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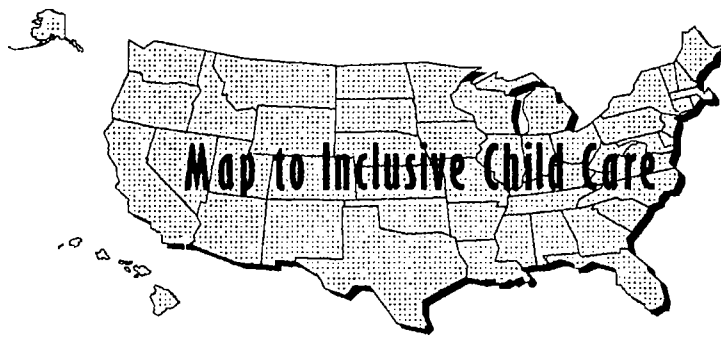


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NEW FEDERAL INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE CHILD CARE

A contract awarded by the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. (UCPA) offers an important opportunity to ensure that children with disabilities from birth through age 12 will have access to child care alongside their more typically developing siblings and peers. Fueling the project is the premise that efforts to support child care providers in accommodating the individual needs of youngsters with disabilities can go hand-in-hand with improvements in the quality of care for all children.

In the first year of the Map to Inclusive Child Care Project, ten states will receive technical assistance to address multiple interrelated aspects of their child care delivery systems. In order to be selected, states will put together teams that include key stakeholders involved in child care from both the public and private sectors, together with the State Child Care and Development Fund Administrators. The Map to Inclusive Child Care Project staff will help them to engage in a strategic planning process, through which they will target priorities and create work plans relevant to the particular issues of their states. The staff and a national pool of expert consultants, in collaboration with six subcontractors, including the National Conference of State Legislatures, Zero to Three, the National School-Age Care Alliance, the National Child Care Association, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and the University of Connecticut Health Center, will support each state team over the course of the year, with technical assistance made available through telephone conferences, on-site visits, and referrals to other information sources.

Individuals interested in helping their state put together a team and obtaining more information on the Map to Inclusive Child Care Project are encouraged to contact Johnna Timmes at United Cerebral Palsy at (800) USA-5UCP.

Supported under Contract 105-97-1601 from the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc.



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CHILD CARE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

Ten States Test Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in New Project Launched by UCP Team

(October 28, 1997, Washington DC) "Quality child care for children with disabilities is quality child care for all children." This is the premise fueling a new project being launched in ten states to test the future of all child care across the nation. The new project, Map to Inclusive Child Care, is led by United Cerebral Palsy's national staff in collaboration with six subcontractors: the National Conference of State Legislatures, Zero to Three, the National School-Age Care Alliance, the National Child Care Association, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and the University of Connecticut. This unique project is funded through a contract with the Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/ Administration for Children and Families. The project matches community-based organizations and individuals with expertise and experience in child care options for children with disabilities with state policymakers responsible for funding state child care initiatives. The goal is to build "best practice" child care in each state that is inclusive of children with disabilities.

The Map to Inclusive Child Care Project will provide on-going technical assistance to ten states to design, implement and evaluate child care services that successfully include children with disabilities (age birth to twelve years). Technical assistance will be built around a model of state specific strategic planning, with input from and investment of key stakeholder groups, in order to improve child care options and opportunities for children with disabilities and their families. Each of the ten states will convene a state work team to create a roadmap, specific of the needs of the state, to high-quality, inclusive child care for children with disabilities. The state teams will consist of key stakeholders with knowledge, power, and resources related to state child care issues as well as an individual to be the state liaison to coordinate activities with project staff. Each state will hold a community event for an expanded group of stakeholders in order to share and refine the vision and proposed outcomes of the work plan, and to gain investment from the broader stakeholder community. The state work teams will develop their specific plans using key consultants for technical assistance and work toward

state driven outcomes that will be shared by all ten states in a national meeting at the end of the first year.

"This is one area that is key to the future for all Americans with disabilities," said Michael Morris, Executive Director of United Cerebral Palsy's national office in Washington, DC. "If kids with disabilities have the opportunity to be included from the earliest time in child care, then each progressive step will assure the same expectations, the same opportunities for support, technology, participation in education, the workplace and marketplace. Beginning right at the beginning is an exemplary way to build the map to full inclusion and participation."

