Fifth Edition

An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs

"This book provides practical ready-to-implement strategies for teaching children with a variety of needs in inclusive environments for both new and seasoned teachers. The authors provide multimedia support to reinforce the rationale for curriculum, adaptations, and environmental design for classroom and home instruction of young children."

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An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs: Birth Through Age Eight is a comprehensive introduction to educational policies, programs, practices, and services for future practitioners serving young children with delays or disabilities in early intervention–early childhood special education (EI–ECSE). Thoughtfully addressing the needs of children at risk for learning or development delays or disabilities, revered authors Richard M. Gargiulo and Jennifer L. Kilgo offer evidence-based interventions and instructional techniques that provide students with a broad understanding of important theoretical and philosophical foundations, including evidence-based decision-making, developmentally appropriate practices, cultural responsiveness, and activity-based intervention. With the support of this current and innovative book, readers will gain a firm understanding of the complex field of EI–ECSE to assist them in their future study and careers.

New to the Fifth Edition

- **The Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices are infused throughout the text**, offering guidance and strategies to promote the development and support of learning outcomes for young children with delays or disabilities in students' future classrooms.
- **SAGE Premium Video, including real classroom footage**, in the Interactive eBook brings concepts to life and appeals to diverse learners.
- **A glossary of terms in Spanish** provides support for diverse learners.
- **Coverage of the latest developments in and influences on the field of early intervention and early childhood special education** addresses philosophical trends and legislative influences.
- **Updated information and new photos, vignettes, examples, reflections, applications, and revised references and resources** ensure that students are introduced to the most up-to-date progress in the field.

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Gargiulo | Kilgo

An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs Fifth Edition

Fifth Edition

An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs

Birth Through Age Eight

Richard M. Gargiulo | Jennifer L. Kilgo

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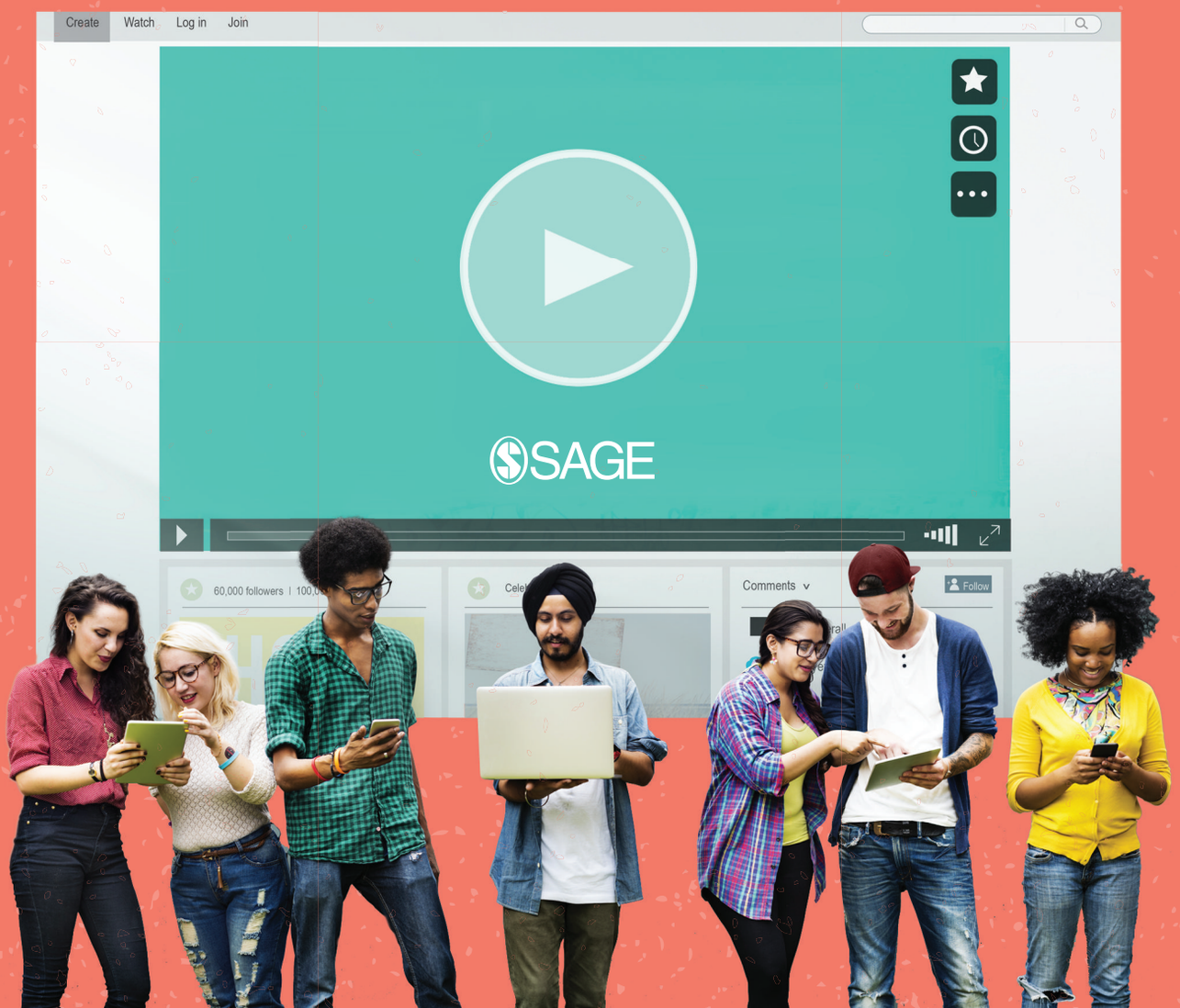

