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Early Intervention Training Program at the University of Illinois

[Home](#)[New to EI](#)[Training
Events](#)[Resources](#)[Credit
Requests](#)[About](#)[FAQ](#)[Newsletters](#)[COVID-19](#)

Principles of Early Intervention

Below you will find resources related to the principles of early intervention. Resources include a link to the Principles of Early Intervention that Illinois has adopted as the foundation for all early intervention services and national resources related to key principles in early intervention.

Illinois Early Intervention Principles

The Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention's "Principles of Early Intervention" guide the outcomes we hope to achieve through our Early Intervention Training Model. **A revised version of the principles was published in January 2021.** Therefore, the Principles of Early

Intervention found in the beginning of the **Illinois Early Intervention Provider Handbook** are obsolete.

The Illinois EI Principles are:

1. The primary goal of Early Intervention (EI) is to build caregiver capacity by supporting their ability to promote their child's optimal development and to facilitate their child's participation in family and community activities.
2. The focus of EI is to facilitate the active participation of families in the EI process by engaging caregivers in the planning and implementation of services, including embedding intervention strategies into family life, such as routines, activities and interactions with their child. It is the family/caregivers who provide the real EI by creatively adapting their caregiving methods to facilitate the development of their child, while balancing the needs of the rest of their family.
3. EI requires a collaborative relationship between families and professionals, with equal participation by all those involved in the process. An on-going, equal family-professional partnership and dialogue is needed to develop, implement, monitor, and modify intervention strategies and services.
4. Intervention must be linked to specific, family-centered, functional, and measurable Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) outcomes that are developed using culturally and linguistically responsive and affirming practices.
5. Services and interventions shall be integrated into a comprehensive IFSP that requires families and professionals work together to consistently exchange knowledge and information with each other. It also requires collaborating across disciplines within the broader early childhood system to increase the team's capacity to jointly solve problems and implement interventions. The plan shall be built around family strengths, priorities, resources, routines and activities and avoid unnecessary duplication of services. Services and strategies are based upon the best available research, recommended practices in the field and special education laws and regulations.
6. Services, interventions and progress should be monitored periodically through ongoing observations and discussions with all team members to ensure that the strategies implemented are successful in achieving outcomes.
7. Ongoing communication and collaboration with EI professionals, family members and professionals in partnering systems outside of EI, who are supporting each family is encouraged. Ongoing communication among all team members allows for coordinated, culturally-relevant and comprehensive services within and across systems to best support families' priorities, changing circumstances, and transitions.

8. Children and their families in the EI Program deserve to have services of the highest quality possible. High standards will be set for the training and credentialing of administrative and intervention staff. Training, supervision, and technology will be focused to achieve excellence.

Workgroup on Principles and Practices in Natural Environments

The **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)** TA Community of Practice- Part C Settings developed the following resources pertaining to key principles in early intervention:

- **Agreed Upon Mission and Key Principles for Providing Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments** (pdf) is a document that includes a "mission statement" that reflects the broad over-arching purpose of family-centered early intervention services provided under Part C of IDEA as well as Principles which are the foundations necessary to support the system of family-centered services and supports.
- **Seven Key Principles: Looks Like/Doesn't Look Like** (pdf) is a document that elaborates on the 7 key principles identified by work group members, listing the concepts underlying the brief statements. Each principle also has descriptive statements illustrating what the principle should "look like" in practice. There are also descriptions of what it "doesn't look like" because too often those practices are still being used.
- **Key Principles and Practices** includes the above-mentioned documents as well as related documents, such as literature supporting the principles and a crosswalk between the disciplines and principles.
- **An Annotated Bibliography of the Research Supporting Key Principles for Providing Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments** (pdf) includes the evidence based research that supports the Mission and Key Principles of Early Intervention. This resource was originally developed for the Washington State Department of Early Learning by **ECTA Center**.

DEC Recommended Practices

The **Division of Early Childhood (DEC)** Recommended Practices were developed to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The purpose is to help bridge the gap between research and practice by highlighting those practices that have been shown to result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the personnel who serve them.

College of Education

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