



NATIONAL CENTER ON

Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning



Disabilities Services Newsletter

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Supporting Children Who Are Dual Language Learners (DLLs) with Disabilities or Suspected Delays

Ensuring the full and effective participation of children who are dual language learners (DLLs) with disabilities or suspected delays is a critical component of inclusion. Children who are DLLs are learning two or more languages at the same time or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language. This includes all children who have a home language other than English. Children who are DLLs can benefit from a range of strategies and activities to support their development and learning. These strategies promote meaningful, relevant, and active participation in early learning experiences alongside their peers. They are particularly important for children who are DLLs with disabilities or suspected delays. In this issue, find resources you can use to support these children at home and in the classroom.

Read About It



Ms. Tamara sits down next to 3-year-old Miguel, who is playing quietly in the block area. Miguel is a DLL and his home language is Spanish. While he does not use many words at home, his family says he seems to understand most of what they say to him. Miguel also knows some words in English, but he is very quiet and does not use many words in either language at school. Miguel has a developmental delay, and while Ms. Tamara has experience supporting children with disabilities, she is less sure about how to fully support and engage Miguel both as a child with a disability and as a DLL. She asks her disabilities coordinator to observe her classroom and help come up with a plan to make sure she is meeting Miguel's developmental and language needs. She is eager to learn about strategies she can apply in her classroom to better engage Miguel and facilitate his development. The disabilities coordinator schedules a time to meet with Ms. Tamara so together they can review resources and develop an individualized plan to build on Miguel's strengths and meet his needs in the classroom.

Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children Who Are DLLs in Early Childhood Programs

Find recommendations from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) for promoting the development and learning of all young DLL children, birth to age 5, including those with disabilities. This resource provides specific guidance for identifying and supporting children who are DLLs with disabilities. It also offers general strategies and practices that can be adapted to meet the individualized needs of children who are DLLs with disabilities and their families. Ms. Tamara and the disabilities coordinator could use this resource to help create a plan for supporting Miguel's learning and development.

Take a Look

Supporting Children with Disabilities Who Are Also DLLs

Discover myths and facts about ways to support children who are DLLs with disabilities. Listen as presenters of the webinar share high-quality screening practices to determine if a child who is a DLL needs further evaluation. Explore teaching practices for promoting engagement once a child has been identified as having a disability.

Try It Out

Screening DLLs in Early Head Start and Head Start: A Guide for Program Leaders

Review current understandings of the development and importance of screening in supporting DLLs. This guide includes tools that can help Head Start and Early Head Start program leaders make informed and intentional decisions about selecting valid screening instruments and implementing high-quality screening practices for young DLLs. This is helpful when valid screening tools are not available in the languages of the children being served.

Improve Your Practice

DLLs with Disabilities: Supporting Young Children in the Classroom

This module shows the importance of maintaining children and families' home language at the same time they are learning a new or second language. It begins with an overview of young children who are DLLs with disabilities. It also explores how to screen and assess these children and identifies strategies to support them in inclusive preschool classrooms.

Families, Too!

Language at Home and in the Community: For Families

This one-page handout provides eight simple and practical strategies that families of DLLs can use in their daily life to promote language learning for their children. The strategies can be key for supporting language for a child who is a DLL and also has disabilities or suspected delays. Suggestions such as bringing in familiar items from home to represent the child's culture in the program can help Ms. Tamara add supports for Miguel. The handout is also **available in Spanish (español)**, which may be useful for Miguel's family members.

Ongoing Features

Free access to a specially selected article from Young Exceptional Children (YEC)

Read the YEC article, **Supporting Oral Language Development for DLLs with Disabilities Through Adult Feedback**. It is available through this newsletter until July 31, 2018.

Head Start Disability/Inclusion Network

Engage with the disabilities and Head Start community around the country in an online community hosted on the MyPeers platform. Our community currently has more than 1,000 members who are sharing resources, engaging in conversations, and asking questions. **Register now** as a member of MyPeers. If you are already a member of MyPeers, find the Head Start Disability/Inclusion Network community under "All Communities" and select the blue "Join" button.

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We Want to Hear from You

The Disabilities Services Newsletter is produced monthly by the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. Submit questions or suggestions for future newsletter topics to ecdtl@ecetta.info.

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