

## RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS <sup>1</sup>

<b>EVIDENCE SOURCES</b>	<p><b>ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas</b> <a href="https://www.access-board.gov/files/ada/guides/play-areas.pdf">https://www.access-board.gov/files/ada/guides/play-areas.pdf</a>  <i>These are the final accessibility guidelines to serve as the basis for standards to be adopted by the Department of Justice for new construction and alterations of play areas covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The guidelines include scoping and technical provisions for ground level and elevated play components, accessible routes, ramps and transfer systems, ground surfaces, and soft contained play structures. The guidelines will ensure that newly constructed and altered play areas meet the requirements of the ADA and are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.</i></p> <p><b>Dear Colleague Letter - Preschool Least Restrictive Environments (LRE)</b>  <a href="https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/updated-dear-colleague-letter-on-preschool-least-restrictive-environments/">https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/updated-dear-colleague-letter-on-preschool-least-restrictive-environments/</a>  <i>The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released this letter in January 2017 to provide updated guidance and clarification on: Key Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, Preschool Placement Options, Reporting Educational Environments, Data for Preschool Children with Disabilities, and Use of IDEA Part B Funds for Preschool Children with Disabilities. It reaffirms OSEP's position that all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs where they are provided with individualized and appropriate supports to enable them to meet high expectations.</i></p> <p><b>Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC</b>  <a href="https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/EarlyChildhoodInclusion_0.pdf">https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/EarlyChildhoodInclusion_0.pdf</a>  <i>The position statement contains a definition of early childhood inclusion and provides recommendations for families and professionals for improving early childhood services and policies with regards to inclusion. In English and Spanish.</i></p> <p><b>Making Sound LRE Decisions</b> <a href="https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-placement.asp">https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-placement.asp</a>  <i>This document lists important actions in the IEP development process along with guiding principles and practices that should inform placement decisions for young children with disabilities.</i></p> <p><b>Preschool LRE Reference Points and Discussion Prompts</b> <a href="https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-reference.asp">https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-reference.asp</a>  <i>This summary of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) provisions of the IDEA as applicable to preschool aged children with disabilities is intended to be used as both a quick reference guide and training tool.</i></p>
<b>PRINT SOURCES</b>	<p><b>Children's Right to Play and the Environment</b>  <a href="http://ipaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IPA-Play-Environment-Discussion-Paper.pdf">http://ipaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IPA-Play-Environment-Discussion-Paper.pdf</a>  <i>This discussion paper highlights the critical role of play to children's well-being, development and survival and reflects upon the impact of environmental conditions on the realization of the right to play in children's everyday lives.</i></p> <p><b>Creating Inclusive Naturalized Outdoor Play Environments</b>  <a href="https://naturalearning.org/creating-inclusive-naturalized-outdoor-play-environments/">https://naturalearning.org/creating-inclusive-naturalized-outdoor-play-environments/</a>  <i>This article outlines the benefits of naturalized outdoor play environments for all children including children with disabilities and provides recommendations for how families, policymakers, and practitioners can ensure that children with and without disabilities can access these play environments.</i></p> <p><b>Creating Print Rich Learning Centers</b>  <a href="http://www.smartbeginningsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/creating_print_rich_centers.pdf">http://www.smartbeginningsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/creating_print_rich_centers.pdf</a>  <i>Authors Juli Pool and Deb Carter highlight ways teachers can provide print-rich preschool environments to encourage children with a range of literacy skills.</i></p>

<sup>1</sup> This collection was compiled and annotated by Camille Catlett and Tracey West for the SCRIPT-NC project. It is current as of August 2022.

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### Fostering Engagement Within Inclusive Settings: The Role of the Physical-Social-Temporal Environment in Early Childhood Settings

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/winter2021/fostering-engagement>

*This article introduces three young children and their early learning environments, including their common routines and learning experiences. After introducing each child and learning situation, the authors identify research-supported modifications to the physical-social-temporal environment that their teachers used to build on a child's interests, experiences, and strengths to support growth in particular areas. These modifications illuminate how early childhood educators in any setting can encourage more active child engagement and more inclusive contexts for learning.*

### How Can You Create a Learning Environment That Respects Diversity?

<https://bcfcca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/How-Can-You-Create-a-Learning-Environment-That-Respects-Diversity-Anti-Defamation-League-PDF-File.pdf>

*This short article discusses how early childhood educators can create learning environments that are inclusive and respect diversity through the use of anti-bias materials, images, and language. A list of guiding questions is offered at the end of the article to help educators assess if their program provides an inclusive, bias-free environment.*

