Defining Moments: New NAEYC Guidance on Including ALL Young Children

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DVAEYC*

Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC

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Early Childhood Inclusion

A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Today an ever-increasing number of infants and young children with and without disabilities play, develop, and learn together in a variety of places – homes, early childhood programs, neighborhoods, and other community-based settings. The notion that young children with disabilities[1] and their families are full members of the community reflects societal values about promoting opportunities for development and learning, and a sense of belonging for every child. It also reflects a reaction against previous educational practices of separating and isolating children with disabilities. Over time, in combination with certain regulations and protections under the law, these values and societal views regarding children birth to 8 with disabilities and their families have come to be known as early childhood inclusion.[2] The most far-reaching effect of federal legislation on inclusion enacted over the past three decades has been to fundamentally change the way in which early childhood services ideally can be organized and delivered.[3] However, because inclusion takes many different forms and implementation is influenced by a wide variety of factors, questions persist about the precise meaning of inclusion and its implications for policy, practice, and potential outcomes for children and families.

The lack of a shared national definition has contributed to misunderstandings about inclusion. DEC and NAEYC recognize that having a common understanding of what inclusion means is fundamentally important for determining what types of practices and supports are necessary to achieve high quality inclusion. This DEC/NAEYC joint position statement offers a definition of early childhood inclusion. The definition was designed not as a litmus test for determining whether a program can be considered inclusive, but rather, as a blueprint for identifying the key components of high quality inclusive programs. In addition, this document offers recommendations for how the position statement should be used by families, practitioners, administrators, policy makers, and others to improve early childhood services.

Definition

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. 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. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.
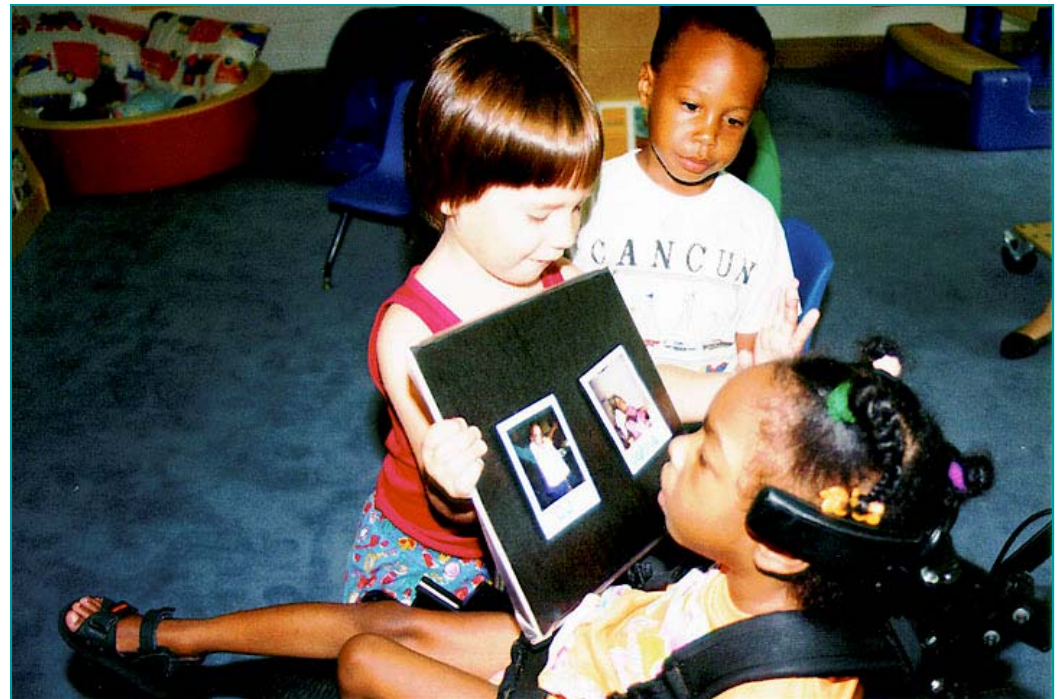
Defining Features

Access – means providing a wide range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development.