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A COMPLETE LEARNING PACKAGE

- **THE DIVISION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD'S (DEC) RECOMMENDED PRACTICES ARE INFUSED THROUGHOUT THE TEXT**, offering guidance and strategies to promote the development and support of learning outcomes for young children with delays or disabilities in students' future classrooms.
- **SAGE PREMIUM VIDEO, INCLUDING REAL CLASSROOM FOOTAGE**, in the Interactive eBook brings concepts to life and appeals to diverse learners.
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An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs

Fifth Edition

This book is dedicated with deep appreciation and much love to my family. Thank you for your continual support, encouragement, and understanding during this writing process. You give purpose and meaning to my life and remain, as always, my inspiration to help others and advocate for those who are the least among us.

RMG

This book is dedicated to Walt Gary, one of my first infants in early intervention, who taught me the critical importance of considering each child within the context of his family and community. Here's a heartfelt thank-you to Walt and his family and the many children and families who have shown me the way throughout my career. May you all experience what Dr. Ann Turnbull calls "enviable lives," and may we continue to learn how to be your reliable and trustworthy allies.

JLK

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An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs

Birth Through Age Eight

Fifth Edition

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University of Alabama at Birmingham

Jennifer L. Kilgo
University of Alabama at Birmingham

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• Brief Contents •

• Detailed Contents •

• Preface •

As the title indicates, *An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs: Birth Through Age Eight* offers an overview and introduction for practitioners who will serve young children, from birth through eight years old, with delays or disabilities and their families in a variety of settings. As early intervention and early childhood special education have developed over the past forty years, it has become increasingly apparent that a comprehensive book is needed to present an overview of this field, which provides services to infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary children with delays or disabilities and their families in a variety of settings.

As university professors, we have experienced the need for a comprehensive textbook to afford a strong foundation for the multifaceted components of the field of early intervention/early childhood special education. Some introductory special education texts focus exclusively on infants and toddlers, some on preschoolers, and some on children from birth through age five. Others address children from birth through age twenty-one, with limited emphasis placed on the early years. Because the field of early childhood is recognized by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as including children from birth through age eight, this book is designed to specifically focus on children in this age range and their families.

We recognize that the early years of a child's life constitute the most critical period of development. Early interventionists/early childhood special educators, general early childhood educators, related services personnel (for example, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech–language pathologists), and other practitioners who work with young children must understand that what happens during the earliest years of a child's life significantly impacts later development and learning. A growing number of young children, however, encounter less than optimal situations and circumstances during the early years. Conditions such as congenital disabilities and developmental delays; environmental factors such as poverty, trauma, abuse, and neglect; and cultural and linguistic differences place some children at risk for future difficulty. Early intervention and early childhood special education services were established based on supporting evidence that the earlier children receive special services and support, the better their outcomes. In addition, early intervention and early childhood special education services were developed based on evidence that families who receive special services and support earlier are better equipped to provide support for their children and advocate for them later in life.

