Preventing and Reducing Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Care and Education Settings

Background and Rationale

Expulsion of young children from early care and education settings as a response to behavior issues or social and emotional challenges occurs at three times the rate of K–12 students, thus limiting the child and family's access to services and needed supports (Gilliam, 2005). When children are expelled from early childhood settings, parents face the difficult task of finding alternate caregiving arrangements. Finding alternate child care after a child is expelled often requires parents to take time away from their employment to search for new care settings. That can be daunting for parents who may face a partial loss of salary or even the loss of their jobs if employers do not support personal leave for such reasons. Child suspension and expulsion also have long-term implications for children. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) warn that "young students who are expelled or suspended are as much as ten times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not" (ED/HHS, 2014).

This compilation provides resources about promoting the mental health and social and emotional well-being of young children and reducing the expulsion of preschool-aged children in early childhood programs. These resources will support state Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrators as they work to prevent and reduce suspensions and expulsions in early care and education settings, a key provision of the *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014* (CCDBG).

Related Resources

Gilliam, W.S. (2016). *Early childhood suspensions and expulsions undermine our nation's most promising agent of opportunity and social justice*.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This issue brief presents the latest information regarding early childhood expulsions and suspensions with a special emphasis on how continuing gender and race disparities violate the civil rights of many of our youngest learners and contribute to our nation's costly achievement gap by locking our boys and African-American children out of educational opportunities and diminishing the ability of early education to provide the social justice remedy it was designed to produce."
http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2016/rwjf431300/subassets/rwjf431300_2

Related CCDF Regulations

The language from the CCDF Regulations related to the CCDBG requirement:

States must describe their policies to prevent suspension and expulsion for children birth to age five in child care and other early childhood programs. (45 CFR 98.16(ee))

Information on State policies regarding social–emotional behavior should be for birth to school-age or age-appropriate, and that policies on expulsion and suspension apply to children birth to age five. (45 CFR 98.33(b)(1)(v))

Allen, R., & E. Steed (2016). Culturally Responsive Pyramid Model Practices: Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support for Young Children. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 36*(3), 165–175.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This conceptual article reviews current research on racial disparities in disciplinary practices in early childhood education and outlines work to address these issues within a positive behavior support (PBS) framework. Recommendations and a culturally responsive approach are suggested for use within a program-wide PBS framework in early childhood settings, the Pyramid Model framework."
http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0271121416651164

Gilliam, W. S. *Implementing Policies to Reduce the Likelihood of Preschool Expulsion* (FCD Policy Brief #7). New Haven, CT: Foundation for Child Development, Yale University, 2008.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This policy brief examines factors associated with expulsion from Pre-K and addresses the factors that predict an increased likelihood of expulsion that may inform changes in policy and that can be both implemented and regulated."
http://ziglercenter.yale.edu/publications/PreKExpulsionBrief2_244606_5379.pdf

Gilliam, W. S. *Prekindergarteners Left Behind: Expulsion Rates in State Prekindergarten Programs*. New York, NY: Foundation for Children Development, 2005.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "The purpose of the paper is to report the rates at which preschoolers are expelled from state funded prekindergarten programs." It was the first national study ever conducted on the rate of expulsion in prekindergarten programs.
http://ziglercenter.yale.edu/publications/National%20Prek%20Study_expulsion_34774_284_5379.pdf

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Standing Together Against Suspension & Expulsion in Early Childhood

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This joint statement was drafted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), with support from 34 organizations that signed on."
http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Standing%20Together.Joint%20Statement.FINAL__8.pdf

Perry, D. F., C. Holland, N. Darling-Kuria, & S. Nadiv. (2011). *Challenging behavior and expulsion from child care: The role of mental health consultation. Zero to Three*, 32(2), 4–11.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This article describes lessons learned from a study of children receiving early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) who nonetheless exited their child care settings because of behavioral concerns. The authors outline the common characteristics of children at risk for expulsion, as well as the common characteristics of programs that may exacerbate challenging behaviors. The authors discuss how ECMHC can help reduce the risk for expulsion, along with a detailed list of specific strategies recommended for use with by teachers."
http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/27368

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Practices in Early Childhood Settings

This website from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services provides resources to assist states in preventing and limiting expulsions and suspensions in early learning settings. There are also links to a webinar series hosted by the ACF.
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/child-health-development/reducing-suspension-and-expulsion-practices

ZERO TO THREE Resources: Preventing Expulsion from Preschool and Child Care

ZERO TO THREE provides resources about supporting social and emotional development to prevent expulsion of young children from educational settings. This website includes videos from leaders in the field, as well as resources for policy makers, advocates, and early childhood programs and professionals.
https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/preventing-expulsion-from-preschool-and-child-care

Federally Funded Technical Assistance Projects

The National Center for Early Childhood Health and Wellness (NCECHW)