Defining Features

Participation – means using a range of instructional approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child.

Defining Features

Supports – refer to broader aspects of the system such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high quality inclusion.

INTEGRATING THERAPIES INTO CLASSROOM ROUTINES

SONG OF OUR CHILDREN

Additional Resources

http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion

What do families most value in inclusive settings?

1. Program personnel ensure that children with disabilities are active participants in all classroom routines and activities

2. Program is a high quality early childhood program.

Hurley, J.J., & Horn, E.M. (2010). Family and professional priorities for inclusive early childhood settings. *Journal of Early Intervention, 32*(5), 335-350.

Create High Expectations

A definition of early childhood inclusion can help create high expectations for every child, regardless of ability, to reach his or her full potential. Shared expectations can, in turn, lead to the selection of appropriate goals and support the efforts of families, practitioners, individuals, and organizations to advocate for high quality inclusion.

Impact

Lauren's early childhood experiences have helped her mother discover answers to some of her own important questions: Yes, I am an advocate. Yes, Lauren will be included. Yes, inclusion is a good thing. See story below.

Welcome to the World

by Samtra K. Devard

I can remember how excited I was at the birth of our daughter, Lauren, as if it were just yesterday. She is our firstborn and the first grandchild on both sides of our family, so her entrance into the world was fit for royalty. Lauren was welcomed into the world with all of the love that our hearts could hold. When we were given the diagnosis that she had Down syndrome, we weren't given any hope for our daughter's future or any information about the *positive* things that we could expect. We felt lost, alone and afraid. We were left with so many questions: Would our daughter experience the world – just like everybody else? Would she have friends? Would she one day find love? Would she live independently? Would she be educated with other students her age that didn't have a disability? Would she be included?

I quit my job to be home with her. I was afraid to let her go. I didn't know about the capacity of early care and education centers to handle a child with a disability. I didn't feel as if I could trust a stranger to care for our daughter the way I knew I could. Our daughter's natural environment was our home. We received all of our early intervention services in our home for Lauren's first three years. When it was time to transition out of early intervention into our local school district, it was the beginning of our journey to make sure that she experienced the world like any other kid her age.

Lauren's 3-year-old program was a playgroup with typically-developing peers run by our school district. As the time to let my baby go drew near, I had apprehension

From the Editors

How can families and early childhood professionals provide quality, inclusive early childhood education for young children with and without disabilities? That's the question posed in this Impact issue. In its pages, parents reflect on their experiences with early childhood education and inclusion for their children – what was helpful, what was not, and lessons learned from the experience. Researchers and practitioners discuss practical strategies for supporting quality early education experiences for young children with disabilities, as well as the necessity and benefits of inclusion for all students. Innovative inclusive early childhood programs from around the country talk about what they're doing and the outcomes. And complementing the stories and strategies are listings of a wide range of resources that may be of use to families and professionals who are parenting or working with young children with disabilities.

Our hope for this issue is that it will be a valued resource for those who are navigating the early childhood years with their children or students, and will support the continuing expansion of quality early childhood programs that bring together children with and without disabilities.

What's Inside

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

http://www.ici.umn.edu/products/impact/221/

What do you see?	Access	Participation	Supports
What would you like to see?	Access	Participation	Supports

Develop a Program Philosophy

- to ensure that practitioners and staff operate under a similar set of assumptions, values, and beliefs about the most effective ways to support infants and young children with disabilities and their families

- to shape practices aimed at ensuring that children have multiple opportunities to learn, develop, and form positive relationships.

