Inclusion in Early Care and Education Settings

Early Childhood Special Education Summit 2019
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Objectives

1. Explain what is meant by inclusion of caring for Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) and disabilities;

2. Explain the benefits of inclusion and be able to dispel common myths; and

3. Assess your own attitudes and consider solutions to increase your capacity to care for CSHCN and disabilities.

Five Things for Inclusion

Things I do well:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Things I'd like to improve:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

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Child with Special Health Care Needs

Definition

A child with special health care needs 'has or is at risk for having a chronic behavioral, physical, emotional, or developmental condition that requires health or related services beyond those used by children generally'.
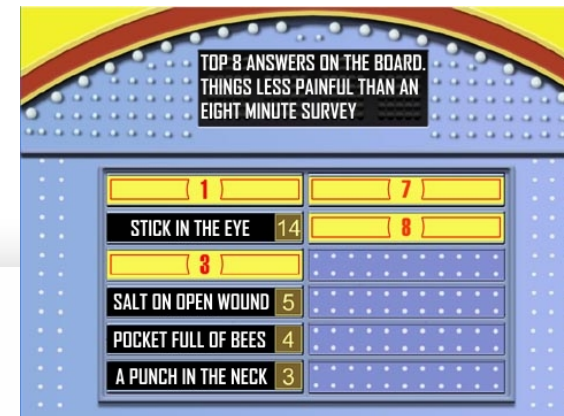
Survey

- Almost 300 licensed child care group home (CCGH) providers in the state of Arizona were surveyed from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017.

- Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, using Survey Monkey or by telephone, when necessary.

- Results were tallied and analyzed.

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Findings

- About half of survey respondents (51%) reported that they _would_ like to care for children with SN.

- Approximately 45% of survey respondents reported that they _would not_ like to care for children with SN.

Most common types of special health care needs reported included:

- severe allergies
- developmental delay
- autism spectrum disorder
- ADD/ADHD
- behavioral conditions

<u>Findings</u>

Top concerns regarding caring for children with SN included setting up the environment to meet the child's needs for <u>*both groups*</u> included:

- the cost/lack of special resources or equipment

- taking time away from other children

- setting up CCGH to meet child's needs

- fear about not meeting child's needs

What Do We Mean by Inclusion?

In an inclusive ECE setting means:

- Children of all physical, emotional, and academic abilities are cared for in the same environment.
- All children can participate in the same daily routines and activities. Special instruction and support are provided to children when needed.
- Children are recognized as individuals with specific strengths and needs that are considered and valued.

Some examples of ECE settings

- child care group home or family child care home

- child care center

- LEA preschool – ECSE or community-based

- Head Start/Early Head Start
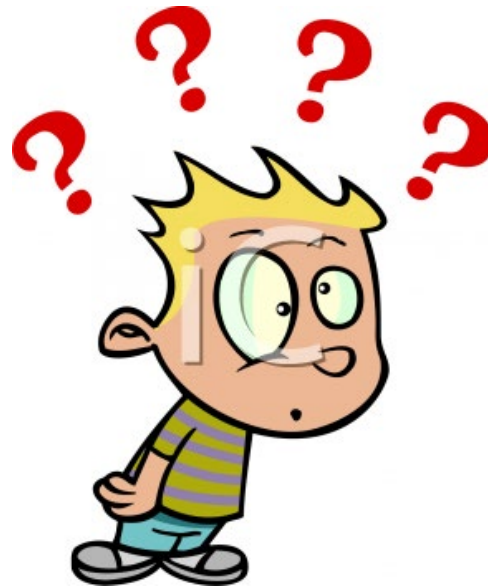
- out of school time (OOST)

- faith-based

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Brainstorm Activity:
What Do Parents Want?

What do parents want from child care?

NAEYC and DEC Definition

NAEYC = Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children

National Association for the Education of Young Children (0-8)

DEC =

Division for Early Childhood (0-8) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

Joint Position Statement

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.

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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, and development and learning to reach their full potential.

The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are *access, participation, and supports*.

Access

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.

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Participation

Participation – means using a range of instructional approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child.

<u>Supports</u>

Supports – refer to broader aspects of the system such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high quality inclusion.

What are the Benefits of Inclusion?

Benefits children, families and staff:

- Enhances experiences for all.

- Increases appreciation and acceptance of individual differences; recognizes that everyone has unique strengths and challenges.

- Increases empathy for others.

