



## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET THERE?

### PROVIDING ITINERANT SERVICES IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS

# QUALITY PROGRAMS

Early childhood programs must ensure that the developmental needs of young children with disabilities are met in inclusive settings, yet the itinerant teacher's job is not to act as the "quality police." The information provided in this section contains strategies and tools that itinerant programs might consider when working with community early childhood programs.

Improving Quality in Early Childhood Environments through On-site Consultation (Palsha & Wesley, 1998) provides one strategy for preparing itinerant staff to work on-site alongside the staff of early care and education programs.

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## High Quality Early Childhood Programs

Inclusion is most successful when it occurs in high quality early childhood programs (Wolery & Odom, 2000). For inclusion to work well, early childhood programs must commit to make adaptations and modifications that will meet the developmental needs of children with disabilities. This will require early childhood special education and early childhood professionals to work together to ensure that children's goals/outcomes are embedded into the program's routines and activities. Sandall and her colleagues (Sandall & Schwartz, 2002) identified several components of developmentally appropriate, high quality learning environments:

- Engaging interactions
- A responsive and predictable environment
- Many opportunities for learning
- Teaching that is matched to the child and activity
- Developmentally appropriate materials, activities, and interactions
- Safe and hygienic practices
- Appropriate levels of child guidance

Measures of classroom quality have been developed to provide early childhood programs with a means to assess their own program's quality. These measures can also be used in collaboration with early childhood special education professionals to jointly examine the quality of a childcare/preschool program (Palsha & Wesley, 1998).

Palsha, S. A., & Wesley, P. W. (1998). Improving quality in early childhood environments through on-site consultation. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 18(4), 243-253.

Sandall, S. R., Schwartz, I. S., Joseph, G. E., Chou, H.-Y., Horn, E. M., Lieber, J., Odom, S. L., & Wolery, R. (2002). *Building blocks for teaching preschoolers with special needs*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Wolery, R. A., & Odom, S. L. (2000). *An administrator's guide to preschool inclusion*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Center, Early Childhood Research Institute on Inclusion.

## Examples of Early Childhood Quality Measures

### General Measures

#### **Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ECERS-R)\***

Harms, T., Clifford, R. M., & Cryer, D. (2005), 96 pages  
Scoring sheets may be reproduced from the original in the scale.  
\$19.95 through Teachers College Press  
<http://store.tcpres.com/0807745499.shtml>

#### **Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised (ITERS-R)\***

Harms, T., Cryer, D., & Clifford, R. M. (2002), 72 pp.  
\$14.95 through Teachers College Press  
<http://store.tcpres.com/0807742996.shtml#730>

#### **Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS)\***

Harms, T., & Clifford, R. M. (1989), 48 pp.  
\$16.95 through Teachers College Press  
<http://store.tcpres.com/0807729558.shtml#386>

#### **Classroom Practice Inventory**

Hyson, M. C., Hirsch-Pasek, K., & Rescorla, L. (1990). The classroom practices inventory: An observation instrument based on the NAEYC's guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices for 4- and 5- year old children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 5, pp. 475-494.

### Inclusive Measures

#### **Quality of Inclusive Experiences Measure (QuIEM) M. Wolery,**

Brashers, Pauca, & Grant (2000)  
<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~inclusion/Instruments/QuIEM/quiem.htm>

#### **DEC Recommended Practices: A Comprehensive Guide for Practical Application in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education\***

Sandall, Hemmeter, McLean & Smith (2005)  
\$35.00 through DEC  
<http://www.dec-sped.org>

\* available for check out from Early Childhood Resource Center at <http://kskits.org/ecrc/index.html>