Fifteen Years of Excellence

**2010 NevAEYC
Early Childhood Conference Program**

www.nevaeyc.org

*"A Culture of Acceptance:
A Journey Together"*

Inclusion   Acceptance   Equality

**April 16th-17th, 2010
Tuscany Suites and Casino
255 E.Flamingo
Las Vegas, Nevada**

The Pre-Conference day is April 15th, 2010

Session 3, 2:30 – 4:00 pm

Supporting Socially and Physically Interactive Young Boys in Early Childhood Settings
Room: Florentine G
Track: Human Growth and Development;
Positive Interactions and Guidance
Emphasis: Preschool

Young boys in early childhood programs often lack opportunities for authentic expression of gender specific social play. The physical nature of play, including rough and tumble play, is fundamental for holistic development and cognitive development of social understanding. However, physical play has been identified as a neglected aspect of play within the predominantly female early childhood environment. This session will explore strategies for effective support of the unique development of boys and include discussion of how educators can support boys while also ensuring a safe environment.

Presented by Michelle Tannock

Session 4, 4:15 – 5:15 pm

Things That Make Me Feel Good
Room: Florentine C
Track: Human Growth and Development, Positive Interactions
Emphasis: Infant/Toddler, Preschool, K-2

This session will address the message that children can feel empowered in accepting differences in a simple fun way through literature.

Presented by Todd Parr

Adaptation tips
Place Velcro tape on clothing in the dramatic play area in place of small buttons/ snaps. This helps children dress/ undress independently.

Understanding Every Child's Potential through Multiple Intelligence
Room: Florentine D (Lakeshore K-2 Classroom)
Track: Human Growth and Development,
Positive Interactions and Guidance
Emphasis: Infant/Toddler, Preschool, K-2

All students can become empowered learners based on the theory of Multiple Intelligences. This workshop will teach educators how to: assess their student's learning needs to provide a clear picture of the strengths and areas for growth, tap into each student's natural talents, and construct self-motivating educational experiences.

Presented by Terri Brownell;
Co-Presenter: Nikki Carter

Hands- On Science Secrets
Room: Florentine D (Lakeshore Preschool Classroom)
Track: Environment and Curriculum
Emphasis: Preschool

This training will give you new ways to share best practices and teaching ideal and creative ways to make science education more exciting and meaningful in the preschool class.

Presented by La Tanya Polk-Johnson;
Co-Presenter: Geraldine Farrer

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Head Start Classrooms: What Works
Room: Florentine E
Track: Environment and Curriculum
Emphasis: Preschool

This workshop will provide participants with a working knowledge of research-based curriculum and environmental modifications and accommodations frequently used to support children with developmental delays in Head Start classrooms.

Presented by Connie Ashmun

Session 2A, 11:45 – 12:45 pm

Start with the Arts in Inclusive Settings
Room: Florentine D (Lakeshore Preschool Classroom)
Track: Environment and Curriculum
Emphasis: Preschool
Participate in hands-on activities designed for inclusive settings with examples of adaptations and modifications that can meet the needs of all children. Also, learn about some great artists with disabilities.

Presented by Teresa Byington;
Co-Presenter: April Kuehne

Supporting Children with Medically Fragile or Special Needs Siblings
Room: Florentine F
Track: Family and Community Relationships
Emphasis: Preschool, K-2
This session will address the needs, stressors, and subsequent behaviors of children that have medically fragile or special needs siblings. Learn the 4 C's of supporting the sibling in your care.

Presented by Lana Strong

Decoding the Motor Development Progression
Room: Florentine G
Track: Human Growth and Development
Emphasis: Infant/Toddler
We'll look at the functional model for motor development in this session, how it relates to sensory motor processing, and its connection to other domains. No charts, ages, or milestones. Come learn about development of movement as you move!

Presented by Joellyn Somberg

Family
Studies show that parents want more than just "parent involvement" activities- they want a relationship with the person who works closely with their child.

Multi-Step Art in the Preschool Classroom: The Process and the Product
Room: Tuscany
Track: Human Growth and Development, Environment and Curriculum
Emphasis: Preschool
Presentation focuses on the use of multi-step process art to introduce, reinforce, and then build upon fine motor skills development. Emphasis will be placed on continuing the lesson over several days, and the use of "recyclables" readily available in homes and classrooms. This is a hands-on class with a take home project.

Presented by Robin Rasor-Feder;

Adaptation tips
Place puzzles on a flat cookie tin and put magnetic tape on the bottom of each puzzle piece to help children put puzzles together more successfully.

