

Accessing Quality Early Childcare for Special Needs Children in Alaska

What is Inclusion?

“Values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities as full members of families, communities, and society.”

National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009

Why Inclusion?

- Childcare providers focus on abilities and strengths, not disabilities.



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Is finding affordable, quality early childcare for your child with special needs difficult for you?

What are your special needs child’s legal rights when it comes to childcare?

What does quality inclusive childcare look like?

This resource for families of young children with special needs in Alaska will guide you through these questions.

Financial Assistance:

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Alaska’s Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP) helps with childcare expenses for eligible families who are working or in an education or training program.
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/parents.aspx>

Alaska In! Assistance:

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Alaska IN! Childcare Program gives families help with inclusive childcare for children with special needs. The program provides referrals, trainings, and additional funding based on the child’s needs. To qualify, the family and the childcare provider must participate in CCAP. Also, the child with special

How to Find Childcare in Alaska:

Parents can find childcare programs in their area using Alaska’s Thread Childcare Referral Service:
<http://threadalaska.org>.

Questions to Ask Childcare Providers:

1. What is the teacher/child ratio in the classroom?
2. How long has the staff worked at the center?
3. Is the room set up in a way that allows all children to safely access facilities and materials?
4. Do teachers focus on strengths in the classroom?
5. Are there children in the classroom with individual accommodations and supports?

<http://threadalaska.org>

Legal Rights Supporting Inclusion in Early Childcare Programs

Part C Services: Alaska Infant Learning Programs

The Alaska Statewide Infant Learning Program (ILP) provides services for children 0-3 with developmental delays or disabilities. ILP professionals can serve children with special needs and their families in the home, at their childcare program, or in the community.

<http://dhss.alaska.gov>

Head Start Programs:

Head Start Programs provide inclusive learning preschool for children 0-5. Head Start programs are required to provide the needed

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) gives children with special needs 0-21 access to inclusive educational supports. Part C of IDEA provides intervention services for children with special needs 0-3.

Civil Rights Laws: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

ADA gives full civil rights to all individuals with special needs. These civil rights apply to all educational programs and services whether or not the school receives federal funding.



Question	Answer	Reason
Do child care providers have to comply with ADA?		A child care provider is considered to be an individual who provides care for your children.
Is there a limit to the number of children with special needs a childcare center or provider may care for?	No	There is no specified limit because each child with a special need is different.
Can a program charge more for a child with special needs because they require more individualized attention?	No	Programs may not charge parents/guardians of child with special needs more for providing reasonable accommodations.
Is there something a	Yes	Individuals can file a comp

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