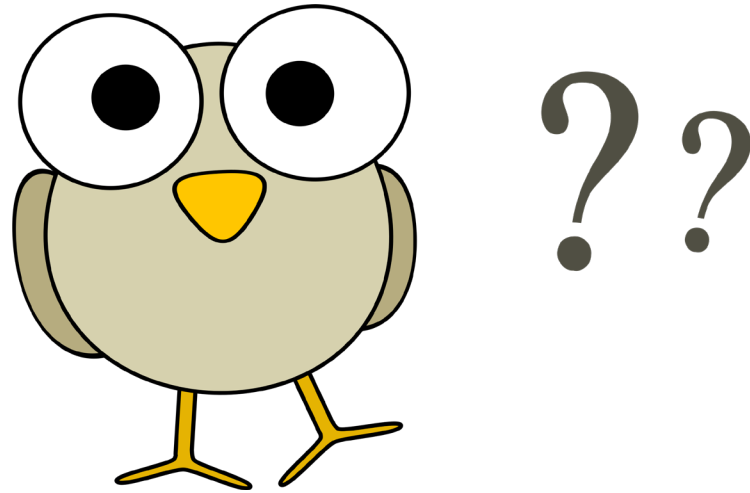- Replicates 'real life' communities (natural proportion).

Brainstorm Activity: What Holds Us Back?

What holds us back from providing inclusion in our programs?

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Identify Common Myths of Inclusion

- Jeopardizes the education of non-disabled students
- Children need expensive or difficult accommodations
- Staff don't have the skills/aren't trained in special ed.
- We don't have enough staff; children need too much care
- Children with special needs won't get the support they need
- Liability insurance will increase; they might get hurt

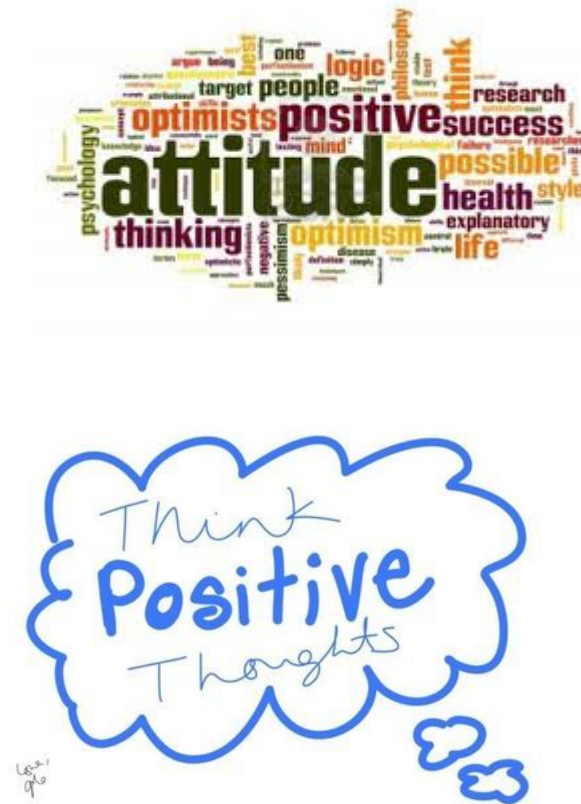MYTHS BUSTED

Language Matters

- ***People First Language puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is.***

- People-First Language emphasizes the person, not the disability. By placing the person first, the disability is no longer the primary, defining characteristic of an individual, but one of several aspects of the whole person. It eliminates generalizations and stereotypes, by focusing on the person rather than the disability.

- Are there exceptions?

Brainstorm Activity:
What Determines Our Attitudes

What Determines Attitudes?

- Our feelings or emotions (emotional)
- Our thoughts, beliefs and ideas (cognitive)
- Our tendency to act in certain ways (behavioral)

❖ Attitudes can change

➢ Our parents, our peers, the media
➢ Our values
➢ Our experiences or someone else's
➢ Our community/society norms

Values, Beliefs, and Attitudes

Values

- What one believes to be important in life

Beliefs

- How one thinks things really are, what is really true and what to expect when behaving a given way

Attitude

- A tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situations

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How Personal Values Are Formed

Life Experiences
- Family and childhood messages
- Lifestyle
- Age
- Geographic location
- Religious education
- Formal schooling
- Peer groups

Core Values

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Families

What Are Y*our* Next Steps?

- What is your program's philosophy around inclusion?

- Are you open-minded and willing to try?

- Review your '5 Steps' worksheet

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Resources

- Raising Special Kids - RSK

- DES/AzEIP (0-3) – Arizona Early Intervention Program

- ADE – ECSE (3-5) and ESS (5-21) – Special Education

- OCSHCN – Office of Children with Special Health Care Needs

  - Emergency Guidelines

Empower online Inclusion Course

<u>Individualize!</u>

- Every child is unique with differing strengths, interests, abilities and challenges.

- Labels and diagnoses don't tell the story.

- Quality programs individualize with all children and all families.

<u>Questions?</u>

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