

EI/ECSE Program Philosophy – Whole Family Support

In a Nutshell.....

A program philosophy guides program practices. But a program philosophy is useful only if articulated and shared/understood by all program practitioners. Individual philosophies merge through discussion, education and a shared belief in a common cause. The recently revised IDEA Part C regulations (2011) communicate more clearly than ever the intent to have EI programs provide whole family support, which ultimately promotes positive child outcomes. How does your EI/ECSE program carry this out? Eligibility for EI/ECSE services are determined by whether or not a child has a disability. However, the child is part of a family and the evidence is clear: Children spend many, many more hours with their families than they do with you. EI/ECSE is intended to enhance how children learn in familiar everyday activities, with familiar adults. Recognizing that children are part of families and that intervention or supports must take this into consideration, changes the focus of our efforts. It is the caregivers who have the greatest influence on their child's development and learning.

Key principles to consider...

1. Building relationships with families should be based on their unique strengths and priorities.
2. Families and caregivers are the primary focus of your intervention and support.
3. Most intervention occurs between your visits, when children are with their families in home, center and community settings.
4. All families have the capacity to enhance their child's development, given self-identified emotional, material and informational supports.

Why is whole family support so important?

A philosophy promoting positive relationships with whole family support is critical to the success of your program. Every contact with families and community agencies should portray your program's philosophy of whole family support, including written materials, initial telephone contacts, meetings, service delivery and transitions into center based or elementary programs. Implementing these key principles in your program's practices by all staff will allow you to achieve positive child and family outcomes.

[Team Assessment Home-Based Item #14](#)

Reference Materials

- DEC Recommended Practices, Chapter 9 pg 189
- [DEC/NAEYC Inclusion](#)
- [NECTAC Mission](#)

Samples

- Grand Island brochure
[English](#) & [Spanish](#)
- ESU7 brochure
[English](#) & [Spanish](#)

Regulations

- [SC Manual](#)

Tools