Experts in Child Care, including the two largest professional organizations for early childhood practitioners, have endorsed inclusive early childhood programs as the preferred model of service for young children.

"We are excited about this new initiative," said Morris. "It should enable us to facilitate the infusion of technical assistance in ten states on what has been learned in model inclusionary activities for child care across the nation. Best of all it will create models that can be implemented in all fifty states."

The Map to Inclusive Child Care Project will use state of the art communications and conferences to inform interested publics on the content, progress and outcomes of each of the ten states plans and practices. In addition, evaluations will be used as teaching tools and descriptive case studies will relate the unique features and outcomes of each state's process and achieved outcomes for improving inclusive child care services for children with disabilities and their families.

"Inclusive child care is a must if we are to achieve a more inclusive society as we enter the twenty-first century," stated Morris. "We are changing the culture of communities across the nation to include people with disabilities. It is critical to start in early childhood and the school years when values and beliefs are established to be able to reinforce and maintain an inclusive education, employment and independent living environment."

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The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

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POLICY ON FULL INCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

In the past two decades participation by individuals with disabilities in the activities of our nation has greatly enriched society as a whole. Yet people with disabilities as a group still occupy an inferior status in our society; are severely disadvantaged socially, educationally, vocationally and economically; and are segregated and relegated to lesser services, programs, activities, benefits and jobs.

The continuing existence of discrimination, attitudinal barriers and prejudice has been shown to be directly related to the segregation and exclusion of individuals with disabilities from participation in activities in which individuals without disabilities typically engage.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into all aspects of life and areas of society can only occur when supports, accommodations and modifications necessary for such individuals are provided.

In enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, the President and Congress recognized that it is the proper goal of the Nation to ensure inclusion of individuals with disabilities into all aspects of life and areas of civic responsibility.

Through enactment of other legislation, Congress has provided consistent and strong mandates for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates that all children with disabilities be provided a free, appropriate, public education designed to meet their unique needs. Recognizing the importance of inclusion in regular education environments, Congress established a clear preference for inclusion in such environments, with individually determined supports as needed, so that children with and without disabilities may experience the benefits of and be enriched by educational opportunities with each other; and so that through such association the continuation of discriminatory and stereotypic attitudes may be prevented.

The Part H program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families mandates that early intervention services be provided in natural environments, including home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate and other settings that are natural or normal for age peers who have no apparent disability, in order to ensure that infants and toddlers with disabilities have access to services and supports in environments where their age peers without disabilities participate.

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 mandate a shift in the current rehabilitation system from one that excludes individuals based on a presumption of inability, to one that recognizes competence and ability, presumes that all persons with disabilities can work in integrated, competitive jobs with necessary supports and accommodations, and recognizes the contribution of individuals with disabilities to the social and economic progress of our nation.

Despite Congressional and legislative action and advocacy supporting inclusion of individuals with disabilities, a number of factors continue to inhibit the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities of all ages is inhibited by the lack of universal access to assistive technology services and devices, which can liberate individuals with disabilities from barriers encountered in everyday life; and enable them to move from spectator to participant in the home, the school, the workforce and the community.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities of all ages is inhibited by the lack of access to augmentative communication technology and other emerging telecommunications services and products which can significantly enhance the ability of all individuals to experience increased choice, communication, and control in their lives; to participate fully in their civic responsibilities; and to otherwise exercise their right to free expression

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities of all ages is continuously inhibited as a result of architectural and transportation barriers.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities is inhibited by the lack of accessible housing and Community Supported Living Arrangements to insure that individuals with disabilities are able to live in and participate fully within the community.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities of all ages is inhibited by the lack of personal assistance services as well as family support services.

Full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into all aspects of life and areas of society cuts across many of UCPA's priorities including but not limited to early intervention, education, family support, assistive technology, communications accessibility, employment, community living and access to health care.

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. and its affiliate organizations support the goal of *full inclusion* of individuals with disabilities into every aspect of life and area of society, including the home, the school, the workforce and the community, regardless of severity of disability, as enumerated in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. and its affiliate organizations pledge to invest our collective time and resources for a more inclusive society that recognizes and embraces the talents of all Americans.

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. and its affiliate organizations call upon the President, Members of Congress, and the Judicial Branch to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided the opportunity to participate fully within society.

Approved: Governmental Activities and Advocacy Committee, 2/14/93
Approved: Members of the Corporation, 5/1/93
Approved: Board of Directors, 5/1/93



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