



MENTAL RETARDATION BULLETIN

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA • DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

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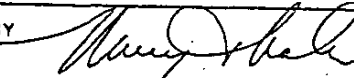
NUMBER

00-95-08

SUBJECT

EARLY INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

BY


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Deputy Secretary for Mental Retardation

SCOPE:

County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Administrators
Early Intervention Program Directors
Base Service Unit Directors
Early Intervention Service Coordinators

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to transmit the revised PRINCIPLES which continue to serve as the foundation for all early intervention services in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

This Bulletin revises Bulletin No. 00-92-13, issued July 17, 1992, entitled "Early Intervention Principles".

BACKGROUND:

The Pennsylvania Early Intervention System is being implemented in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Public Law 102-119, and the Pennsylvania Early Intervention Services System Act, Pennsylvania Act 212-1990. The statutes provide a value base for the early intervention system to be focused on the family. The early intervention initiative in Pennsylvania has evolved through collaboration by the Departments of Education, Health, and Public Welfare, and the State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). This collaborative effort has resulted in adoption of common principles upon which to base comprehensive services for all children and families. Recently the State ICC adopted, and the department endorsed, revised language reflected under the principles of "INCLUSION" described herein.

REFER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS TO:

Ms. Fran Markle, Early Intervention Specialist, Office of Mental Retardation
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DISCUSSION:

The Pennsylvania Early Intervention System is the total effort of a statewide, coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency system of appropriate developmental and support services to meet the needs of eligible infants, toddlers and young children, and their families. The Office of Mental Retardation, consistent with a family centered philosophy in the delivery of early intervention services, and in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Education has adopted principles to govern policies, training, monitoring, evaluation, and other aspects of the early intervention system.

The Early Intervention Principles are consistent with the enabling statutes and reflect current thinking in the field of early intervention. These principles are intended to provide a foundation upon which to plan, develop policy, monitor and evaluate services, train staff and develop and implement all other activities within local communities.

A. ALL EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES SHALL BE FAMILY CENTERED. THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES APPLY TO FAMILY CENTERED ACTIVITIES:

1. Celebrate all children and their families.
2. Recognize that families are the constant in a child's life which means they know their child best.
3. Recognize that each child and family is unique by honoring their beliefs and cultural, linguistic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity.
4. Share with parents, on a continuing basis and in a supportive manner, complete and unbiased information.
5. Recognize and value family strengths.
6. Honor family priorities.
7. Recognize and value families' dreams for their children.
8. Respect choices and decisions made by families thus maximizing the family's control over supports and services they receive.
9. Respect the family's right to accept or reject supports and services.
10. Respect families' different methods of coping with life's events.
11. Provide a range of service, support, and resource options.
12. Provide a range of options which are flexible and can be adapted to meet the unique needs of the child and family.

B. INCLUSION HAS POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR ALL FAMILIES AND CHILDREN. THE PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSION ARE:

1. Promote family access and participation in all activities and resources of the community.
2. Develop and implement coordinated support services for all children and families in local communities.
3. Support and enhance the abilities of families and children for self advocacy.
4. Ensure early intervention services are provided in natural environments.
5. Acknowledge parental right to choose the type of appropriate natural environment.
6. Foster individual family beliefs and their unique cultural, linguistic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.
7. Protect the rights of all children according to their diverse abilities and individual needs.

C. QUALITY EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES SHALL BE DIRECTED BY BEST PRACTICES. THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES APPLY TO BEST PRACTICES:

1. Adherence to family centered principles.
2. Adherence to inclusion principles.
3. Application of state-of-the-art early intervention and early childhood practices.
4. Active and continuous improvement of programs, practices, and methods.
5. Conduct evaluations and use data to improve services.

The early intervention initiatives shall reflect the aforementioned principles, and adapted to Pennsylvania's diversity of communities, geographic locations, socioeconomic and cultural influences, and any other significant factors to tailor a comprehensive service delivery system.

OBSOLETE BULLETIN:

Office of Mental Retardation No. 00-92-13, issued July 17, 1992, entitled "Early Intervention Principles".