As we have described, the topic of this book is infants and young children from birth through age eight, some of whom have been identified as having disabilities, others who are delayed in their development, and still others who are at risk for problems in learning and developmental issues due to exposure to adverse genetic, biological, or environmental conditions. These children with delays or disabilities are members of families, programs, schools, teams, communities, and society. They have the right to appropriate services, beginning with early intervention and early childhood special education designed to meet their individual needs and prepare them for a successful future. Hopefully, this book will provide the foundation for comprehensive, appropriate services for all young children and their families.

Organizational Features and Terminology

There are four major parts to this book. Part I, *Perspectives, Policies, and Practices of Early Childhood Special Education,* provides a foundation to frame the field of early intervention/early childhood special education. Part I introduces the field as well as its legal and historical bases. This part examines the multifaceted influences that have shaped the field of early intervention and early childhood special education in addition to service delivery options for educating young children with delays or disabilities.

Part II, *Assessment and Planning for Young Children With Delays or Disabilities,* includes two chapters that address the processes involved in assessment, planning, and curriculum. Part III, *Organization and Intervention for Young Children With Delays or Disabilities,* is composed of three chapters that focus on designing, adapting, and organizing the learning environment and implementing instructional programs for young children with delays or disabilities. Part IV, *Contemporary Issues and Challenges in Early Childhood Special Education,* discusses the issues and challenges that exist in the field today, as well as future directions.

Throughout this text, we use "person first" language, which means that we discuss *children with disabilities* rather than *disabled children*. By placing the noun before the adjective, we hope to ensure that the reader realizes that the emphasis is correctly on the child, not the disability. This practice is in keeping with contemporary thinking and reflects our belief that young children with delays or disabilities are first and foremost children who are more similar to their typically developing peers than different.

Key Features of the Text

This edition has several unique features described below.

- **Vignettes** about three young children and their families help to illustrate how theory is translated to practice in the field of early intervention/early childhood special education.
- The **Making Connections** feature throughout the text highlights the three young children of different ages and their families in the vignettes and provides insight into the services required to meet the unique needs of each child and family.
- Each chapter includes contemporary information, topics, evidence-based practices, and research services for young children with delays or disabilities and their families. This includes suggestions for incorporating assistive technology in the learning environments of young children.
- DEC Recommended Practices are identified and discussed in individual chapters with examples provided.
- A glossary of key terms in Spanish is located on page 355.

Readers of this text will encounter certain recurring themes that reflect our professional beliefs and values about programs and services for young children with delays or disabilities and their families. These themes, along with certain basic premises, provide the theoretical and philosophical foundations for this book. The following list depicts those orientations that we consider requisites for delivering high-quality services. We value, support, and encourage the following:

- Services in natural and inclusive environments
- Family-centered services
- Collaboration and teaming
- A transdisciplinary service delivery model
- Developmentally appropriate practices
- A blended approach to curriculum to foster inclusion
- Authentic assessment and intervention
- Cultural appropriateness and responsiveness
- Activity-based intervention
- Embedded instruction
- Evidence-based decision making
- Coordinated and comprehensive services for young children with delays or disabilities and their families

New to This Edition

As described previously, the fifth edition of this textbook has undergone significant modifications. This edition is filled with updated information and new photos, vignettes, examples, reflections, applications, and revised references and resources. Also addressed in this edition of the textbook are the latest developments in and influences on the field of early intervention and early childhood special education including the philosophical trends and legislative influences.

One of the biggest updates has been the addition of the most recent publication of the DEC Recommended Practices. The DEC Recommended Practices build on the Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) guidelines of the NAEYC. The DEC Recommended Practices were developed based on an extensive review of the research in the field that spanned across the literature of multiple disciplines and were designed to bridge the gap between research and practice. The revised DEC Recommended Practices are divided into eight strands that focus on components of early intervention and education (leadership, assessment, environment, family, instruction, interaction, teaming and collaboration, and transition). The revised practices offer guidance to professionals and parents on specific strategies to promote the development and support the learning outcomes of young children with delays or disabilities. The DEC Recommended Practices have been infused throughout this book and addressed specifically in each chapter with examples provided. A brief overview of the updates to the chapters follows.

Chapter 1, "Foundations of Early Childhood Special Education," has been reorganized to provide a more comprehensive overview of early intervention/education. The chapter includes updated references and new and revised tables and figures. After reviewing this chapter, the reader will have a clear understanding of the basis for the field of early intervention and early childhood special education.

