

**Oregon's Early Childhood Inclusion Collaborative; Professional Development Workgroup
May 25, 2010**

Cost-Benefit Models of Inclusion

Results from discussion on NPDCI website:

- Shelley deFosset posted: Odom papers
- Tracey West posted a link to information about the SEEDs project in Sacramento CA
 - Model Components:
 - **Administrative support and involvement at the superintendent level**
 - **Philosophical statement (mission, vision) for inclusion**
 - **Models of inclusion:** Full inclusion, differentiated instruction, creative curriculum
 - **Flexible staff:** mostly itinerant; teacher, assistant teacher teams
 - Program manager is familiar with all aspects of the program
 - **Fiscal support:** worked with district accounting office from the start; program manager prepares annual cost avoidance summaries on the number of children served and what the fee for service would have been in received through the county
 - **Professional development:** assistants are paid an extra hour per week to attend trainings
 - **Yearly evaluation:** program manager provides a cost benefit analysis to the superintendent each year; compiling DRDP outcomes through third grade
 - Cost Benefit
 - The fee is \$15 per session for children with typical development
 - Free for children with IEPs
 - 1.3 million dollar annual budget (200 kids +45 wait list)
 - total cost saving from operating a district preschool program:
 - 770,000 in 08-09
- Donna Nylander
 - Serving 900 children – 300 with special needs
 - Model Components:
 - Value of inclusion and benefits to children and families
 - School districts already had classrooms
 - Instead of 10 children with IEPs, 5 and 10 students paying tuition
 - Saved on transportation
 - Children with IEPs needed less services (typical peers)
 - Monies from IL's state funded preschool paid for one assistant
- Easter Seals – Bob Siegel
 - Programs run from 0 – 25% (an average of 10%) of the cost of a typical center

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The Costs of Inclusive and Traditional Special Education Preschool Services

Odom, Parrish, and Hikido (in press)

- Examined costs of different models of inclusion and traditional special education preschool programs in local educational agencies in five states
- Results show somewhat lower costs associated with more inclusive models as compared to traditional forms of special education provision on both an annual and per hour basis.
- Data on who bears the cost show that for school districts, inclusion is less costly than traditional models.

Inclusion was defined as classrooms in which children with disabilities and typically developing children participate together for over 90% of the time.

All inclusive programs were classified into one of three categories:

- ***Public school***—state funded programs for children at risk for learning difficulties, preschool classrooms for which parents pay tuition for their typically developing children
 - team teachers or an ECSE lead teacher
 - ***Community-based***—public or private childcare and preschool programs operating outside the public schools
 - supplemental itinerant teacher, ECSE teacher, or team teachers
 - plus related services from other public agency
 - ***Head Start***—with the Head Start contract held by a community agency
- Inclusive programs also vary in the way educational services are configured or provided.
- supplemental itinerant teacher, ECSE teacher, or team teachers
 - plus related services from other public agency

*costs of salaries averaged across states

Results:

COSTS:

- Average instructional cost across the three types of inclusion programs is \$3,649, which is 11% less than the traditional model at \$4,096.
- All three forms of inclusion (public school-based, community-based, and Head Start) have lower annual costs than the traditional model (\$2,415, \$3,893, and \$3,928, respectively, versus \$4,096).
- Public school- based inclusion appears to be substantially lower cost than community-based and Head Start inclusion (\$2,415 versus \$3,893 and \$3,928, respectively), and is 41% less than the traditional, more segregated, special education classroom model.

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HOURS:

Students in inclusive programs receive slightly fewer hours of services per week (17.8 versus 18.3 hours), and the public school inclusion students receive substantially fewer hours of service, at only 12.5 hours per week.

Total instructional costs per hour are 8% lower for inclusion than for the traditional model (\$5.77 versus \$6.28). Public school-based inclusion is the least costly at \$5.37 per hour, while the Head Start program is the most expensive of the three inclusion models, similar in cost to the traditional model (\$6.23 versus \$6.28).

IMPLICATIONS:

The public school model has the advantage of having certified teachers serving as lead teachers (i.e., in community-based programs the lead teachers often do not have special education or other public school licensure). In addition, the public school model supports a greater potential for collaboration in planning curriculum where both teachers are in the class the entire time compared to community-based programs where an itinerant teacher visits the class for a shorter period of time each week.

The most troubling aspects among these findings are the costs borne by parents and that these costs appear higher under the more inclusive models.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Examine non-instructional costs;
- Larger n
- Outcomes
- Quality (e.g., Bailey et al., 1998)
- Cost to parents