Included from the Start in K-1 Classrooms!

An Overview of SPECS First Year Implementation Data for the Include Me from the Start Initiative

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BACKGROUND

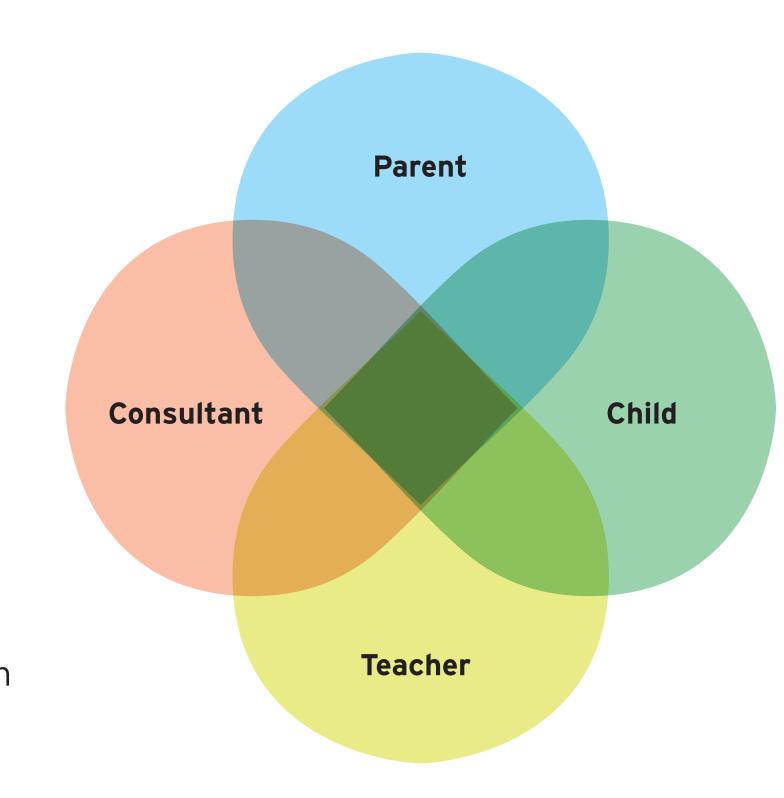
The Include Me from the Start (IMFS) initiative of the ARC of Pennsylvania is state funded by the PA Department of Education according to the Gaskins Settlement. The program seeks to provide high quality mentoring to receiving teachers, and adaptive programming in inclusive settings for close to 150 children a year with significant disabilities in Kindergarten and 1st grade.

Include Me from the Start proposes to:

- Include children early in Kindergarten and 1st grade to increase federally required inclusion outcomes for those children and decrease the likelihood that they will be segregated throughout their school-age years.
- Help build inclusion capacity within all school districts involved.

The program uses 15 consultants, employed by ARC, in order to train, mentor, and support teachers and parents in 30+ school districts per year with the provision of services to children with disabilities.

The program evaluation research of the Include Me from the Start initiative is designed to determine the impact and programmatic elements for successful inclusion of children with significant disabilities in public school kindergarten and first grade classrooms.



Include Me from the Start Quadrad

The IMFS Quadrad represents the key stakeholders involved in the initiative and highlights how each of their roles erlap to create direct and indirect effects within the

METHODOLOGY

Participants (30 School Districts across the state of Pennsylvania)

Child Demographics

| GENDER Male | Autism | EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT (TYPE) Learning Support 55.2% Autistic Support 20.7% | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Caucasian | | Life skills Support | |
| GRADE LEVEL Kindergarten (Half Day) 14% | EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT (AMOUNT) | | |
| Kindergarten (Full Day)38% First Grade48% | Itinerant Support 52.2% Supplemental Support 28.4% | | |

| Teacher Demographics | Consultant Demographics |
|---|--|
| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL | EDUCATIONAL LEVEL |
| Bachelors Degree | Associates Degree |
| Some Graduate Level Courses 22% | Bachelors Degree |
| Masters Degree | Masters Degree |
| OTHER FACTORS | Juris Doctorate |
| Mean Age | OTHER FACTORS |
| Mean Years of Teaching Experience 13.39 | Mean Age |
| Mean Years of Teaching Experience | Mean Years of Experience |
| in School District10.86 | Teaching Experience26.7% |
| | Parent of a Child with a Disability80% |

Full Time Support 19.4%

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Do children show improvements in their classroom social participation and prerequisite learning skills as a result of IMFS consultation on classroom practices?