### Measuring the Quality of Early Learning Environments: A Guide to Evaluating Ideal Learning Environments for Young Children

<https://trustforlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TFL-Report-Jan-2022-FINAL.pdf>

*The first part of the guide summarizes the expert workgroup's thoughts about the purposes, use, and implications of quality measurement, and highlights important equity issues for educators and policymakers to consider when making decisions about measurement. It is also a firm reminder that true quality cannot exist without a commitment to equity. The second part looks specifically at the Principles of Ideal Learning framework and examines how each principle aligns with existing quality measures. The second section and the attached appendix provide useful information about the current state of measurement and available tools. An executive summary of this work is available at*

<https://trustforlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-Evidence-Brief-Executive-Summary.pdf>

### Outdoor Learning Environments in ECE

<https://cdn.theeducationhub.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Outdoor-learning-environments-in-ECE.pdf>

*This website provides a rationale and evidence for inclusive outdoor learning, as well as considerations for the design of outdoor spaces.*

### Supporting Outdoor Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/learning-environments/supporting-outdoor-play-exploration-infants-toddlers/supporting-outdoor-play-exploration-infants-toddlers>

*This technical assistance paper explores the benefits of outdoor time for infants and toddlers and provides suggestions for creating outdoor play spaces, safety considerations, and strategies and policies that support this important part of quality infant-toddler programming.*

### Using Environmental Strategies to Promote Positive Social Interactions

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb6.pdf>

*This brief highlights evidence-based practices that early childhood educators and other caregivers can use to adapt environments, so they encourage positive social interactions between children.*

PRINT SOURCES

AUDIOVISUAL SOURCES

### Arranging the Preschool Classroom

<https://www.easternct.edu/center-for-early-childhood-education/guiding-young-childrens-behavior/segment-2-arranging-the-classroom.html>  
*Classroom arrangement has a powerful effect on children's behavior. This sequence of four videos looks at ideas teachers can use to arrange classrooms to guide children's behavior. The segment also explores how rearranging the classroom can address behavior problems. Sample discussion questions are provided.*

### Creating the Learning Environment

[http://resourcesforearlylearning.org/educators\\_pd/](http://resourcesforearlylearning.org/educators_pd/)  
*This video-based training explores how to design a learning environment that supports preschool children's developmental growth by planning and organizing the space, establishing routines, and fostering exploration. It is available in an online 45-minute self-paced version, or a facilitator led 1.5-2 hour training.*

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### AUDIOVISUAL SOURCES

#### Early Childhood Environments: Designing Effective Classrooms

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/env/#content>

*This multi-media module offers information on how to set up effective inclusive early childhood classroom environments for young children. It also provides details about the interrelated physical, social, and temporal components of those environments, as well as adaptations to help teachers meet the needs of children with disabilities (est. completion time: 1 hour).*

#### Environments That Support High Quality Inclusion

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/environments-support-high-quality-inclusion>

*This webinar focuses on modifications and accommodations to the environment that support children with disabilities or suspected delays. Learn how to adapt the physical environment (e.g., space, equipment, and materials), social environment (e.g., interactions with peers, siblings, adults, and family), and the temporal environment (e.g., the sequence and length of routines and activities).*

#### Literacy Rich Environments <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3UWyDVcAE4>

*This Early Literacy Quick Clip highlights the importance of children seeing print in their everyday environments.*

#### Managing Flow in the Early Childhood Classroom <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ib-WgzoO528>

*Control the environment and that will direct the child. It's a powerful concept and we've made it simple to put into practice! Just watch this video for tips on working proactively to achieve a peaceful classroom.*

#### Setting Up to Support Children's Learning <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIDMnUVbm8g>

*This video includes a focus on preschool classroom room arrangement, schedules and routines, classroom management and rules, and building classroom community.*

#### Shane's Inspiration: Where I Feel Like Me <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUDKtK6Gfls>

*This video tells the story of the international non-profit Shane's Inspiration, based in Los Angeles, whose mission is to foster a bias-free world for children with disabilities through inclusive playgrounds and programs. Shane's Inspiration partners with communities to design and build fully-inclusive play environments and offers inclusive playground programming for schools and recreation departments. Watch and think about playground design in new ways.*

### ONLINE SOURCES

#### Creating Environments that Include Children's Home Languages and Cultures

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/dll-creating-environments.pdf>

*Physical environments in early childhood settings should reflect and include all children's home languages and cultures. This tip sheet shares examples of how to do that.*

