



## Inclusion Procedure

The purpose of the Inclusion Department is to provide assistance and consultation to child care providers for the purpose of including every child, regardless of ability, in the opportunity to participate fully in a broad range of activities offered in the early learning environment so as to prepare them to enter and succeed in school.

The following guidelines establish the procedures to be followed by the Inclusion Specialists of the Coalition in carrying out the Inclusion Policy.

### Guidelines

#### 1. Promote an increase in the number of providers offering quality inclusive programs for children with disabilities and/or special needs.

- Establish a Warm Line as the mechanism for provider referrals.
  - Calls to the Warm Line will be routed to the Inclusion Specialists who will respond within 48 hours.
  - Contact logs of all Warm Line calls will be maintained for reporting and monitoring purposes.
  - Inclusion Specialists will prioritize Warm Line calls based on the expressed needs of the child.
- Inclusion Specialist will complete an Intake Packet with all providers making a referral. Children must be enrolled in a program for a minimum of eight (8) weeks in order to receive Inclusion Services.
  - Intake Packet will include the following **required** documents:
    - Request for Inclusion Services Form
    - Informed Consent for Services Form
    - ASQ-SE completed by the teacher and parent/guardian
  - Intake Packet may include the following additional documents:
    - Behavioral Information Form
    - Classroom and child observations
    - List of interventions used to improve challenging behaviors in the classroom
    - Other Diagnostic Screeners, if applicable, completed by the teacher and parent/guardian
- Providers making excessive referrals will be evaluated and accepted on a case by case basis.
- Provide technical assistance to all providers in the service area through email, telephone, on-site visits, and distribution of materials.
  - Provide specific information on curriculum, strategies, child development, health, environmental adaptation, disability laws and regulations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Identify centers or family child care homes *that have* or *do not have* children with disabilities currently enrolled in their programs and that would like to receive training and technical assistance regarding quality inclusive early care and education.

**2. Increase the knowledge, confidence, and skills of early educators who care for children with disabilities and/or special needs.**

- Provide Inclusion services through a consistent and unified methodology offered to early childhood educators for them to provide an inclusive environment for all children. This will be done through:
  - Classroom observation
  - Training and technical assistance to the teacher/center
  - Child observation
- Respond in a timely manner to requests for information, training and technical assistance from all providers in the service area to the maximum extent possible.
- Work with Child Care Resource & Referral to ensure that all providers are aware of Inclusion services.
- Provide training opportunities open to all providers at least once per quarter. Requests for trainings will be provided to the maximum extent possible.

**3. Assist child care providers and parents with information and access to resources available in the local community for children with disabilities and/or special needs.**

- Develop constructive and collaborative relationships with other entities that serve children with disabilities and/or special needs (Florida Diagnostic and Learning Research Systems (FDLRS), Functional Improvement Team (FIT), Community Inclusion Teams, Technical Assistance and Training System (TATS) Regional Facilitators, Early Steps, BayCare, and other community partners/resources).
- Identify and obtain/compile a list of community resources that can assist providers with accommodations and adaptations using such available resources from Child Care Resource & Referral.

**4. Increase community awareness of the need for, requirements of and benefits associated with providing inclusive early care and education for children with disabilities and/or special needs.**

- Prepare and deliver information and/or presentations about Inclusion, ADA requirements, inclusive early care environments and other topics related to children with disabilities and special needs on an as needed basis but not to exceed one time per quarter.

- Disseminate professional materials to communicate with providers and the local community regarding ADA and the need for and benefits for all children of quality, inclusive early care and education programs.

**5. Provide mental health services to children and supportive services to families in need of intervention.**

- Identify children who exhibit social, emotional, and behavioral challenges.
- Refer children who continue to display challenging behavior and have not improved as a result of Inclusion services to the Program Manager.
- Contract with outside agency for Mental Health services, as needed.