Does IMFS individual consultation result in changes in knowledge, attitudes, and classroom and school practices to benefit children with significant

disabilities in grades K-1?

Does IMFS consultation result in changes in parent's attitudes and knowledge about inclusion?

Measures

| PARTICIPANT | MEASURE | | |
|-------------|---|--|--|
| Child | Demographic Form (1 time); SPECS for IMFS Child Progress & Learning Scale | | |
| | (2 times-pre/post); (ATEC, Rimland & Edelson, 1999) | | |
| Teacher | Demographic Form (1 time); Teacher Perceptions Survey (2 times-pre/post) (Adapted from Palmer, Borthwick-Duffy, & Widaman, 1997 and a review of | | |
| | relevant research); The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) (2 times-pre/post) | | |
| | (ICP, Soukakou, 2010) | | |
| Parent | Parent Perceptions Survey (2 times-pre/post) (Adapted from Palmer, Borthwick- | | |
| | Duffy, & Widaman, 1997 and a review of relevant research) | | |
| Consultant | Demographic Form (1 time); SPECS for IMFS Consultation Monitor (ongoing) | | |







METHODOLOGY (CONT.)

Procedures

Data Collection

- All children and teachers were given identification numbers to maintain confidentiality.
- Demographic data was collected at the onset of the program implementation.
- Data using the primary measures (SPECS for IMFS Child Progress and Learning Scale, Teacher Perceptions Survey, Parent Perceptions Survey, Inclusive Classroom Profile) was collected twice during implementation.
- The Consultation Monitor was an ongoing measure collected by the consultant.

Data Collection: The Consultation Monitor

The consultants used the Consultation Monitor to record and track the activities they engaged in with members of the IMFS quadrad. This allowed the consultant to document and measure the consultation process: participants, time or intensity, modes used, strategies and activities.

The Monitor was based on the Supplementary Aids and Services Toolkit and included the following:

- Categories: Collaborative, Instructional Physical, Social-Behavioral
- Strategies: Observing, Demonstration/ Modeling, Inclusion Goal Planning, Formal workshop, training, Written feedback, Collecting resources

Percent Allocation of **Consultation Activities Across Categories** Collaboration 22% Instructional..... 36%

Physical 13%

Percent Allocation of Consultation **Activities Within Categories**

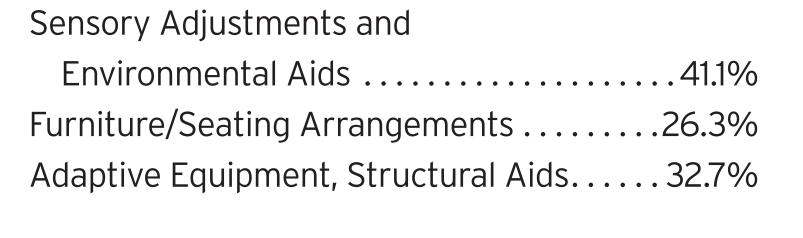
COLLABORATIVE Team Meetings 46.6% Parent Meetings29.6% Professional Development23.8%

INSTRUCTIONAL

36%

| Modifying Curriculum, Goals, Tests | .29.2% | |
|------------------------------------|---------|--|
| Instruction on Functional Routines | . 32.7% | |
| Presentation Methods and | | |
| Instructional Adaptations | . 38.1% | |

PHYSICAL



SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL

| JOUINE, DEMANIONAL | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Social Skills Instruction | /(|
| Behavior Plans, Expectations44.39 | /(|
| Peer Supports, Co-operative | |
| Learning Strategies | /(|
| | |

a special education classroom.

