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PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN BIRTH THROUGH FIVE YEARS  
OF AGE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS OR DISABILITIES

Early intervention and early childhood special education provide the necessary individualized supports and services to enable young children who experience developmental delays or disabilities to build upon their abilities and prepare them to be successful in school and later life. When these services are provided in a timely and appropriate manner, and in the context of natural and least restrictive environments, the need for further specialized intervention can often be eliminated or reduced. Partnership with families is essential to meet the developmental needs of young children and supports the enhancement of the quality of life for the child and family.

Eligibility/Assessment

Eligibility determination should be conducted in an efficient and effective manner leading to establishment of need. Assessment should recognize the variable nature of young children's performance and the potential for rapid change in their developmental status. Assessment should be ongoing, inform instruction, and be directly linked to intervention that is predicated on the child's strengths. Administrative structures and funding mechanisms for services to young children should not require the assignment of specific diagnostic labels.

Intervention/Instruction

Intervention must be planned and intentional, addressing positive social/emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behavior. Individualized outcomes for children and families must be identified and referenced to the priorities, culture, beliefs, values and language of those being served and demonstrate a respect for characteristics of uniqueness including race, ethnicity, religion, education, income, ability, and family configuration. Services must be guided by principles of ethical practice, built on a foundation of research and evidence-based practice, reflect the wisdom of the field, be referenced to professionally recommended practices, and be designed to optimize developmental outcomes.

Children Under Age Three

Early intervention should be provided within the context of the family, reflective of the supportive guidance provided by the Kansas Early Learning Standards while meeting individual needs, and designed to promote access and learning through typical everyday routines, experiences, and opportunities. Families should be partners in assessment and primary providers of intervention.

Children Ages Three Through Five

Special education services should be delivered in the setting where the child would be if s/he did not have a disability and include a predominance of typically developing peers. Curriculum

and intervention for young children with disabilities should be grounded in the Kansas Early Learning Standards, with services individualized to provide the supports needed to allow each child to have meaningful access to and participation in a variety of early learning experiences and environments. Families continue to be key and essential partners in the education of their child.

### Service Providers

Individual Family Service Plan and Individual Education Plan teams should be composed of all professionals necessary to address the needs of the child, with families being equal partners in any and all decisions. Professionals delivering services to young children and families should have appropriate training, demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary for the delivery of quality service, hold the appropriate credential for their profession, and access professional development/learning opportunities throughout their career.

### Interagency Collaboration

No single agency is capable of meeting all of the needs that young children with or at risk for developmental delays and disabilities and their families may require. Programs should reflect quality as identified in the Kansas Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education. Funding for services should come from a variety of sources. Interagency collaboration is essential and produces the most comprehensive and uninterrupted delivery of services. As appropriate, interagency agreements should be developed to institutionalize understandings between community providers addressing issues such as screening, evaluation, sharing of information, financing and delivery of services, individual plan development, agency reporting requirements, staff training and supervision, and transitions between services and agencies.

*KANSAS COORDINATING COUNCIL ON EARLY  
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES*  
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