Chapter 2, "The Context of Early Childhood Special Education," has been restructured in the same way as Chapter 1. Legislative information has been added with new and extensive coverage of current legislations and the impact on young children with delays or disabilities. New content has been added on early primary students, six through eight years of age.

Chapter 3, "Family-Centered Approach to Early Childhood Special Education," has been modified to reflect the changes that have occurred in society that have had an impact on the characteristics of the American family. Greater emphasis is placed on family-centered services and how families must be supported as contributing members of the team according to their individual preferences. Cultural responsiveness to young children and their families representing diverse backgrounds and structures is emphasized throughout this chapter.

Chapter 4, "Delivering Services to Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," has been restructured, and we have

imposed a conceptually sound presentation of content. Updated coverage of an individualized family service plan (IFSP), an individualized education program (IEP), and Section 504 accommodation plans are included in addition to various ways to engage cooperative teaching. (See Appendices D and E and the accompanying website for examples of an IFSP and IEP.)

Chapter 5, "Assessment of Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," addresses assessment in a more comprehensive, coordinated manner as suggested by current recommended practices in the field of early intervention and early childhood special education. Chapter 5 has expanded coverage of authentic, team-based, and culturally responsive assessment practices. The emphasis is on the coordination of all phases of the assessment process from screening to eligibility to program planning and progress monitoring.

Chapter 6, "Curriculum for Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," has been updated and substantially reorganized to address current practices in the field related to appropriate curriculum development. General early childhood education content and practices serve as the foundation for curriculum development, and early childhood special education recommended practices are added as needed based on the needs of young children with delays and disabilities. Increased coverage in this chapter includes a holistic and eclectic approach to curriculum development and implementation for young children with delays or disabilities.

Chapter 7, "Designing Learning Environments for Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," has been reorganized to focus on infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary age children. The content is reorganized and is now more conceptually sound and includes web-based resources, examples, and guidelines to broaden the readers' understanding of ways in which the environment can be organized to foster learning for young children with delays or disabilities.

Chapter 8, "Adapting Learning Environments for Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," has been expanded to provide broader coverage of organization and intervention for young children with delays or disabilities. A process for determining evidence-based recommended practices is also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 9, "Intervention and Instructional Strategies for Supporting Young Children With Delays or Disabilities," provides a more in-depth focus on how authentic intervention and instruction should be delivered for the birth through eight-year-old population based on evidence-based practices. Increased coverage of early primary students with delays or disabilities is a hallmark of this chapter.

Chapter 10, "Emerging Issues and Contemporary Challenges in Early Childhood Special Education," has been restructured to more accurately reflect the most important issues in the field today including response to intervention (RTI), universal design for learning (UDL), assistive technology, cultural and linguistic diversity, and poverty. New references and resources are included in this chapter, as well as future directions in early intervention/early childhood special education.

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- integrated links to the interactive eBook that make it easy for students to maximize their study time with this "anywhere, anytime" mobile-friendly version of the text. It also offers access to more digital tools and resources, including SAGE Premium Video; and
- select tables and figures from the textbook.

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- learning objectives that reinforce the most important material;
- exclusive access to influential SAGE journal articles that tie important research and scholarship to chapter concepts to strengthen learning; and
- video and multimedia resources that facilitate student use of Internet resources to further explore topics from the text.

• Acknowledgments •

Writing a textbook requires a collaborative effort, and the fifth edition of this book is no exception. We wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude and much appreciation the contributions of Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward (Chapter 9), whose expertise and professionalism added greatly to the quality of this endeavor. We are grateful to A. K. Bruton for her expert editing. Due to her detailed and thorough editing of the entire manuscript including the preface, chapters, tables, figures, graphics, and appendices, we are proud of the high quality of this textbook. Similarly, we are grateful to Mindy Robbins for creating the tables, figures, and graphics for the chapters. We are very appreciative of the efforts of the families and teachers whom we interviewed and whose quotes and suggestions we included throughout the book. Our thanks are extended to our entire team for their contributions to the fifth edition of our textbook. Their ongoing support and enthusiasm helped us to see this work to fruition.

