



New Jersey
Special Education

ANNUAL SUMMIT

Let's Start with the Little Ones: Inclusive Early Childhood Programs

Presented by Ellen Frede & Amy
Hornbeck

The National Institute for Early
Education Research, Rutgers University

Agenda

- Defining inclusion
- What does the research say?
- How are we doing in NJ?
- Identifying barriers & solutions

About the Presenter

Ellen Frede is Senior Co-Director at the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University and Research Professor at the Graduate School of Education.

In her work, Dr. Frede applies what she has learned throughout her varied career in early childhood education, including experience as a teacher of ages 0-8, curriculum and professional development specialist at the HighScope Foundation, teacher educator at The College of New Jersey, researcher, pre-k administrator for the New Jersey Department of Education, education lead in a large Head Start grantee and early learning lead at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Dr. Frede has edited and written a wide range of books and chapters for research and practice, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles. She holds a doctorate in developmental psychology, a master's degree in human development and a bachelor's degree in early childhood education.



About the Presenter

Amy Hornbeck is Research Project Manager at the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) where she focuses on work related to early childhood development, preschool program evaluation, and the impact of coaching on teaching practice.

Formerly the Director of Teacher Training for *Tools of the Mind*, a teacher educator at the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University and a pre-k program specialist for the New Jersey Department of Education Ms. Hornbeck applies what she has learned throughout her career to help school districts create high quality inclusive early childhood systems.

Ms. Hornbeck has completed a post graduate program in applied behavioral analysis, holds a master's degree in early childhood education and a bachelor's degree in psychology. She has a strong personal interest in issues related to equity for children with special needs and behavioral challenges.



How do you define inclusion?

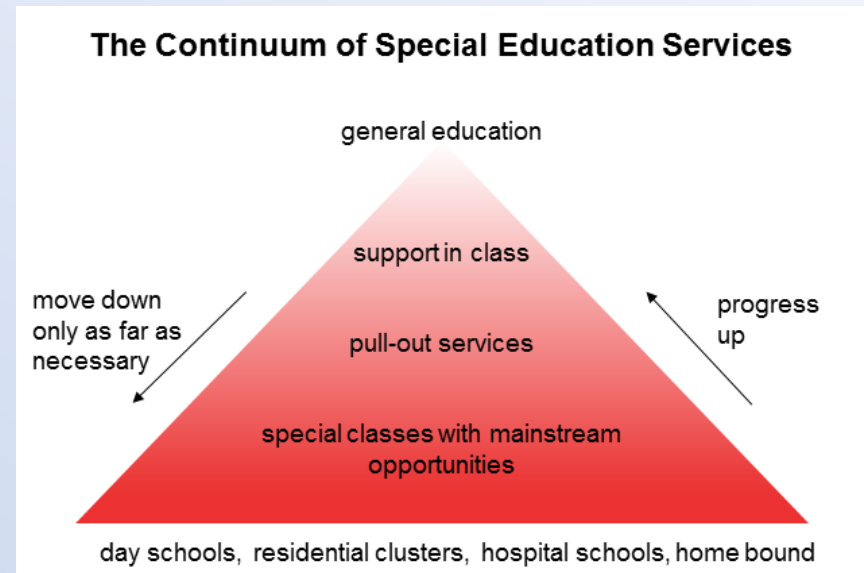


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DEC/NAEYC- Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion

“Inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every . . . child . . . to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members . . . society.

The defining features of inclusion . . . are access, participation, and supports”.



DEC/NAEYC. (2009). Early childhood inclusion: A summary. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

What are some of the benefits of inclusion?



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What the research says about inclusion

Children with disabilities CAN:

- Be effectively educated in inclusive settings using specialized instruction AND it is often less expensive than segregated settings
- Learn through embedded instruction
- Benefit from inclusion AND so can their typically developing peers

BUT

- Parents and teachers beliefs about inclusion influence the way children view disability

What is the landscape in NJ?



Fully included	Some inclusion	No inclusion
Attends a general education setting and receives the majority of services in the regular education program	Attends a general education program part of the time but receives the majority of special education services in some other location	Attends a special education program- not in any regular education setting
16%	44%	40%

How does NJ compare to the national data?

- Nationally, in 2012, 42.5% of 3–5 year-olds in inclusive settings (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).
- An increase of only 5.7% since 1985 (U.S. Department of Education, 1987, 2014).