Using Visual Supports with Young Children to Promote School-Wide Success
Room: Siena
Track: Environment and Curriculum
Emphasis: Preschool, K-2
This presentation will focus on communication needs and use of visual supports. There are a variety of visual supports that can be used across the early childhood setting to promote successful transitions, facilitate interactions with peers, give information about rules and expectations, and provide support for behavior. We will address the communication levels of individuals as well as integrating visual supports across daily routines.

Presented by Annamarie Cohen;
Co-Presenter Mary Ann Demchak

"Early Childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society".

Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC)
and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Delaware MAPS

Meaningful Access Participation & Supports

A Guide to High Quality Inclusion of Children with Disabilities for Families and their Communities

Delaware MAPS (Meaningful Access Participation & Supports) is a component of Delaware's Early Childhood Inclusion Toolkit and is a project of the State of Delaware Expanding Inclusive Early Intervention Opportunities (EIEIO) Workgroup, intended for families of children with disabilities and those essential to making high quality inclusion happen. (Other essential stakeholders are early childhood practitioners, related service personnel, community programs and families without children with disabilities.)

12/31/2010

THINGS FAMILIES CAN DO

✓ Ask the program director and/or those working with your child how they are engaging him or her.

✓ Ask to see some specific examples or state specific examples of how activities have been adapted.

✓ Ask if the staff knows how to differentiate their instruction for children with differing abilities.

PENNSYLVANIA PRESCHOOL INCLUSION: SELF-EVALUATION TOOL

Date:_____

The purpose of this self-evaluation tool is to provide a framework for discussion that promotes partnerships to benefit young children with special needs and their families. As the team considers each item, reflect on past experiences working together to provide services to young children and families. Once you have completed the tool, decide which item(s) you want to work on to improve the quality of services you provide. Remember that all voices are important to moving your partnership forward. Complete the Action Plan form and use it as a guide for your work.

	Not Yet	Beginning to Develop	Partially Implemented	Fully Established	Evidence (What does it look like?)	Comments
ACCESS to SERVICES						
1. Early childhood program providers encourage families to contact their Early Intervention preschool program if they have concerns about their child's development.						

PLANNING FOR FULL PARTICIPATION						
12. Preschool early intervention personnel, early childhood providers and families collaborate in:						
• Creating shared goals and objectives for the child to be implemented across settings (school, childcare, community, home)						
• Developing modifications for implementing the IEP across settings						
• Providing technical assistance and training to implement the IEP throughout the child's day						
• Providing services and resources as defined in the IEP						
• Providing parent resources						
13. Preschool early intervention, early childhood personnel and families are flexible when making decisions about children's programs and services						

Consider a child's point of view

❑ Do I usually feel welcome rather than captured?

❑ Do I feel that I belong or am I just one of the crowd?

❑ Am I usually addressed seriously and respectfully, rather than as someone who is "precious" or "cute"?

❑ Do I find most of the activities engaging, absorbing, and challenging rather than just entertaining or exciting?

❑ Do I find most of the experiences meaningful, rather than frivolous or boring?

❑ Am I usually glad to be here, rather than eager to leave?

Establish Effective Services & Supports

Reflect a continuum of services and supports that respond to the needs and characteristics of children with varying types of disabilities and levels of severity

Just the Facts, Ma'am: An Inclusion Quiz[1]

Please indicate whether you think each statement is **true** or **false**.

