



Preventing Expulsion and Promoting Social-Emotional Health through Effective Investment of CCDF Quality Funds

The State Capacity Building Center is sponsoring a peer learning forum entitled “Preventing Expulsion and Promoting Social-Emotional Health through Effective Investment of CCDF Quality Funds.” This forum will give state teams who are planning or operationalizing strategies in this area the opportunity to learn new information and discuss policies and strategies for promoting children’s social-emotional behavioral health and preventing or minimizing expulsion from early learning programs. The forum is structured to give participants adequate time to assimilate information and consider how to apply it. Discussions among participants are designed to promote learning, planning, and decisionmaking.

Desired Results

At the end of the peer learning forum, participants will have increased knowledge of the following:

- ◆ Policy and program strategies that support the development of children’s social-emotional behavioral health
- ◆ Implementation of policies and programs that support children’s social-emotional competence and decrease the likelihood of expulsion
- ◆ Their States’ strengths and gaps in this area and approaches to filling those gaps
- ◆ Opportunities for a comprehensive set of social-emotional health and expulsion-prevention strategies as a part of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) framework

Topics and Key Questions

Potential topics include the following:

- ◆ Qualified workforce (qualifications, professional development, training, coaching)
- ◆ Quality improvement (use of quality dollars, expansion of infant and toddler care, promoting continuity of relationships, quality rating and improvement system standards and supports)
- ◆ Standards and monitoring
- ◆ Subsidy policies
- ◆ Family engagement
- ◆ Early childhood mental health



The following questions are intended to stimulate participants' thinking and inform the forum's curriculum and resources.

- ◆ What do we know about children's social-emotional development and why it is foundational to later learning?
- ◆ How do early care and learning environments support optimal social-emotional development?
- ◆ Based on evidence and research, what strategies or initiatives yield the best return on investment?
- ◆ What workforce policies and resources help early childhood educators support children's social-emotional development and behavioral health?
- ◆ What quality initiatives or elements of quality rating and improvement systems support children's social-emotional health?
- ◆ What policies within the subsidy program promote continuity of relationships between children and providers?
- ◆ What aspects of parent and consumer education contribute to children receiving high-quality supportive care?
- ◆ How does failing to address expulsion contribute to lack of access to high-quality programs?
- ◆ What combination of policies and programs across agencies and departments could create the context for significant reduction or elimination of expulsion?
- ◆ What are the benefits to children, families, programs, communities, and States when CCDF funds are used to address social-emotional health?

Schedule

- ◆ Session 1 (virtual): June 2016
- ◆ Session 2 (virtual): To be determined by participants; approximately 6 weeks after session 1
- ◆ Session 3 (in person): September 2016

The first two sessions will be virtual meetings approximately 2 hours in length. Discussion will take place via conference call, with webcams if possible. The third meeting will be held at the September 2016 State and Territory Administrators Meeting (STAM) in Washington, D.C.

Forum Content

Before the first meeting, facilitators will research and review information from each State, such as the draft or final State CCDF Plan and other relevant documents, to gain a deeper understanding of the context and policy approaches of participating States. Conference calls will also be conducted with each team.

The three forum sessions each cover a different content area. The first session will focus on children's social-emotional development as the foundation for this work, what we know from research, and why social-emotional development is the foundation of learning. It will also include an overview of policy options that States can consider. In the second session, participants will consider what is needed in children's environments to provide children with optimal experiences that support their social-emotional development. They will explore this question by discussing the range of CCDF policy choices regarding standards, the role of quality rating and improvement systems, and professional development. In the third meeting, participants will discuss specific policies regarding reducing or preventing expulsion, best practices for transitions, and early childhood mental health consultation. State teams will also present on plans and next steps for their efforts to promote social-emotional development and reduce expulsion.

Suggested Reading

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education. (2014, December 10). Joint letter on suspension and expulsion policy. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ece/hhs_and_ed_joint_letter.pdf.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.) *Policy statement on expulsion and suspension policies in early childhood settings*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>.

A tentative schedule follows. Details will be refined based on the needs of participants.

Session 1 (virtual)

Guest speaker (to be determined)

During this session, participants will develop a shared understanding of children's social-emotional competence as foundational, share their current policy and program approaches, and begin to identify areas of strength and opportunity in their policies and programs.

Learning Outcomes

- ◆ Participants will have an understanding of the relationship between supporting children's social-emotional health and preventing expulsion.
- ◆ Participants will gain an understanding of each other's strategies for supporting children's social-emotional health and preventing expulsion.
- ◆ Participants will become familiar with policy options and begin to recognize areas of strength and areas where they could take action to strengthen their States' policies and programs in this area.

Premeeting Preparation Resources

Administration for Children and Families. (2015). Establishing federal, state, and local policies [Video recording]. *Expulsion and Suspension Prevention Webinar Series*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbCG9kr3r-c&list=PLypiJrod4DeiSz0WfHzn8pTB2OAJ66-fh&index=2>.

McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership. (2016). *The influence of center climate on teachers' emotional support of children*. Wheeling, IL: McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University. Retrieved from <http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/the-influence-of-center-climate-on-teachers-emotional-support-of-children/>.

Session Resources

Outline of policy options for creating a comprehensive approach to supporting children's social-emotional development and reducing expulsion.

Session 2 (virtual)

This session will focus on the use of CCDF policies, with particular attention to standards, workforce professional development, and quality initiatives that support children's social-emotional development. Participants will be asked to share what policies and programs their States have in place and discuss what new insights they have gained from considering the policy options document.

Learning Outcomes

- ◆ Participants will present how their States are approaching the opportunity to support children's social-emotional development within standards, through workforce professional development programs, (e.g., coaching, training) and through quality initiatives.
- ◆ Participants will understand the continuum of existing approaches and continue to identify gaps and opportunities for strengthening their States' approaches.
- ◆ Participants will identify what policies and programs they want to learn more about.

Between sessions 2 and 3, participants will begin outlining plans to address gaps they have identified.



Session 3 (in person at STAM)

Session 3, in September 2016, will be held during the State and Territory Administrator's Meeting in Washington, D.C. (travel at participants' expense). During this session, participants will discuss strategies to support children at high risk of expulsion, possible policies and supports to reduce expulsion, and best practices and policies around what should be in place before during and after children's transitions between programs.

Participants will also present approaches and next steps for implementing their plans. The discussion will focus on eliciting feedback, reactions, and ideas that build on what was presented.

Learning Outcomes

- ◆ Participants will learn about what should happen when children need to transition to programs that can meet their needs.
- ◆ Participants will present their plans and immediate next steps.
- ◆ Participants will identify whether additional technical assistance support is needed and, if so, what kind of support.

Facilitators

- ◆ Kim Means, Senior Technical Specialist, State Capacity Building Center
- ◆ Lori Bowers, State Systems Specialist, State Capacity Building Center
- ◆ Carey McCann, Assistant Director, State Services, Build Initiative
- ◆ Michelle Soltero, Infant/Toddler Specialist, State Capacity Building Center

The State Capacity Building Center (SCBC) works with State and Territory leaders and their partners to create innovative early childhood systems and programs that improve results for children and families. The SCBC is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care.

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