

A view from Head Start state level

Early Childhood RTI

Overview

- Head Start Requirement
- What's Different Now? (A new paradigm)
- Issues and Implications

Head Start Requirements

- Not less than 10 percent of the total number of children actually enrolled by each Head Start agency...will be children with disabilities who are determined to be eligible for special education...as appropriate, as determined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act . (HS Act 640(b)(1))
- Must develop a disabilities service plan providing strategies for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities and their parents. (1308.4)
- Full process of assessment: (1308.6(a))
 - (1) All children enrolled in Head Start are screened
 - (2) Staff carry out on-going developmental assessment for all enrolled children throughout the year;
 - (3) Children who need specialized assessment to determine whether they have a disability

But wait...there's more.

- (2) Such policies and procedures shall ensure the provision of early intervening services, such as educational and behavioral services and supports, to meet the needs of children with disabilities, **prior to an eligibility determination under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**
- (3) Such policies and procedures shall require Head Start agencies to provide **timely referral to and collaborate** with the State or local agency providing services under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to ensure the provision of special education and related services and early intervention services, and the coordination of programmatic efforts, **to meet the special needs of such children.**

The New Paradigm

Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ELIGIBILITY: The eligible child is the one we refer to LEA for Special Ed services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ELIGIBILITY: The eligible child is the one who has been assessed and determined is best served by Special Education services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCLUSION: Special education referral as a way to move time-consuming, problematic or disruptive kids out of the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCLUSION: Special education is a way to provide only to those children that need it, special supports to ensure success in typical classroom settings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Education addresses the needs of children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Education and Special Education address the needs of children with disabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The LEA is responsible for assessing a child's eligibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The LEA and the Program (Head Start) work together to determine a full and individual evaluation regarding progress, discrepancy and need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children with suspected disabilities will be addressed using an RTI process which delays indefinitely a specific determination of eligibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children with suspected disabilities/delays receive a full and individual evaluation, a determination is established within 60 days.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FOCUS: Identification and Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FOCUS: Response to Intervention (finding the right and appropriate intervention to support full access to preschool curriculum and ensure success)

Head Start Issues

- The ten percent requirement
- Developing MOUs
- Parents' rights
- Collaboration

The ten percent requirement

- True since 1972
- Purpose: full inclusion
All eligible children, including children with disabilities, are to receive Head Start services and be included in the full range of activities normally provided to all Head Start children.
- 10 Percent/10 Percent confusion
- Emphasizes eligibility and encourages identification

Developing MOUs

HSPS 1308.4(l)

Develop interagency agreements with the LEAs and other agencies, updated annually; must address:

- (1) Head Start participation in the public agency's Child Find
- (2) Joint training of staff and parents;
- (3) Procedures for referral for evaluations, IEP meetings and placement decisions;
- (4) Transition;
- (5) Resource sharing;
- (6) Head Start commitment to provide the number of children receiving services under IEPs to the LEA for the LEA Child Count report
- (7) Any other items

Parent's Rights

Parent involvement and empowerment in Head Start (HSPS
1304.40(b),(d),(e),(g))

Accessing community services and resources.

Involvement in governance, volunteering

Involvement in child development and education

Community advocacy

§ 1308.21 Parent participation and transition of children into Head Start and from Head Start to public school.

(1) Support parents of children with disabilities entering from infant/toddler programs.

(2) Provide information to parents on how to foster the development of their child with disabilities.

(3) Provide opportunities for parents to observe large group, small group and individual activities describe in their child's IEP.

(4) Provide follow-up assistance and activities to reinforce program activities at home.

Parent's Rights (cont'd)

- (5) Refer parents to groups of parents of children with similar disabilities who can provide helpful peer support.
- (6) Inform parents of their rights under IDEA.
- (7) Inform parents of resources which may be available to them from the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program, the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program and other sources and assist them with initial efforts to access such resources.
- (8) Identify needs (caused by the disability) of siblings and other family members.
- (9) Provide information in order to prevent disabilities among younger siblings.
- (10) build parent confidence, skill and knowledge in accessing resources and advocating to meet the special needs of their children.

Collaboration

Collaboration is at the heart of making RTI work for Head Start.

From 1308 Guidance:

- Each State has in effect under IDEA a policy assuring all children with disabilities beginning at least at age three, including those in public or private institutions or other care facilities, the right to a free appropriate education and to an evaluation meeting established procedures. Head Start is either:
 - The agency through which the Local Education Agency can meet its obligation to make a free appropriate public education available through a contract, State or local collaborative agreement, or other arrangement; or
 - The agency in which the family chooses to have the child served rather than using LEA services.

- Regardless of how a child is placed in Head Start, the LEA is responsible for the identification, evaluation and provision of a free appropriate public education for a child found to be in need of special education and related services which are mandated in the State. The LEA is responsible for ensuring that these services are provided, but not for providing them all. IDEA stresses the role of multiple agencies and requires their maintenance of effort.

Closing thoughts

- Head Start wants and should be a partner in thinking through and implementing what EC RTI means.
- Emphasis should be on how programs make that work through local partnership
- Identifying the best practices with RTI and promoting those as best practices for children and families.
- Separating the effects of poorly implemented RTI from those of RTI delivered appropriately and effectively.

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