Appreciation is also extended to the team at SAGE Publications who believed in the vitality of this textbook and offered us the opportunity to write a fifth edition. We offer our heartfelt gratitude to our editor, Steve Scoble, for his support, visionary ideas, and commitment to ensuring that *An Introduction to Young Children With Special Needs* is a market leader. To the other professionals at SAGE Publications, including Jennifer Jovin, development editor; Elizabeth You, editorial assistant; and Veronica Stapleton Hooper, production editor, we deeply appreciate your dedication, hard work, sense of humor, and commitment to this project. Writing a textbook of this scope requires the efforts of many people at many different levels, and we are indebted to all of those who worked on this project along the way.

Finally, we are indebted to our reviewers. These professionals provided invaluable input and helpful suggestions. Their thoughtful commentary and insights definitely helped to shape the direction of this edition. These individuals include:

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Duquesne University

In addition to the reviewers, we would like to acknowledge the work of our cover artist, Joan Curtis. Her painting embodies young children with delays or disabilities within the context of their families in the community. Our thanks is extended to Joan Curtis, who is a lifelong friend of Walt

Gary's family, for her willingness to create this multidimensional impressionistic painting that represents Walt, other children, and families within their communities. As the whimsical painting illustrates, a cadre of support is needed for children with delays or disabilities to be afforded the opportunity to be included and experience success across the life span in order to lead the lives they deserve. Readers of this textbook hopefully will become reliable and trustworthy allies of the young children with delays or disabilities and their families.

Our sincere thanks are extended to all who have generously contributed their time and resources to seeing this project to fruition. As a result, we have a product of which we are extremely proud, one that we believe will make a significant contribution to the field of early intervention and early childhood special education.

• About the Authors •

Richard M. Gargiulo

I have always desired to be an educator. I guess I am a rarity in that I never changed my undergraduate major or left the field of education. My undergraduate education began at Hiram Scott College in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Three years later, I was teaching fourth graders in the Milwaukee public schools while working toward my master's degree in intellectual disability at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. At the conclusion of my first year of teaching, I was asked to teach a class of young children with intellectual disability. I jumped at the opportunity and for the next three years essentially became an early childhood special educator. It was at this point in my career that I decided to earn my doctorate. I resigned my teaching position and moved to Madison, where I pursued a PhD in the areas of human learning, child development, and behavioral disabilities. Upon receiving my degree, I accepted a faculty position in the Department of Special Education at Bowling Green State University (Ohio), where for the next eight years I was a teacher educator. In 1982, I moved to Birmingham, Alabama, and joined the faculty of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), where, until my retirement, I served as a professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. In November 2014, I was awarded professor emeritus status by the board of trustees of the University of Alabama system.

I have enjoyed a rich and rewarding professional career spanning more than four decades. During the course of this journey, I have had the privilege of twice serving as president of the Alabama Federation, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC); serving as president of the Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES), CEC; and serving as president of the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD), CEC. I mostly served as the Southeast representative to the board of directors of DADD. I have lectured abroad extensively and was a Fulbright Scholar to the Czech Republic in 1991. In 2007, I was invited to serve as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic.

Teaching has always been my passion. In 1999, I was fortunate to receive UAB's President's Award for Excellence in Teaching. In 2007, I received the Jasper Harvey Award from the Alabama Federation of CEC in recognition of being named the outstanding special education teacher educator in the state.

With a background in both educational psychology and special education, my research has appeared in a wide variety of professional journals including *Child Development, Journal of Educational Research, Journal of Learning Disabilities, American Journal of Mental Deficiency, Childhood Education, Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, British Journal of Developmental Psychology, Journal of Special Education, Early Childhood Education Journal, International Journal of Clinical Neuropsychology,* and *International Journal of Special Education,* among a host of others.

In addition to the present text, I have authored or coauthored ten books, several enjoying multiple editions, ranging in topics from counseling parents of children with disabilities to child abuse, early childhood education, teaching in inclusive classrooms, and, most recently, instructional strategies for students with intellectual disability.

Jennifer L. Kilgo

Personal experience and unforeseen opportunity pointed me toward my rewarding career in early intervention–early childhood special education (EI-ECSE). When I was a young girl, my sibling was born with multiple medical complications and died shortly after birth, an event that immediately piqued my interest in childhood disabilities and catalyzed my career in EI-ECSE. While I was an undergraduate, Congress passed Public Law 94–142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, to provide services for children with developmental delays and disabilities. This opened a new avenue for me while I was studying psychology at the time. My passion became improving the educational opportunities afforded to infants and young children with disabilities and their families. This has been accomplished in higher education, where I prepare early intervention and early childhood special educators and physical, occupational, and speech therapists to serve infants and young children with disabilities and their families.

