



MAP* Winter Newsletter 2016

*Making Access Possible

January 2016

Building a Culture of Inclusion and Belonging: Ten Guiding Questions

[MAP* to Inclusion and Belonging... *Making Access Possible](#) Project provides information, resources, supports and training to help child care providers, educators, specialists and families include children and youth with disabilities or other special needs in child care, after school and community settings. MAP is dedicated to promoting resources and supports that help to enable all children to be fully participating and valued members of their communities. The MAP newsletter alerts you to newly identified resources and practices that support children's optimal development and well-being in high-quality environments where children with and without disabilities or other special needs can thrive together.

The MAP Winter Newsletter 2016 introduces the federal Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs. The ten questions below guide you in exploring the latest information and resources supporting inclusion posted on the MAP website including those in the federal Policy Statement, current state and national resources and other newly released resources. Discover everything you need to build a culture of inclusion and belonging for not only preschoolers, but everyone!

Introducing the Policy Statement on Inclusion for Young Children with Disabilities: Building a Culture of Inclusion

The year 2015 marked the 25th anniversary of the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and the [40th Anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#). These laws have opened the doors of opportunity for people of all ages with disabilities to access the community and education. While the progress that's been made with these laws is cause for celebration, the federal government recognizes and has definitively stated that there's so much more to be done especially in early care and education. In September of 2015 the U.S. Department of Education along with the Department of Health and Human Services released the [Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs](#). An excerpt from the "Purpose" provides a summary of this visionary Policy Statement:



The purpose of this policy statement is to set a vision and provide recommendations...for increasing the inclusion of infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities in high-quality early childhood programs.

It is the Departments' position that all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in meeting high expectations. This joint ED and HHS policy statement aims to advance this position by:

- *Setting an expectation for high-quality inclusion....;*
- *Increasing public understanding of the science that supports meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities, from the earliest ages....;*
- *Highlighting the legal foundations supporting inclusion...;*
- *Providing recommendations... for increasing inclusive early learning opportunities for all children; and*
- *Identifying free resources... to support high-quality individualized programming and inclusion... in early childhood programs.*

Though this policy statement focuses on including young children with disabilities in early childhood programs, it is our shared vision that all people be meaningfully included in all facets of society.



Linda Brault, Director of the MAP to Inclusion and Belonging Project and a primary author of [Inclusion Works!](#), pointed out that, "This is the first time the federal government has used the word "inclusion" in recommending an educational setting for children with disabilities." The Policy Statement on Inclusion goes beyond early intervention in "natural environments" and education in "least restrictive environments" and promotes a shared vision that all people are meaningfully included in society. "*This begins in early childhood programs and continues*

into schools, places of employment, and the broader community." The Policy Statement on Inclusion is a call to action to "build a nationwide culture of inclusion."

The MAP to Inclusion and Belonging Project Team challenges you to reflect on where you are with the culture of inclusion. What are your values, beliefs, and understanding about inclusion? What do you know about the law and inclusive practices? What are your next steps in building a culture of inclusion in 2016?



1. Why High-Quality Early Childhood Education for All Children?

In her TED talk, [Assembly of the Healthy Child](#), Dr. Kathleen Gallagher from the University of North Carolina Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute makes a powerful case for why all children need high-quality early education.



Assembly of the Child | Dr. Kathleen Gallagher | TEDxMemphis



Everyone needs to feel included. Hear what this very articulate [6 year old, Grant](#), has to say about what he wants and needs from other people and the world. His words could be voiced by any child or adult for that matter. Grant says, "I'm a six year old and I'm just like anyone else." Then he shows us! [Find both of these videos in MAP's Video Collection](#).

The [US Office of Special Education \(OSEP\) Funded Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center \(ECTA\)](#) recently completed a webinar series on inclusion and posted summaries of the latest research supporting inclusion. The **Fact Sheet of Research on Inclusion (2014)** by Dr. Erin Barton and Dr. Barbara Smith and **Inclusion for Preschool Children with Disabilities: What we Know and What we Should be Doing (2014)** provide compelling evidence supporting and providing a rationale for building high quality inclusive preschool programs.

The poster, **10 Reasons for Inclusive Schools**, reminds us why inclusive schools are good for all children. It's available to download at [Inclusive Classroom.com](#). While you are there, take a look at the articles in the left hand column of the site. Check out: 'Is it Inclusion?' for a chart that points out what is and is not inclusion.



