervention in natural environments*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- ² Winter, S. (1999). *The Early Childhood Inclusion Model: A Program for all Children*. Olney, MD: Association for Childhood Education International. [800-423-3563 or www.udel.edu/bateman/acei]
- ³ Reprinted from the University of Connecticut Community Inclusion Project. (p. 10) *Inclusion is a Right, Not a Privilege*. (no date). Division of Child and Family Studies, Department of Pediatrics, University of Connecticut Health Center, 309 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, CT 06032.
- ⁴ For additional information on accessing special education services, contact the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities at www.nichcy.org or 800-695-0285. NICHCY disseminates materials on a wide range of topics related to special education. News Digest (Jan.2000) is entitled “*Questions and Answers about IDEA*.” It can be downloaded at <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/newsdig/nd21txt.htm>
- ⁵ For assistance, contact TR Aid (Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities). This federally funded project is administered by the New York State Office of the Advocate: (800) 522-4369 (Voice and TTY). There is also a technology Resource Center located at United Cerebral Palsy of New York in New York City: (212) 979-9700 (Voice); (212) 475-0842 (TTY).
- ⁶ *The Great Outdoors: Restoring Children’s Right to Play Outside*, by Mary Rivkin, emphasizes the need for every child to play outdoors. Throughout the text, photographs of children with and without disabilities are shown in a variety of outdoor play scenarios. The book includes an appendix of “*Guidelines for Playground Accessibility*.” It is available from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (DC) <http://www.naeyc.org>. Note that some states, such as New Jersey, have used Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to support facilities, technical assistance, and financing for child care, Head Start and other early childhood programs.
- ⁷ Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (Eds.). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For a complete listing of NAEYC resources, visit their website: www.naeyc.org or telephone them at 800-424-2460. See also *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, by Barbara T. Bowman, M. Suzanne Donovan, and M. Susan Burns, Editors; Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy, National Research Council, <http://www.nap.edu> and type “Eager to Learn” in the book title search.
- ⁸ Villa, Nevin, & Thousand. (1996). *Inclusion News 1996* an international publication from Inclusion Press, Toronto, Canada.
- ⁹ For additional information on fostering friendships and pro-social skills in inclusive classes, see Sapon-Shevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world: A practical guide to building cooperative inclusive classroom communities*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- ¹⁰ University of Maine. Center for Community Inclusion. (1999b). *Building a foundation for cooperative behavior*. [<http://www.ume.maine.edu/ccj> or (207) 581-1084]
- ¹¹ Bank Street Family Center Inclusion Video. Available from Bank Street Family Center, 610 West 112th Street, New York, NY 10025. Telephone (212) 775-4414. See also (1) Derman-Sparks, L. and the ABC Task Force. (1989). *The anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children and (2) Teaching Tolerance Project. (1997). *Starting small: Teaching tolerance in preschool and the early grades*. Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center. [<http://www.splcenter.org>]
- ¹² For additional information on designing inclusive learning environments, see Winter, S. (1999). *The Early Childhood Inclusion Model: A Program for all Children*. Olney, MD: Association for Childhood Education International. [800-423-3563 or www.udel.edu/bateman/acei]
- ¹³ Winter (1999) describes the ecological aspects of implementing early childhood inclusion programs. In her book, “*The Early Childhood Inclusion Model*” she examines ways that the roles and relationships among professionals, families, and the community can be redefined from this perspective to achieve more effective inclusion for all children.

For additional copies contact:
The New York Community Trust
212-686-0010, Ext. 0

To download copies go to:
www.advocatesforchildren.org