Presently, I am a professor of early childhood special education (ECSE) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), where I have been employed since 1995. I hold a BS in psychology from Auburn University; teacher certification in early childhood–elementary education; an MA in special education and certification in administration from UAB; and a doctoral degree in EI-ECSE from the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa). Prior to my appointment to the faculty at UAB, I taught at Virginia Commonwealth University and the

University of Hawaii. As a professor at UAB, I enjoy interdisciplinary teaching for graduate students representing a variety of disciplines (e.g., ECSE, physical therapy, occupational therapy) who are learning to collaboratively provide team-based services to young children (from birth through age eight) with delays or disabilities and their families.

My involvement in EI-ECSE has extended for over forty years. Before becoming a higher education faculty member, I provided direct services to young children with disabilities and their families in various community agencies and school settings. Also, I worked as a teacher at an early intervention–education program at the University of Alabama, Project RISE of the Stallings Center. In this role, I was responsible for coordinating the assessment, intervention, and transdisciplinary team functions, as well as supervising interns representing a variety of disciplines. My experience with young children and their families has informed my ability to teach others, as well as my interest in various scholarly activities.

My involvement at the state, national, and international levels in service, scholarship, and personnel preparation activities has been a highlight of my career. For example, my leadership positions have included serving as the president of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Additionally, I have been a member of the editorial review board for leading national journals, served as the principal investigator of numerous federally funded grants, and delivered many presentations at conferences throughout the country. Finally, I have conducted ongoing research and written journal articles, chapters, and books with the major focus of my work being on interprofessional education, transdisciplinary teaming, and family-based services.

The accolades and honors I have received have focused on collaboration and teaching. In 2013, I was honored to be designated a University Professor by the UAB Board of Trustees. The criteria for this appointment includes "numerous achievements and extensive recognition in the individual's chosen professional field, and academic competence to enable her to undertake cross-departmental, cross-disciplinary activities in research and teaching and community service." I also was honored with the Sam Brown Bridge Builder Award for my collaborative efforts with multiple disciplines at UAB and within the community, as well as the President's Excellence in Teaching Award and the Alabama Council for Exceptional Children's Jasper Harvey Award for Outstanding Teacher Educator. To be recognized by my students and colleagues has meant a great deal to me throughout my rewarding career. Hopefully, I have contributed to interdisciplinary education in higher education and helped to improve services for infants and young children with delays or disabilities and their families.

PART 1

Perspectives, Policies, and Practices of Early Childhood Special Education

1

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Foundations of Early Childhood Special Education

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Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you will be able to

- Describe the contributions of historical figures to the development of the field of general early childhood education
- Discuss the evolution of educational opportunities for children with delays or disabilities
- Explain the concept of compensatory education
- Describe the purpose of Head Start and related compensatory programs
- List four long-term benefits of compensatory education

Introduction

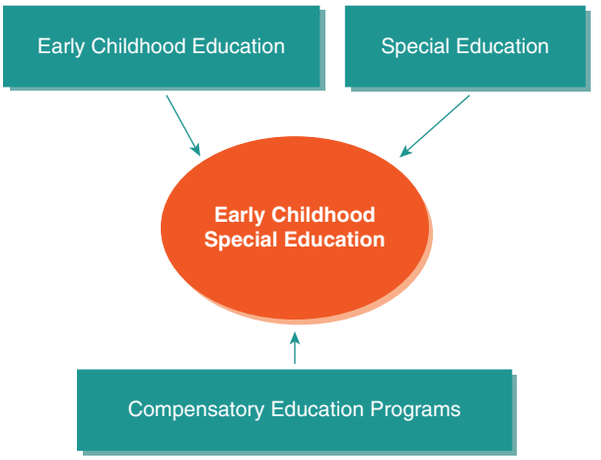
Before examining the origins of our field, it is perhaps best to define who is the focus of our attention. When we talk about **early intervention** and **early childhood special education**, we are referring to the period from birth through age eight. In educational terms, this includes early intervention, early childhood special education, and early primary special education. The individuals who require these services represent an especially heterogeneous group of children. The students you serve will vary in their chronological age and cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as in the types and severity of their delays and disabilities. As early childhood special educators, you will encounter children with a wide range of physical, cognitive, communication, health, and social limitations (Kilgo, 2006). This textbook is designed to help you deliver an appropriate and effective educational program to infants and young children with delays and/or disabilities and their families who are receiving services in a variety of educational settings.