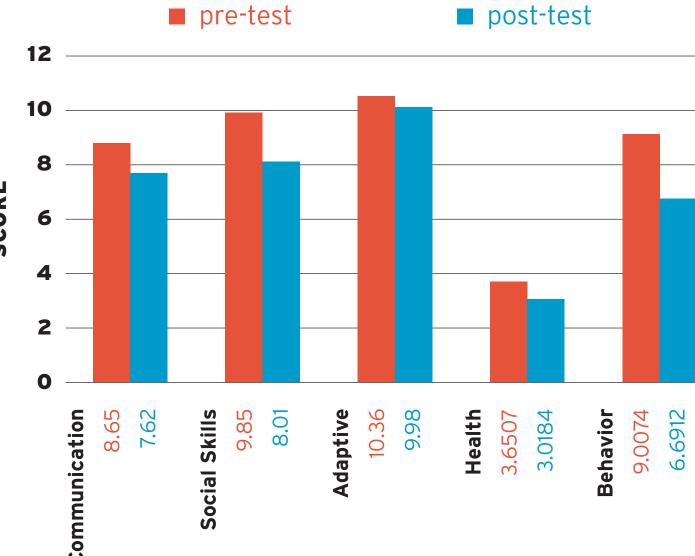
RESULTS (CONT.)

Child Progress and Learning Scale

Look at the scale and please note that the *lower* the scores, the BETTER! Example questions:

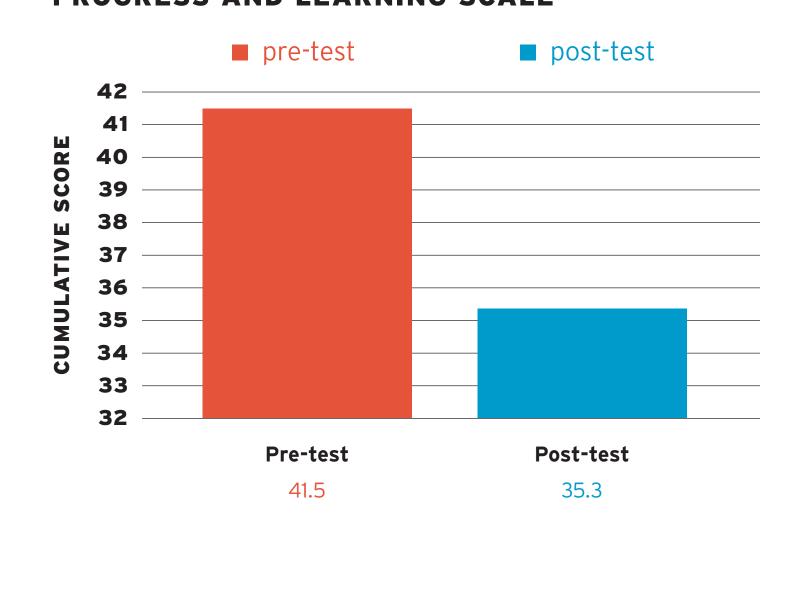
- Asks meaningful questions 2=not true, 1=somewhat true, 0=very true

