

Topic: **Know and share the laws, policies, procedures and ethical principles that support and protect children birth to 5 with disabilities.**

Podvey, M. C., Hinojosa, J., & Koenig, K. P. (2013). Reconsidering insider status for families during the transition from early intervention to preschool special education. *The Journal of Special Education, 46*, 211-222. doi:10.1177/0022466911407074

Context

Part C and Part B services governed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) operate under unique philosophies that are often not compatible. With these differences come variations in service delivery models and types of interventions.

The transition from Part C early intervention services to Part B preschool special education services can also present challenges and unique experiences for families and service providers. Additionally, children with disabilities receiving supports under IDEIA often need related services that address specific needs, which may also affect the transition experiences, perspectives, and roles of families and service providers. However, there is limited research that has examined the roles, perspectives, and experiences of families and children with disabilities who receive related services as they transition from Part C to Part B service delivery.

Purpose of the Article

The purpose of this article was to explore and evaluate the transition experiences of six families, whose children were receiving related therapy services, and capture views on their changing roles as children transitioned into preschool special education programs. Additionally, authors focused on the role of therapy and therapy service providers.

Method

Researchers included six parents whose children were receiving Part B special education services and related therapy services from their local school and from four agencies. Each participating parent completed seven semi-

structured interviews over a three month period to obtain perspectives on the transition from Part C to Part B services. Data gathered from the interviews were analyzed at three levels (open coding, axial coding, & selective coding) and specific themes emerged.

Findings

Three themes emerged and were titled, *Transition is Scary*, *Therapy is Central to Progress but not Transition*, and *Communication is Key to Comfort*. Findings suggested that families could not maintain the level of involvement after they transitioned into Part B services as they did when involved in Part C. This finding resulted in a meta-theme, *The Outsiders*, which described the parents' perspectives on moving from an "insider" role with Part C early intervention services to an "outsider" role with Part B preschool special education services. More precisely, this finding found a philosophical shift from family-centered practice to classroom-based preschool special education where families were no longer an integral part of the their child's education and care.

Conclusion

These findings suggested that parents are outsiders within the preschool special education environment because there is a philosophical change in service provision from Part C to Part B, and there is a lack of communication with the key players involved in the daily care and services for their children. Even though IDEIA requires parental involvement in preschool special education services, parents involved in this study did not feel included. It was suggested to then question how the law regarding parental involvement is interpreted. Moreover, there is a need for clear guidelines and policies regarding

family involvement so that all constituents, including parents, guardians, care-givers, and siblings, are involved effectively during service delivery and stages of transition. Additionally, it was suggested that agencies involved in transitions should examine their own expectations and policies for families and further express these to families before the transition begins to avoid later confusion. Ideally, the role of therapy service providers and families should be defined to provide clarification and understanding of potential roles and resources.

How to Use This Article

Scholars (and practitioner-scholars) have the opportunity read this brief and review identified excerpts (chosen by the instructor) from the article concerning parental experiences on transition. Scholars can have small group discussions around parents' concerns and experiences using prompts such as: *What do hear the parent saying? As a teacher, what would you offer this parent?* Scholars can engage this activity further by looking for resources on the internet specific to their county and state.

About Research-to-Practice Briefs

Research-to-Practice Briefs provide summaries of key studies that inform practice related to early childhood special education. The series is designed specifically to support community college faculty who prepare candidates to work with children with special needs in the early childhood setting.

About the ACCEPT Project

The ACCEPT (Advancing Community College Efforts in Paraprofessional Training) Project is a federally-funded cooperative agreement between the U. S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte College of Education. The focus of this effort is the inclusion of special education content in the coursework and experiences provided within the associate degree program in early childhood education at targeted state-supported community colleges in North Carolina.

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