Impediments to Inclusion?

Challenges to Preschool Inclusion

The 2014 Preschool Inclusion Survey asked respondents to identify the primary challenges they saw to including children with disabilities in regular preschool programs. Figure 1 lists the challenges recognized by survey respondents and the percentage of respondents citing each challenge.

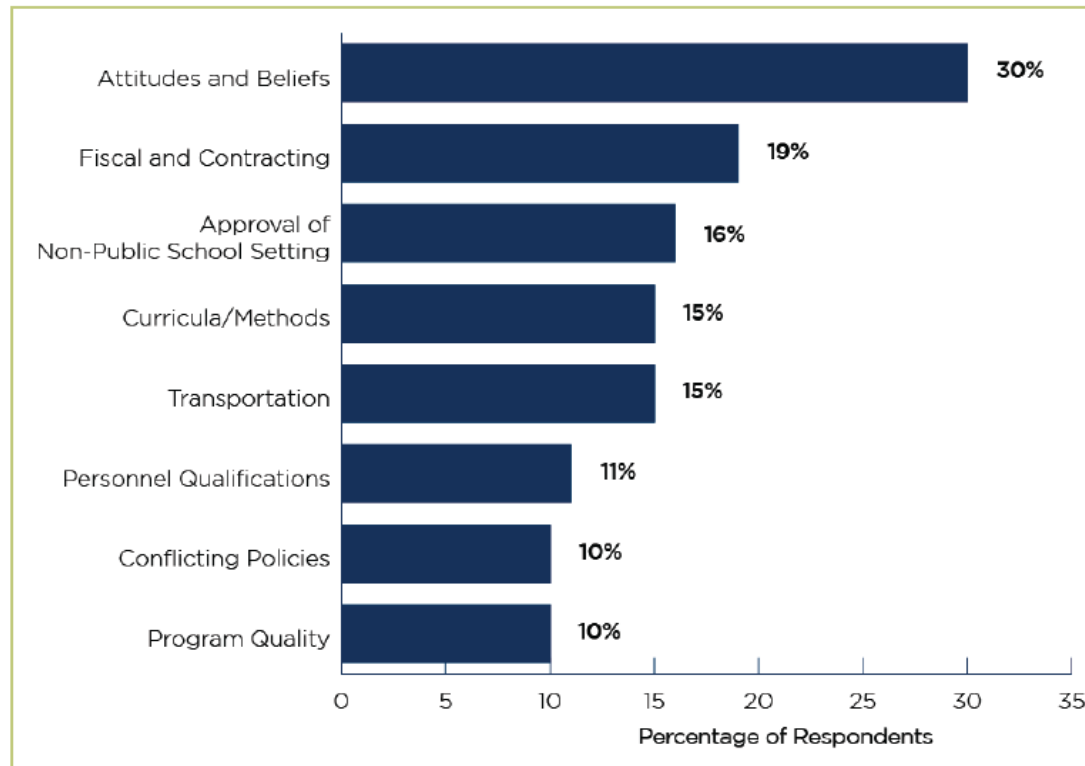


Figure 1. Common Challenges to Preschool Inclusion Identified by Survey Respondents

³ Links to these statements and additional resources on preschool inclusion are available on the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center's Inclusion webpage at <http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/default.asp>.

Impediments to Inclusion

- Survey results in 1993 (Smith & Rose) vs. 2014 show very little change in reported challenges and suggested solutions.
- The **major change** from 1993 to 2014 is that *attitude and belief* moved from being the second highest rated category of challenges to the highest rated.

What are some solutions?



New Opportunities for Fully Serving Preschoolers in Inclusive Settings

Funding for general education preschool expansion has been included in the last two state budgets—and odds are there will be more money in the future.

Eligible districts have the opportunity to create high quality, inclusive classroom settings where most, if not all, of their students with disabilities can be served.

What is high quality inclusive preschool?

- Child centered environment that supports exploration and play
- Research-based, content-rich, whole child curriculum that supports differentiation
- Ongoing professional development with specialized coaching for teachers
- Identification & interventions focused on social competence and the development of friendships among children with and without disabilities to ensure all children are accepted

Odom, S. L., Zercher, C., Li, S., Marquart, J., Sandall, S., & Brown, W. (2006)

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Thank you!



Working together we can improve early learning for all our children to enhance their well being and development.
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