The Origins of Early Childhood Special Education

The last four decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in awareness, services, and opportunities for young children with delays or disabilities. Legislative initiatives, litigation, public policy, and the efforts of advocacy groups are some of the factors that have helped to focus attention on this group of children. As a distinct field, early childhood special education is relatively young but rapidly emerging. The foundation for constructing developmentally appropriate learning experiences for young children with delays or disabilities is built upon three related fields. The origins of early childhood special education can be traced to trends and developments in general early childhood education, special education for school-age students, and compensatory programs like Head Start (Hanson & Lynch, 1995). In their own unique way, all the movements have played vital roles in the evolution of early childhood special education. Perhaps it is best to consider the field of early childhood special education as a hybrid built upon the evolving recommended practices of early childhood and special education, plus the research evidence from empirical investigations documenting the effectiveness of compensatory education programs. Figure 1.1 illustrates this threefold foundation of the field.

Early childhood education has a long history rich with tradition. The efforts of past religious leaders, reformers, educational theorists, and philosophers have helped to shape contemporary thinking about young children. The work of these individuals has also paved the way for many of the concepts and practices utilized with young children with disabilities and students who are at risk for future developmental delays or disabilities. It is important to note, however, that

FIGURE 1.1 ● The Foundations of Early Childhood Special Education



the value of children and their education reflects the social, political, and economic conditions of particular time periods.

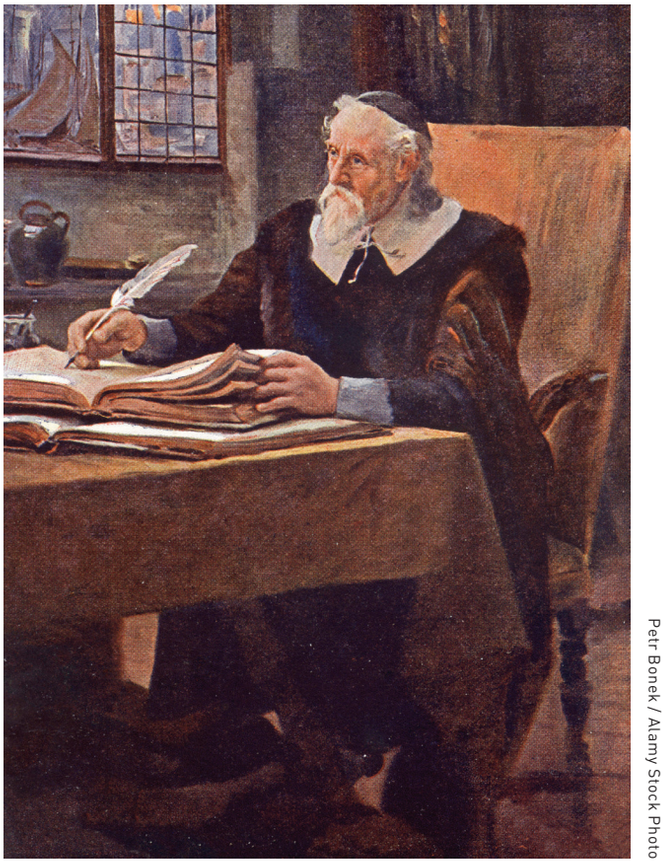
Early Contributors

Although he was a significant historical religious leader, Martin Luther (1483–1546) is also remembered for advocating the importance of literacy and universal, compulsory education. He also was a firm believer in publicly supported schools for all children, including girls. Luther's legacy includes his visionary idea that family participation is a critical component of a child's education.

Another early religious leader and educational theorist was Jan Ámos Comenius (Komenský) (1592–1670). He was a strong believer in universal education, which ideally should begin in the early years due to the plasticity or malleability of the child's behavior. In *The Great Didactic* (1657), Comenius outlines his view that young children are like soft wax, capable of easily being molded and shaped. Schooling in the first six years of life should begin at home at the mother's knee ("School of the Mother's Knee") and progress throughout an individual's lifetime. Comenius also advocated that all children, including those with disabilities, should be educated (Gargiulo & Černá, 1992).

Many contemporary practices, as well as the thinking of later theorists such as Montessori and Piaget, can be found in Comenius's early ideas about children's learning and development. As an example, Comenius realized the importance of a child's readiness for an activity. He also stressed that students learn best by being actively involved in the learning process. Additionally, Comenius placed great emphasis on sensory experiences and the utilization of concrete examples.