1. High quality inclusive programs adhere to a single national standard.   *True*   *False*

2. Families of young children with disabilities can find inclusive programs in their community if they look hard enough.
True   *False*

3. Inclusion can benefit children with and without disabilities, particularly the area of social development.
True   *False*

4. A variety of factors (policies, resources, beliefs) influence the implementation of inclusion.   *True*   *False*

5. Partners with specialized knowledge and skill are not an important component of quality inclusive programs.
True   *False*

6. Collaboration among parents, teachers, and specialists is a cornerstone of inclusion.   *True*   *False*

7. The quality of early childhood programs is negatively impacted when they include children with disabilities.
True   *False*

8. Most teachers feel comfortable and confident about including young children with disabilities.
True   *False*

9. There is no national definition of inclusion.   *True*   *False*

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[1] For the answers, go to National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2009). *Research synthesis points on early childhood inclusion*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author. Available at http://community.fpg.unc.edu/npdci

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion

Research Synthesis Points on Early Childhood Inclusion

This document is a summary of key conclusions or "synthesis points" drawn from a review of the literature or research syntheses on early childhood inclusion. We encourage you to reproduce it for distribution and use it in a variety of contexts including professional development, policy development, planning, advocacy, and grant writing.

A Center For Inclusive Child Care Announcement

The CICC is located at Concordia University St. Paul, MN 651-603-6265

New Podcast Episode Released by The Center for Inclusive Child Care

Inclusion: The Foundation of Our Practice (Part one)

Description: In this podcast, we take a closer look at the DEC and NAEYC Joint Position Statement on Inclusion and how its application can help us promote inclusion within our settings. The important elements of access, participation and supports are basic to the needs of all children and staff and become cornerstones for successful inclusive settings.

Length: 9:46 minutes

Available at http://www.inclusivechildcare.org/podcast.cfm#10

Revise program and professional standards

Identify the dimensions of high quality inclusive programs and the professional standards and competencies of practitioners who work in those settings.

Achieve an integrated professional development system

- Use strategic planning to build a shared commitment among families and key stakeholders across early childhood sectors
- Develop shared assumptions about what personnel need to know and be able to do, as well as how to support the acquisition AND application of new knowledge.

Ground professional development in evidence-based practices

Shared assumptions about the meaning of inclusion are critical for determining who would benefit from professional development, what practitioners need to know and be able to do, and how learning opportunities are organized and facilitated as part of an integrated professional development system.

Defining Feature of Inclusion	Instructional/Intervention Practices or Activities	Description
Access: removing physical barriers, providing a wide range of activities and environments, and making necessary adaptations to create opportunities for optimal development and learning for individual children	Universal design (UD)/ Universal design for learning (UDL)	• Supports access to early care and education environments through the removal of physical and structural barriers (UD) • Provides multiple and varied formats for instruction and learning (UDL).
	Assistive technology (AT)	• Involves a range of strategies to promote a child's access to learning opportunities, from making simple changes to the environment and materials to helping a child use special equipment and technology.

Defining Feature of Inclusion	Instructional/Intervention Practices or Activities	Description
Participation: using a range of instructional and intervention approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for each child.	Embedded instruction/ interventions (related terms include: routines-based or activity-based instruction/interventions and integrated therapy)	• Strategies that address specific developmental or learning goals within the context of everyday activities, routines, and transitions at home, at school, or in the community.
	Scaffolding strategies	Providing the following types of strategies across a wide range of teaching and learning contexts for children who require intensive learning supports: • Modeling: demonstrating how to do something • Response prompting: providing assistance to elicit a response • Variations of prompting & modeling: increasing/ decreasing the level of assistance, adding wait time, or combining strategies • Peer supports: enlisting peers to support another child in learning • Corrective feedback: responses that reinforce correct responses & address incorrect responses or non-responses
	Tiered models of instruction/intervention	• Involves gathering assessments on children's behavior or learning to plan and organize instruction/ interventions and to monitor progress.

Influence federal and state accountability systems

A shared definition of inclusion could be used to revise accountability systems to address both the need to increase the number of children with disabilities who receive services and the goal of improving the quality and outcomes associated with inclusion.

Zah'Trelious, 2 years old

Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Young Children, Birth through Age Eight, in New Mexico's Early Learning System

Every child in New Mexico has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. Early learning programs that support the full participation of every child build on these strengths by promoting a sense of belonging, supporting positive social relationships, and enabling families and professionals to gain advocacy skills that positively impact the life of every child.

We believe that . . .

