The Benefits of Inclusion in Early Childhood
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Benefits of Inclusion in Early Childhood is the next article in the Inclusion, Suspension, and Expulsion series.

“Research demonstrates that participation of children with disabilities in regular early childhood settings with appropriate supports, accommodations and modifications results in improved outcomes for those children, and also provides benefits for their nondisabled peers.”  ~The Birth through Five Building Bridges Initiative

Not only does inclusive early care and education benefit the children with disabilities and the children without disabilities, but it also benefits the families and society, as a whole. The latter groups display an increased tolerance to those with disabilities, a greater understanding and respect for those who are less able, and increased acceptance overall.

Benefits of an Inclusive ECE
1. Families and children participate in, and contribute to, their communities.
2. Children develop a positive understanding of themselves and others.
3. Friendships develop among all children in and out of school, and are associated with important developmental outcomes and academic achievements. Through those friendships, children with and without disabilities learn how to cope with challenges, find alternative paths to success, and social and communication skills.
4. Learning, with specialized instruction as appropriate, is facilitated for all children. http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/3841

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.

Shared understandings about the meaning of inclusion should be the starting point for creating a system of services and supports for children with disabilities and their families. Such a system must reflect a continuum of services and supports that respond to the needs and characteristics of children with varying types of disabilities and levels of severity, including children who are at risk for disabilities.  https://www.naeyc.org
Early child care and education programs can and should develop resources for effective communication between families and early childhood program staff to ensure families know the benefits of and their rights related to inclusion.

The infographic, *The Benefits of Inclusion in Early Childhood* (below), shares the impact of inclusion for all children, families and communities. It can be shared with your families by downloading it from [http://www.papromiseforchildren.com/](http://www.papromiseforchildren.com/).
Previous articles in the Inclusion/Expulsion & Suspension Series:
Operatizing Suspensions and Expulsions
Introduction to the Preventexpulsions.org website
"How to Write a Program Philosophy" with Decision Tree
Guidelines to Support Implementation of OCDEL Announcement on Inclusion
Writing a Quality Inclusion Policy
How to Ensure that Barriers to Inclusion are Removed