CHILD PROGRESS ON THE CHILD PROGRESS AND LEARNING SCALE





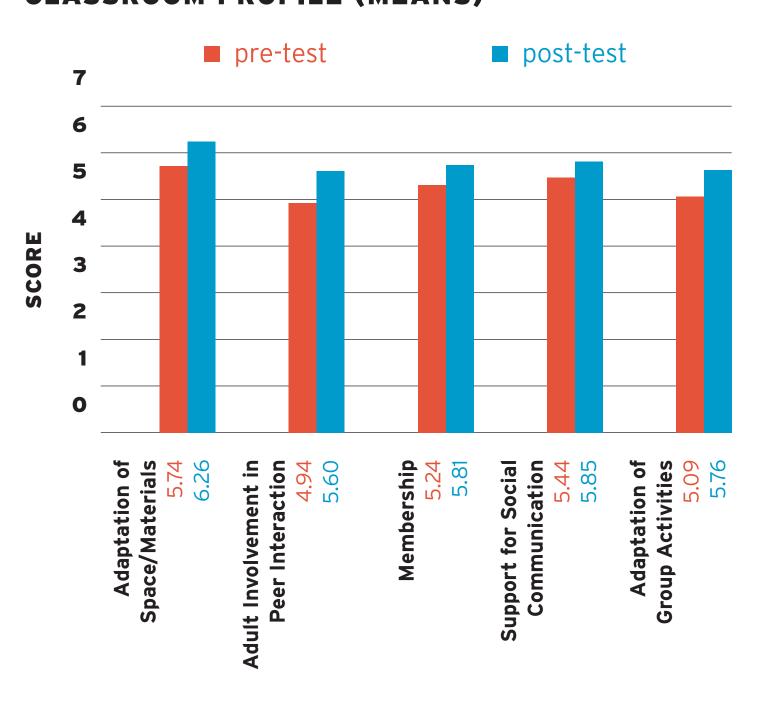
OVERALL CHILD PROGRESS ON THE CHILD PROGRESS AND LEARNING SCALE



Inclusive Classroom Profile

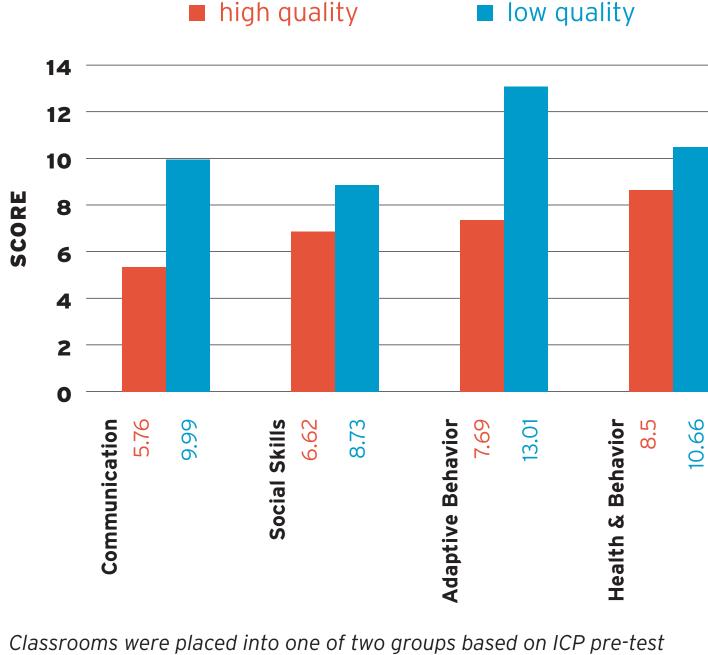
Please note that these graphs are **not** reversed scored, so **the** *higher* **the scores**, **the BETTER!**

CLASSROOM GAINS ON THE INCLUSIVE **CLASSROOM PROFILE (MEANS)**





POST-TEST SCORES BY QUALITY



scores. Low Quality = 2.20 to 5.40, and High Quality = 5.60 to 7.00.

RESULTS

Perceptions Surveys

| ITEM Ho | ow strongly do you agree with the following | statement? Strongly Agree 3 Strongly Disagree |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| | PARENT Mean Range = 1.296-1.878 | TEACHER Mean Range = 1.276-2.500 |
| Highest Rated M Score | O1. The more time my child spends in a regular classroom, the more likely he/she is to show educational benefits. | 10. I feel I have a positive attitude toward having children with disabilities in the classroom. |
| Lowest Rated M Score | 14. I understand my child's rights and education law. | 5. A regular education classroom provides more meaningful and functional opportunities for a child to learn than does |

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of year one data demonstrated...

Child Gains on Functional Skills

According to the SPECS for IMFS Child Progress and Learning Scale, scores demonstrated improvement from pre-test to post-test in all areas measured (Communication, Social Skills, Adaptive, Health, and Behavior). Statistical significance was reached for the Social Skills, Health, and Behavior domains (p<.05). In addition, an overall improvement was demonstrated.

Improvements in Classroom Quality

Children in the High Quality classroom group demonstrated better post-test scores on the School Learning and Progress Scale than those in the Low Quality classroom group. Also, statistical significance was reached for the Communication and Adaptive domains (p<.05) on the SPECS for IMFS Child Progress and Learning Scale.





