Vermont’s Universal PreK Professional Learning Module Series
Awareness and Action: Reducing Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood
Supporting Each and Every Young Child’s Full and Equitable Participation

Guiding Principles
Implementation of Evidence-based Practices
Reduce Suspension and Expulsion

Promoting the Full and Equitable Participation of Young Children through Practices that Reduce Suspension and Expulsion

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Evidence Sources (e.g., laws, policy statements, research, position statements)

Building a Comprehensive State Policy Strategy to Prevent Expulsion from Early Learning Settings

In September 2017, this state policy tool was published by the Administration for Children & Families to provide states policy options that promote the social-emotional development of young children and reduce expulsions in early learning programs. Aligned with the 2014 Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) reauthorization, this resource assists stakeholders to identify strategies, set goals for actions, and develop partnerships with others, such as medical and mental health professionals. The document includes a succinct summary of research related to the extent of and sequelae from expulsions.

Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014
http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/obh/fy14-discipline-snapshot.pdf

Under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (CCDBG), reauthorizing the Child Care Development Fund program, states must comply with several new eligibility requirements. These include: (1) states must dedicate a portion of their funds to at least one of the recommended quality improvement activities such as "including effective behavior management strategies and training, including positive behavior intervention and support models, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors, including reducing expulsions of preschool-aged children for such behaviors," and (2) states must disseminate consumer education information to parents, the public, and child care providers, which may include information about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and expulsion and suspension policies.

Civil Rights Data Collection
http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/obh/fy14-discipline-snapshot.pdf

Analyses of The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) reveal that students of certain racial or ethnic groups and students with disabilities are disciplined through suspension and expulsion at far higher rates than their peers, beginning in preschool. The CRDC data also show that an increasing number of students are losing important instructional time due to exclusionary discipline. This snapshot describes and displays both national and state-by-state data. Two additional publications that describe what may be learned from analysis of the latest data (2013-14 school year) may be found in the two publications listed below.

- A First Look: Key Data Highlights on Equity and Opportunity Gaps in Our Nation’s Public Schools
  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/obh/fy14-discipline-snapshot.pdf
- What Does the Civil Rights Data Collection Tell Us About Early Learning?
  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/obh/fy14-discipline-snapshot.pdf

Office of Child Care Information Memorandum on Expulsion and Suspension
https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/obh/fy14-discipline-snapshot.pdf

This November 2016 Information Memorandum encourages state agencies responsible for implementing the Child Care and Development Block Grant to adopt policies set forth in the Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Settings issued by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, and Education.

Preparation of the document was partially supported by a contract from the Vermont Agency of Education. Funding was provided through the Vermont Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. Available at http://www.soe.vt.edu/presentations/vermont-preschool-collection/
Objectives

• To increase awareness and knowledge of:

• Suspension and expulsion in early childhood PreK settings.

• Evidence-based practices for reducing suspensions and expulsions in early childhood PreK settings.

• Resources that identify potential barriers and support possible solutions.
16 (V.S.A.) § 829 (e)(10)
PreKindergarten Education

State Board of Education (SBE)
Rule 2606(1)(h)
“complete reports for enrollment, attendance, child assessment, costs of Prek, finances and other areas as required by state law and AOE”.

16 V.S.A. § 829 (e)(10)
PreKindergarten Education

16 V.S.A. § 1161a
Effective Discipline Measures

16 V.S.A. § 1162
Suspension or Expulsion of Students
All private and public PreK programs must also comply with Child Development Division (CDD) expulsion criteria as defined in Childcare Licensing Regulations 6.2.8.4 (1)(2)(3)
Head Start programs must also comply with the Head Start Policy and Regulations, specifically the Expulsion and Suspension Policy Statement.
The Impact of Suspension and Expulsion

- Early expulsion or suspension predicts later expulsion or suspension.
- Estimates indicate that expulsion and suspension rates for PreKindergarteners are 3 times higher than in K-12 settings.
- Racial and gender disparities exist.