2. What Does High Quality Inclusion Look Like? See the Videos!

The [Desired Results Access Project](#) with the expert help of Larry Edelman, Producer and Project Coordinator of the [Results Matter Video Library](#) and consultant to the DRaccess Project, has produced videos that show what's possible for children in high-quality inclusive programs. **Team Lydia Rose: Supporting Inclusion Every Day in Every Way** is the story of Lydia Rose and her family from before she was born until she was a toddler. It demonstrates high-quality early intervention services in natural environments. In **Win, Win: Inclusive Preschool Settings** you'll see and hear about successful collaborations between regular and special education that have created fully inclusive preschools in Sacramento. **Getty's Window To Inclusion: The Chance To Be Just Like Any Other Kid** illustrates how essential early childhood inclusion is for all children, including those who cannot be in close proximity to other children because of health concerns and vividly demonstrates key elements of inclusion. [Find the link to these videos in MAP's Video Collection](#).

3. What Does the Law Say About Inclusion in Early Education and Preschool Settings?

[The Policy Statement on Inclusion](#) lays out a summary of the legal foundation for inclusion in the body of the document and details of applicable federal law in Appendix 1.

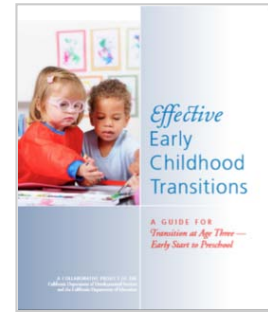
[A Parent's Guide to the Americans with Disabilities Act and Child Care](#), a MAP publication, provides information relevant to private child care providers and families. Downloadable in both English and Spanish.

[A Brief Overview of California's Early Start](#), a MAP Training PowerPoint, updated in June 2015 to

reflect the recent changes in law, describes early intervention services in California including services in "natural environments." It's easy to understand and comes with detailed notes.

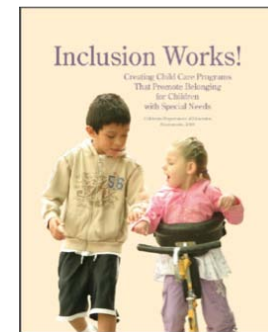
[The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center \(ECTA\)](#) explains education in "least restrictive environments" under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as well as the provision of services in "natural environments" under Part C of IDEA.

The California Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services publication, [Effective Early Childhood Transitions: A Guide for Transition at Age Three](#), updated in 2015, is a guide to regulations and recommended practices for transition at age three. Do your transition IEP teams discuss inclusive preschool options with families?



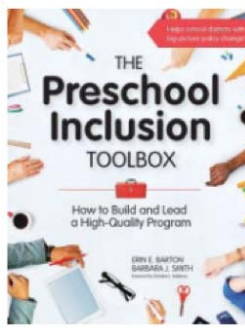
4. What Do You Need to Build an Inclusive Preschool Program?

If you are in the process of building an inclusive early childhood setting, [Inclusion Works!](#), a California Department of Education publication downloadable from MAP, is the perfect primer on inclusion. It describes the key elements of inclusion and strategies to promote inclusion and belonging for all children. Eight true life examples of inclusive strategies for children from age 11 months to 12 years with different disabilities demonstrate that "inclusion works!"



[ECTA](#) has launched a campaign to bring widespread awareness about the **Division of Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices (RPs)**. The latest

ECTA resources to support implementation of the RPs include **Performance Checklists for Practitioners**, **Practice Guides for Practitioners** and **Practice Guides for Families**.



For a more comprehensive guide to building an inclusive preschool, consider the book by Barton and Smith (2015), [The Preschool Inclusion Toolbox: How to Build and Lead a High Quality Program](#). This is the how-to book preschool administrators, school district leaders, child care directors, and faculty need to step up the progress of early childhood inclusion through big-picture, systems-level change. It is a comprehensive toolbox of problem-solving tips, evidence-based practices, and practical checklists and handouts.

[Brookes Publishing Inclusion Lab](#) created a free downloadable infographic, **Ten Inclusion Teamwork Tips**, created with information from *The Preschool Inclusion Tool Box*. It provides an essential "To Do" list required for effective teamwork for inclusion for any age group. Check out the inclusion "Success Story" while you are at the Inclusion Lab.



5. How Do You Address the Unique Needs and Abilities of All Children to Build a Culture of Inclusion?

[The DEC/NAEYC Joint Position Statement on Inclusion](#) states that, "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. It defines and describes the principles of access, participation and support as essential to all high-quality early childhood programs. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) addresses the concept of access for all children. See the video and other UDL resources at the [Building Inclusive Child Care site](#). The California Department of Education's [High Quality Early Learning Environments \(HQELE\)](#) takes you on a virtual tour of the Mira Costa Child Development Center and demonstrates elements of a high quality preschool environment that's built for easy access for all children.