- Every child has unique gifts and abilities that are to be celebrated and nurtured
- The early years hold enormous promise for every child to reach his or her full potential
- Every child learns within the context of relationships and through playful interactions within their environment
- Every child and his or her family deserve equitable access to appropriate services and supports that acknowledge their uniqueness and enable them to reach their full potential

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Participating in Stars

Reaching for Quality Early Care and Education

The overarching goal of Delaware's Early Childhood Plan for Early Success (2006) is that all children enter life and school ready to succeed. Access to high quality early care and education programs for all of Delaware's children, with an initial focus on children from low-income families, is an essential component of the plan.

Delaware Stars for Early Success is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), which is a method used to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and school-age settings. It establishes quality standards for programs and provides technical assistance and limited financial support to programs involved in Stars as they engage in quality improvement efforts. Delaware Stars is designed as a voluntary system that expects programs to work on improving quality by moving up the Star Levels.

Delaware Stars for Early Success is a five level system, with "5" being the highest rating. The licensing rules issued by the Office of Child Care Licensing serve as the Standards for Star Level 1. With each higher Star Level, a program is required to meet increasingly higher quality Standards in the following categories. Copies of the standards can be found under the section on Policy and Forms.

- Qualifications and Professional Development
- Learning Environment and Curriculum
- Family and Community Partnerships

Family & Social
Services Administration

Paths to QUALITY™

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Paths to QUALITY

Top FAQs   **I Want To...**

1. Who is eligible for The Healthy Indiana Plan?
2. If you do not qualify for the Healthy Indiana Plan, but are still uninsured. Are ...
3. What services are covered by the Healthy Indiana Plan?
4. Are vision and/or dental covered by Healthy Indiana Plan?
5. Where do I apply for Healthy Indiana Plan?
6. When can I apply for the Healthy Indiana Plan?

More FAQs »

Paths to QUALITY™
Better Child Care. Brighter Futures.

Research shows that high quality early learning experiences prepare children for future success in school, work and life. From birth through age 3 is the most important time for growth of the human brain. A child's brain develops in response to the child's experiences by building neurological networks in reaction to the environment.

Nationally, at least 14 states have implemented statewide Quality Rating Systems to address the importance of early learning. **Quality Rating Systems are a vital informational tool for parents of young children to use as they make decisions about what early care settings are best for their family.** Quality Rating Systems also provide an accountability measure for funding and create an alignment between licensing, subsidy and quality across child care, Head Start and Kindergarten foundations.

Indiana has chosen to implement a voluntary Quality Rating System that builds on a home grown model. All regulated child care providers will have the opportunity to participate. The original model was implemented by Early Childhood Alliance in Allen County and is known as **"Paths to QUALITY."** The model and its replication in other areas of the state have shown dramatic success in assisting parents in locating quality child care and in improving the overall level of care in these areas. **There**

look for the

stars

Look for the STARS is a Child Care
Quality Rating System with five levels. The
higher the *STAR* level,
the higher the level of quality.

Look for the STARS Requirements

Licensed child-care centers and licensed family child-care homes are required to meet basic licensing
regulations to receive a *1-STAR* license through the Children, Youth and Families Department.
For additional *STARS,* programs are required to meet higher quality standards in the following areas:

Staff Training and Education
Well-trained staff raise program quality.

Environment
The environment affects the way children behave,
develop and learn.

Ratios and Group Size
Fewer children per adult and smaller groups result
in positive outcomes for children.

Learning Activities
Appropriate daily learning activities reflect each child's
interests, growth and development.

Family Involvment
Family involvement helps staff make learning
meaningful to children.

Assessment
Assessment allows staff to observe and document
children's progress and share information with parents.

Other information…

A program must apply to Child Care Licensing for a higher *STAR* Level License. The program's
STAR level will then be verified based on quality criteria in the AIM HIGH Essential Elements.

How can you use the position statement in your work?

- Create high expectations

- Develop a program philosophy

- Establish a system of services and supports

- Revise program and professional standards

- Achieve an integrated professional development system

- Influence federal and state accountability systems