How Suspension and Expulsion Impacts a Child

Children who are expelled or suspended in early childhood are more likely to:

• experience future academic failure
• be retained in a grade
• drop out of high school, and
• face juvenile incarceration
Exclusionary Discipline

What do exclusionary discipline practices look like in early childhood settings?
Examples of exclusionary practices in early childhood

In-School Suspension could look like...
Disciplining a child by sending the child out of the classroom, such as to the director’s office.

Out-of-School Suspension could look like...
Asking a family to pick up their child early because of behavioral issues (e.g., biting, hitting, not following directions).

Expulsion could look like...
Telling a family that they will need to find another care arrangement/center because the child is not a "good fit" for the program or that the program can 'no longer support' their toddler or preschooler.

'Soft' Expulsion could look like...
Asking the family repeatedly to pick their child up early because of behavior issues, requiring them to leave or miss work frequently.
Suspension in PreK

In-Program Suspension
Is the placement of a child in a specified supervised location other than the child’s regular classroom

Out-of-Classroom/Program Suspension
Is the removal of a child from classroom/program (off premises)
Expulsion in PreK

Expulsion is the permanent removal of a child from their PreK program.
“Soft Expulsion”

Programs encouraging families to voluntarily terminate services is referred to as a “soft” expulsion.

“Our program just isn’t right for her.”

“Don’t bring him in tomorrow.”

“We can’t provide the services your child needs.”

“Your child will be placed in the toddler room since he is not ready for PreK.”
September 21, 2017
Memorandum to the field:

• Public PreK
• Private PreK
• Principals
• Superintendents
The licensee shall support continuity of care and education. In the event that a child’s continued enrollment is at risk the following shall apply:

1. Consult with child’s parents

2. Provide parents with written notice at least 5 days prior to expulsion

3. If child is expelled, a full copy of the child’s file must be provided to family and documentation retained by program.
As of September 1, 2017 all private and public PreK programs are required to submit a Public/Private PreK Suspension and Expulsion Incident Report to the SU/SD of children’s school of enrollment within 5 school calendar days from the date of incident.
Meeting Reporting Requirements

To meet obligations related to PreK suspension and expulsion data collection, all PreK programs must complete an incident report for each child who is asked to leave PreK or misses PreK for a determined period of time due to behavioral or disciplinary reasons.
An incident report is required for each child who is:
Requested to permanently leave a PreK classroom/program, or
Removed from a PreK classroom for 2 or more hours out of the 10 entitled PreK hours per week due to behavioral or disciplinary reasons.
Reporting Requirements for Children with Disabilities

Prior to any decision:
• The PreK program must contact the SU/SD early childhood special education staff and/or director of student support services.
• If a child is suspended or expelled for more than 10 days (consecutive or cumulative) the LEA must convene a manifestation determination hearing.
• A meeting of the child’s IEP team is required to determine appropriate services and placement.
Establishing PreK Partnership Agreements

PreK partnership agreements established between SU/SD and prequalified private and other public PreK programs should be revised to include process and procedures for reporting PreK suspension and expulsion incidents.
PreK Partnership Agreements

Agreements should include the following:

• SU/SD and school of enrollment designates appropriate points of contact for submitting the suspension and expulsion forms

• PreK program designates point of contact

• Assurance that prequalified private/public PreK program will submit suspension/expulsion report within 5 school calendar days of incident to SU/SD.
Evidence-based Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education Joint Memo to the Field (12/2014)
- HHS/DOE Joint Policy Statement (12/2014)
- Vermont Agency of Education PreK Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting Memo to the Field (9/2017)
- AOE Incident Report (9/2017)
- New America: What Does the Civil Rights Data Tell Us About Early Learners?
- Vermont Early Childhood Suspension-Expulsion Resources: An Annotated Collection of Free Materials (2017) including:
  - Standing Together Against Suspension & Expulsion in Early Childhood Pyramid Model Consortium Resources
  - ECTA Center’s Reducing Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspensions
Thank you for all you do for each and every young child!