The NCECHW provides information and resources to health professionals working with Head Start and child care programs across the country. One area addressed by the NCECHW is early childhood mental health. Early childhood mental health is defined as a child's growing ability to experience, regulate, and express emotions. The NCECHW highlights resources on ECMHC as an effective strategy for addressing challenging behaviors and reducing suspensions and expulsions in Head Start and Child Care.
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/mental-health

Technical Assistance Center on Social–Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)

The source website describes this resource in this way: "The resources developed by TACSEI support an enhanced awareness of, understanding of, and ability to use evidence-based practices to improve the social–emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities. The conceptual model TACSEI uses to deliver this important information is the Pyramid Model framework for promoting social–emotional competence and addressing challenging behavior." TACSEI is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.
http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/about.htm

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA): Reducing Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension This website provides a variety of resources that relate to suspension and expulsion in early childhood settings. Resources include items posted in the ECTA eNotes, federal guidance and resources, and resources from national centers and associations.
http://ectacenter.org/topics/expulsion/expulsion.asp

Reports

Connors-Tadros, L., & Hammond, J. *Information and Resources to Assist States in Developing Policy on Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion* (CEELO Policy Report). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, 2017.

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This report includes resources to inform early childhood stakeholders at the state and local level interested in developing policy and guidance for programs to prevent and reduce suspension and expulsion."
http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ceelo_policy_report_ece_suspension_expulsion_2017_03_final.pdf

Neufeld, S. *Expelled in Preschool*. New York, NY: The Hechinger Report, 2015.

This report provides recommendations to address the troubling issue that preschoolers are expelled at three times the rate of their older peers. This report offers suggestions on what might be done and how to support the mental health of all children.
http://hechingerreport.org/expelled-preschool/

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. *Data Snapshot: Early Childhood Education* (Civil Rights Data Collection Issue Brief No. 2). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2014.

This data snapshot from the U.S. Department of Education highlights early childhood data about the suspension of preschool children, especially African American boys.
https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-early-learning-snapshot.pdf

Webinars

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Expulsion and Prevention Webinar Series (2015). ACF hosted a webinar series on suspension and expulsion in early childhood settings. The ACF website describes this resource in this way: "The four-part series features key experts from across the country who have conducted work on different aspects of the issue, including policy, research and data, and prevention/intervention."

- Webinar: Basic Research, Data Trends and the Pillars of Prevention
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-xEXMPTICM&list=PLypiJrod4DeiSz0WfHzn8pTB2OAJ66-fh&index=1
- Webinar: Establishing Federal, State, and Local Policies
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbCG9kr3r-c
- Webinar: Program Quality and Professional Development
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sw4ZPLcLe14&list=PLypiJrod4DeiSz0WfHzn8pTB2OAJ66-fh&index=3
- Webinar: Using Data Systems to Track and Reduce Expulsion and Suspension
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxAGnnCNIzk&index=4&list=PLypiJrod4DeiSz0WfHzn8pTB2OAJ66-fh

Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood Programs (2016). Preschool Development Grants Publications. In this webinar, Dr. Walter S. Gilliam of the Yale University Child Study Center, and Director of The Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy, discusses the current state of suspension and expulsion in early childhood education settings and the effect that it has on children and families.
https://pdg.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/12608

Professional Development Materials

Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation's (CECMHC) Best Practice Tutorial Series

The source website describes this resource in this way: "This tutorial series is designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff in Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) programs around how to implement effective mental health consultation. It can also be used by a variety of other audiences interested in infant and early childhood mental health."

There are ten tutorials in the series. Each tutorial includes background information about the tutorial, a pretest, modules that make up the tutorial, take-home messages, a posttest, resources, and references.
https://www.ecmhc.org/tutorials/index.html

Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL)

This website includes accessible and easy to use training materials, videos, and print resources designed to help early care, health, and education providers implement the evidence-based Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children.
http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu

The following modules are included:

- Infant/Toddler
- Preschool
- Parent Training Modules (English and Spanish)
- Infant/Toddler Parent Modules (PIWI)

State Examples

State and Local Action to Prevent Expulsion and Suspension in Early Learning Settings: Spotlighting Progress in Policy and Supports

Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (2016)

The source website describes this resource in this way: "A snapshot of the innovative policies and support strategies that state and local leaders around the country are putting into place to prevent, reduce, and ultimately eliminate expulsion and suspension practices in early learning settings."
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/state_and_local_profiles_expulsion.pdf

Suspension & Expulsion in Preschool Development States: Policies and Practices

Preschool Development Grant State Technical Assistance Report (2016)

This brief highlights how states receiving Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding have begun to explore the issue of preventing suspension and expulsion. It discusses state practices used to address the issue as well as relevant state and federal policies.
https://pdg.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/12062

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