Participation is aided by accommodations and adaptations. You'll find ideas for both at [ConnectAbility](#), a Canadian website, and [Head Start Inclusion](#), both of which offer ideas for participation using accommodations and adaptations. [Santa Clara County Office of Education Inclusion Collaborative](#) has created an Adaptation Bin full of all kinds of adaptations that you can build yourself or buy for a nominal fee. The [Visual Supports page of MAP](#) also provides many useful resources that support children's learning.

[CONNECT Modules](#) from Frank Porter Graham offer a problem solving approach and multi-media resources to meeting inclusion challenges on a variety of topics.

6. What Do You Need to Know About Specific Disabilities?

A basic knowledge of a child's specific disability and resources available to support that disability can be helpful in addressing the needs of both the family and the child. [The Disability Specific area on the MAP website](#) houses information, resources, national associations, and family support organizations for many common disabilities. Under "General Disabilities" you'll find [NORD, the National Organization for Rare Disorders](#), to help you find resources and support for less common disorders. Below are the latest resources added for specific disabilities.

Autism

According to the Center for Disease Control's latest survey the incidence of Autism is now 1 in every 45 children. [The Friendship Circle Blog](#) discusses what this might mean. What we know is that children with autism are in our classrooms and the community. Understanding their needs and the best ways to support their learning will help them succeed, not only in an inclusive school setting, but as adults. [Positivity and Inclusion Go A Long Way to Help Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) describes the results of research conducted by the University of Wisconsin at Madison that provides evidence of the lasting effects of a positive environment and inclusion on the lives of people with autism.



[Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children](#) Sesame Street's new website includes tips for parents and siblings, as well as guides to help kids on the spectrum learn everyday basics like brushing teeth and going to the grocery store. In addition, the initiative includes an iPad app and printed storybooks.

Sesame Street is introducing a new character named Julia, a preschool girl with autism who "does things a little differently when playing with her friends." [See the Sesame Street Autism: Highlights Reel video](#) in the MAP Video Collection to get a taste of the new website and meet some families of children with autism.

"Sesame Workshop is uniquely positioned to play a meaningful role in increasing peoples' understanding about autism," said Sherrie Westin, executive vice president of global impact and philanthropy at Sesame Workshop. "This project is an extension of the belief we've always promoted: 'we are all different, but all the same.'"

Cerebral Palsy

In addition to being familiar with local and national support groups, a parent's voice in real time describing her life as a parent of a child with cerebral palsy provides new insight into the experience of parents. [She Keeps Moving](#) is a blog that describes one family's journey with their daughter, born in 2014, who has Cerebral Palsy.

Down Syndrome

[See the trailer for the A&E Network premiere of the series "Born This Way"](#). A&E Network premiered the new original docu-series "Born This Way," following a group of seven young adults born with Down Syndrome along with their family and friends in Southern California. The six-episode, hour-long series from Bunim-Murray Productions premiered Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at 10 PM ET/PT. [A link to watch full episodes to this series is on the Video Collection page under Down Syndrome.](#)

7. What Training and Technical Assistance is Available to Support Inclusion?

[The Training and Technical Assistance area of MAP](#) describes the California Department of Education (CDE) funded training and technical assistance projects that support high-quality early care and education programs and inclusion. These include the [Program of Infant Toddler Caregivers \(PITC\)](#) for training on



high-quality child care for infants and toddlers and [Beginning Together](#) for training on inclusion of infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities in child care settings. [The California Preschool Instructional Network \(CPIN\)](#) offers several trainings on inclusion. Check their calendar for trainings on Inclusion Works! [The California Inclusion and](#)

[Behavior Consultation Network \(CIBC\)](#) provides onsite consultation to support early care and education providers serving children birth to age 5 who have disabilities or other special needs including challenging behavior.



[CA CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid](#), approved by the California Department of Education, available from WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies, provides program-wide training supporting social and emotional development, emotional literacy and positive behavioral support in preschool settings. [The site houses downloadable materials for classrooms and families](#) related to supporting social and emotional development. Many of these materials have been translated into Chinese and Spanish.

[Santa Clara County Office of Education-Inclusion Collaborative](#) offers different types of professional development on inclusion:

- **California's Annual Inclusion Collaborative Conference** (Save the dates of October 27 & 28, 2016)
- **EPIC (Education Preparation for Inclusive Classrooms)**, special education credential programs.
- **Online Inclusion Collaborative Community of Practice** that includes periodic webinars, resources and access to inclusion experts.

