Inclusion As a Core Belief Embodied in The EI/ECSE Standards

Central to all of our work in EI/ECSE and reflected across each of the seven standards and the Field and Clinical Experience Standard is inclusion. Inclusion in the early childhood years (birth through age 8) embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant, toddler, and young child and their family to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of their communities and society. Each and every child should have equitable access to high quality early childhood educational opportunities. High quality early childhood education refers to opportunities where all children are provided with individualized and appropriate supports using evidence-based interventions and practices. These early experiences for children and their families lead to a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to meet high expectations. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports. EI/ECSE professionals work in partnerships with the family and the other individuals in the child and family’s lives to ensure that the services experienced by children and families are consistent and integrated.