

Professionalism and Ethical Practice

Initial Practice Based Professional Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE)

7.4



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Standard 7

Candidates identify and engage with the profession of early intervention and early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) by exhibiting skills in reflective practice, advocacy, and leadership while adhering to ethical and legal guidelines. Evidence-based and recommended practices are promoted and used by candidates.



Component 7.4

- Candidates practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.



Objectives

- Describe ethical and legal policies and procedures that define practice in EI/ECSE.
- Identify a codes of ethics from DEC or another EI/ECSE professional organization to guide EI/ECSE practice.



Policies, Procedures and Ethics

- **Policies** are guiding principles intended to influence decisions and actions (What and Why)
- **Procedures** are a specific way of doing things (How, When and Who)
- Professional **Ethics** are moral principles of conduct for a specific profession



Policies, Procedures and Ethics

- A Code of Ethics is moral responsibility NOT regulation, policy or law
- Policies are also NOT laws; they are a set of standards that guide the development of law



EI/ECSE and the Law

- The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975
 - Made education services available to children with disabilities
 - Provided federal funds to help states educate students with disabilities
 - Required schools to evaluate children and create an individualized education plan
 - Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

EI/ECSE and the Law

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004
 - Part C: early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, birth to age 2
 - Part B: special education services for children and youth with disabilities, age 3 to 21
- “Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”



EI/ECSE and the Law

- The Assistive Technology Act, 2004
- State-Level Activities
 - Financing system
 - Loan programs
 - Device reutilization
 - Device demonstration and information
- State Leadership Activities
 - Training and TA
 - Public Awareness
 - Coordination & Collaboration



EI/ECSE and the Law

- The Handicapped Children's Protection Act, 1986
 - Awards reasonable attorneys' fees, expenses and costs to the parents or guardian of a handicapped child or youth who prevailed in a civil suit to protect the child's right to free appropriate public education (FAPE)



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Policy, Procedures and Ethics

- IDEA governs how states provide EI/ECSE services,
- States develop policies and procedures for service delivery
- Why is it important for EI/ECSE professionals to engage in public policy?



How Can You Engage in EI/ECSE Policy?

- Non-Lobbying Activities
- Lobbying
- Advocacy Letters
- Coalitions
- Resources:
 - [Division for Early Childhood | Children's Action Network \(decpolicy.org\)](http://decpolicy.org)
 - [Legislative Action Center | Council for Exceptional Children](#)
 - [Division for Early Childhood | 2016 Elections \(decpolicy.org\)](http://decpolicy.org)
 - [Coalitions | Council for Exceptional Children](#)



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Why Do We Need Ethics in Early Childhood?

- People have different values and morals
- Not every situation can be solved by following regulations
- There are often competing interests
- Young children are vulnerable



DEC Code of Ethics

- Principles and Guidelines for practice
 - Professional Practice
 - Professional Development and Preparation
 - Responsive Family Practices
 - Ethical and Evidence Based Practices



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Ethical Issues

- Responsibilities
 - Mandates
 - Clear course of action
 - Examples: do no harm; maintain confidentiality
- Dilemmas
 - A conflict between values and responsibilities
 - Multiple courses of action
 - Example: needs of one person gives way to the needs of others



Analyzing and Addressing Issues

- Identify the problem
 - Does it involve ethics?
 - Is it a legal problem?
 - Is it an ethical responsibility?



Analyzing and Addressing Issues

- Analyzing the Ethical Dilemma
 - Identify Conflicting Responsibilities
 - Brainstorm Possible Solutions
 - Consider Ethical Finesse
 - Look for Guidance
 - Decide on a Course of Action
- Implement Resolution and Reflect



NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

- Professional Responsibilities
 - With children
 - With families
 - Among colleagues
 - With community and society
- Ideals
 - Aspirations of practitioners
- Principles
 - Guide conduct



Professional Boundaries

- Use the framework to determine if this is an ethical dilemma or responsibility
- You supplement your income by selling cosmetics at home parties. Is it okay to ask a child's family to host a party?



Activity:

“Make Sure My Child Drinks Her Milk”

On the next slide read the “Make Sure My Child Drinks Her Milk” situation then discuss the following;

1. Identify the Problem
2. Identify the stakeholders
3. Brainstorm possible solutions
4. Consider ethical finesse
5. Look for guidance



Activity:

“Make Sure My Child Drinks Her Milk”

Jane, a petite just-turned-3-year-old, is new in Kristen's class. Her father brings her to school each day at breakfast time.

As required by licensing and the USDA food program, the school serves milk each day at breakfast and lunch. Like a number of her children in her class, Jane refuses milk and drinks water instead. Kristen allows children to make this choice. One day Jane's father tells Kristen that he and his wife do not want her to let Jane drink water until she has drunk at least a full cup of milk. Kristen assures them that she will encourage Jane to drink her milk.

At the next meal, Kristen tells Jane that her family wants her to drink milk, so she'll be healthy and grow strong. Jane sobs uncontrollably. Kristen comforts her and allows her to drink water. She tells Jane she will talk to Jane's father about letting her drink water. Jane's eyes grow wide, and she sobs even harder, saying, "Don't tell Daddy! Don't tell daddy!"

Ethical Principles: Matrix of Professional Organizations

- [Ethical Principles Matrix of Professional Organizations.docx \(ectacenter.org\)](#)

Source: Kyzar, K., Turnbull, H.R., & Turnbull, A.P. (2017). Updated from Turnbull, A.P., Kyzar, K., Kemp, P., & Lindeman, D. (2013). Early Years Module One: Evidence-based Practice. Topeka, KS: Kansas Infants-Toddlers Services, Department of Health and Environment.

References

- [Standard 7: Professionalism and Ethical Practice | The Early Childhood Personnel Center \(ecpcta.org\)](#)
- [Microsoft Word - Ethical Principles Matrix of Professional Organizations.docx \(ectacenter.org\)](#)
- [DEC Member Code of Ethics \(Position Statements\)](#)
- [Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment | NAEYC](#)
- [Focus on Ethics: Ethical Issues—Responsibilities and Dilemmas | NAEYC](#)



Disclaimer

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