National online training on inclusion is available from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina's [CONNECT](#). This comprehensive program offers eight online training courses on inclusion. The introductory online course is free and

CONNECT

the other seven are offered at the low cost of \$30 and provides CEUs.

"State Developed Resources to Support Inclusion" are identified by the federal [Policy Statement on Inclusion](#) in Appendix 4. The Minnesota based [Center for Inclusive Child Care \(CICC\)](#) has 10 minute podcasts, information and training modules on multiple topics supporting high quality inclusive early childhood settings.

8. What Agencies in Your Community Support Children with Disabilities and Their Families and May Be Able to Help with Inclusive Preschool Options?



[MAP's "County Specific Resources"](#) provides contact information and links to organizations supporting families of children with disabilities. [Early Start Family Resource Centers](#), funded by the California Department of Developmental Services, are managed and staffed by parents of children with disabilities. They support children with disabilities ages birth to three and their families in accessing services and learning about early intervention. Many of these resource centers are also federally funded [Parent Training and Information Centers \(PTI\)](#), that provide training to parents of children birth to 21 on

disabilities, special education and resources.



Congratulations to the WarmLine Family Resource Center in Sacramento!

They were recently awarded a federal grant to be a Parent Training and Information Center. [Find contact information to WarmLine under the Early Start Family Resource Center tab.](#)

Regional Centers, California Resource and Referral Agencies, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA's), County Offices of Education and Head Start Programs all may provide support or information about inclusive preschool options in your county. Some counties have inclusion committees or inclusion support. [See MAP's "County Specific Resources"](#) for contact information and weblinks for all of these organizations in each county as well as Early Start Family Resource Centers.

[Visit the National Center for Parent Information and Resources](#) for an interactive map of the United States that will identify both Community Parent Resource Centers and Parent Training and Information Centers in each state. This site also houses the NICHCY Legacy resources.



9. How Do You Build a Culture of Inclusion for School Age Children and Teens?

According to the Policy on Statement on Inclusion, attitudes and beliefs have been the most frequently

reported barrier to inclusion for several decades



[KIT, Kids Included Together, National Training Institute on Inclusion](#) is a nonprofit organization that provides best practices trainings to help communities, businesses, and child care & recreation programs include children with all kinds of disabilities and special needs. They believe that "disability is a natural part of

the human experience. Almost everyone knows someone who has or will have a disability - or will directly experience disability themselves." [Torrie Dunlap, the executive director, presents a TED Talk that examines "special needs"](#) and helps us reflect on authentic inclusion and belonging for everyone.

Viewing disability
as a form of
diversity rather
than a deficiency
enables positive
outcomes. KIT



[Circle of Friends \(CoF\)](#) is a non-profit organization that started in 1999 on the campus of Santa Monica High School when a student with Down Syndrome was observed sitting alone at lunch. He was isolated at lunch, a time when all other teenagers on his high school campus were eating with friends. They built a different "circle" of 2-3 non-disabled peers around him daily and he became fully woven into the fabric of his campus...thus began "Circle of Friends." CoF provides the opportunity for students with disabilities to build genuine friendships with non-disabled peers. Nationwide, CoF establishes a social inclusion program on school campuses that increases the understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of differences while decreasing bullying, creating a safer school environment in which all students can learn. Students with disabilities are integrated into mainstream campus life and helped to expand the new relationships they have formed into the community at large. [Watch the video to hear about the program and to see the impact on peers, both non-disabled and disabled.](#) Then call and ask about starting a chapter at your school!

10. What's Your Plan for Inclusion in 2016?

The MAP team has been focused on inclusion and belonging since its inception in 1998. We are committed to spreading information and encouraging thoughtful planning across the state (and country). We will keep you posted on state and local efforts on implementing the recommendations of the federal [Policy on Inclusion in Early Childhood](#) and welcome you to share your efforts with us.

The Inclusion Lab at Brooke's Publishing recently posted [Inclusion Resolutions: 10 Things to Do to Include All Students in the New Year](#). These thoughtful ideas and resources along with the federal [Policy on Inclusion in Early Childhood](#) and everything in this newsletter will help you to move forward with a plan for building or enhancing inclusion of children of all ages in school and in the community.

For more information on inclusion visit the [MAP to Inclusion and Belonging website](#) or contact the MAP Team at map@wested.org.

Wishing everyone a year of inclusion and belonging in 2016!

Direct questions or comments about this news brief to map@wested.org



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