#### DEC Recommended Practices Module 3: Environment <https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-3-environment>

*This online module focuses on the components of a child's natural and inclusive environment and why attending to the environment is crucial for children with disabilities. The content focuses on recognizing physical, temporal, and social components of environment, identifying when modifications should be made to make an environment more inclusive, and making modifications. The module includes content, videos, simulations, and additional resources for instructors.*

#### Designing Environments <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/designing-environments>

*Learn about features of the physical and social classroom environment that maximize young children's engagement and learning. This resource includes a presentation, activities, and handouts.*

#### Environment <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/environment>

*Resources in this collection reflect practices that are aligned with support effective, engaging, and accessible environments, including equipment, materials, supplies, and physical spaces. Environments also include developmentally appropriate schedules, lesson plans, and experiences that practitioners and families can alter to make necessary accommodations to support all children, especially those at risk for or diagnosed with disabilities. The practices are aligned with the [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework \(ELOF\)](#) in the following domains: Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development. Learn more about recommended practices related to environment from the [Division for Early Childhood \(DEC\)](#).*

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### Environment Checklists <http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-environment.asp>

Five checklists are available to support practitioners and families to learn about and incorporate recommended environmental practices. Each checklist is downloadable for use as a self-assessment tool or to plan for effective ways to use environmental practices. Checklists are available in English and Spanish.

- **Natural Environments Learning Opportunities Checklist** includes the types of environmental arrangement and adult (parent or practitioner) practices that can be used to engage children in everyday activities to encourage and sustain child learning while engaged in the activities.
- **Environment Arrangements Checklist** includes practices for encouraging child physical activity using environmental arrangements and active child play opportunities as part of everyday learning.
- **Child Physical Activity Checklist** includes practices for encouraging child physical activity and active child play opportunities as part of everyday learning.
- **Environmental Adaptations Checklist** includes procedures for determining the types of environmental adaptations (physical, social, temporal, etc.) that can be used to promote child participation in learning activities to enhance child competence.
- **Assistive Technology Checklist** includes procedures for identifying and using assistive technology (AT) to promote child participation in learning activities to enhance child competence.

### Environment Practice Guides for Practitioners <http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-environment.asp>

Each practice guide features a recommended practice, describes how to do the practice, offers an illustrative vignette and a short video of the practice, and lists suggestions for additional resources. Practice Guides for Practitioners are available in web and mobile device formats. Available in English and Spanish.

### Environment Practice Guides for Families <http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-environment.asp>

Each practice guide features a recommended practice, describes how to do the practice, offers an illustrative vignette and a short video of the practice, and lists suggestions for additional resources. Practice Guides for Families are available in web and mobile device formats. Available in English and Spanish.

### Learning Environments: Indoor and Outdoor Spaces

<https://tmsc.createsend.com/t/ViewEmail/j/38D00140E22B903F2540EF23F30FEDED/C67FD2F38AC4859C/?tx=0&previewAll=1&print=1&source=PrintPreview&context=BE1559E32AC7F640D744A813E2B67A32>

Outdoor learning spaces offer many developmental, learning, and health benefits. It is important to plan and design outdoor environments and activities so that children with disabilities and suspected delays are able to have full access and are able to participate and learn. In this issue, learn more about strategies that can be used to promote access and support individual learning needs in outdoor spaces.

### National Early Childhood Inclusion Indicators Initiative <https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators.asp>

A national initiative with partners across early care and education is working to develop indicators that address inclusive policies and practices at the state, local program leadership and early care and education environments level. The indicators will support state and local program leaders to examine and implement strategies that strengthen their capacity to provide high quality inclusive options in their communities. The goal of the initiative is to improve and increase inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities and their families, through system and practice refinements. Draft indicators are available at state, community, local program, and early care and education environment levels.

### Resources for Infant/Toddler Learning Environments

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/learning-environments/article/resources-infanttoddler-learning-environments>

Whether the environment is a home, socialization space, or a child care center, creating a safe, playful, and welcoming learning environment requires a thoughtful process. Use the resources at this website to help you think about play spaces, areas for caregiving routines, and ways to integrate home cultures into children's environments—all important aspects of an engaging environment for infants and toddlers.

### Responsive Teaching and Learning Environments for Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/responsive-teaching-learning-environments-dual-language-learners>

This suite of resources includes an archived webinar, in English and Spanish, that explores how to create effective teaching and learning environments, including homes, for children from birth to age 5 who are DLLs. Additional resources are also provided.