John Locke (1632–1704) was a seventeenth-century English philosopher and physician who also influenced thinking about young children. Locke is credited with introducing the notion that children are born very much like a blank slate (**tabula rasa**). All that children learn, therefore, is a direct result of experiences, activities, and sensations rather than innate characteristics. Locke was a strong advocate of an environmental point of view. What a person becomes is a consequence or product of the type and quality of experiences to which he or she is exposed.



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▲ Comenius believed that young children learn best by being actively involved in the learning process.

Locke's belief in the domination of the environment is reflected in the behavioral theories of B. F. Skinner and other contemporary theorists as well as today's compensatory education programs aimed at remedying the consequences of a disadvantaged environment. Early school experience for children at risk, such as the popular Head Start program, is a prime example. Because Locke also stressed the importance of sensory experiences, his theorizing influenced Montessori's thinking about the significance of sensory training in early education.

One social theorist and philosopher who had a significant impact on education was Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). Through his writings—in particular, *Emile* (1762)—Rousseau described his views on child-rearing and education. His ideas, radical for his time, included a natural approach to the education of young children. Rousseau urged a laissez-faire approach, one void of restrictions and interference, that would thus allow the natural unfolding of a child's abilities. Childhood was viewed as a distinct and special time wherein children developed or "flowered" according to innate timetables. Rousseau emphasized the importance of early education. He also believed that schools should be based on the interests of the child (Graves, Gargiulo, & Sluder, 1996).

Educational historians typically regard Rousseau as the dividing line between the historical and modern periods of education. He significantly influenced future reformers and

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▲ According to Rousseau, children develop according to innate timetables.

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▲ Owens believed that early education was crucial to the development of a child's character and behavior.

thinkers such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Montessori, all of whom have contributed to modern early childhood practices.

Pioneers in Early Childhood Education

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827), a Swiss educator, is credited with establishing early childhood education as a distinct discipline. Like Rousseau, Pestalozzi believed in the importance of education through nature and following the child's natural development. He also advocated developing school experiences centered on the interests of the student. Pestalozzi realized, however, that learning does not occur simply through a child's initiative and exploratory behavior; adult guidance is required. Teachers, therefore, need to construct "object" lessons to balance the pupil's self-guided experiences. Due to Pestalozzi's belief in the importance of sensory experiences, instructional lessons incorporated manipulative activities like counting, measuring, feeling, and touching concrete objects (Lawton, 1988).

Three additional ideas distinguish Pestalozzi's contributions to the field of early childhood education. First, Pestalozzi stressed the education of the whole child; second, he was a strong believer in involving parents in a child's early education; and, finally, he saw the merit of multiage grouping whereby older students could assist in teaching younger pupils.

Social reformer and entrepreneur Robert Owen (1771–1858) is recognized for establishing an infant school in 1816. Influenced by the theorizing of Rousseau and Pestalozzi, Owen was concerned about the living and working conditions of the children and their parents who worked in textile mills. As the manager of a mill in New Lanark, Scotland, Owen was able to initiate his reform ideas. Very young children were prohibited from working at all, and the working hours of older children were limited. Perhaps more important, however, was the establishment of a school for children between the ages of three and ten. He believed early education was critical to the development of a child's character and behavior. The early years were the best time to influence a young child's development. By controlling and manipulating environmental conditions, Owen, like other Utopians, sought to construct a better society (Morrison, 2015). Education was seen as a vehicle for social change.

Owen's infant school was noted for its emphasis on the development of basic academics as well as creative experiences such as dance and music. This pioneer of early childhood education did not believe in forcing children to learn and was opposed to punishment, stressing mutual respect between teacher and learner. His ideas were immensely popular, and more than fifty infant schools were established by the late 1820s throughout Scotland, Ireland, and England. Several schools flourished in urban areas of the United States; yet, their influence diminished by the mid-1830s.

Owen's infant schools served as a forerunner of kindergartens. They were also seen as a way of immunizing children living in poverty from the evils of nineteenth-century urban living. This social reformer was visionary; he realized the important relationship between education and societal improvements. Owen believed, as did other reformers of that time, that poverty could be permanently eliminated by educating and socializing young children from poor families.

Graves and his colleagues (1996) describe Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel[1] (1782–1852) as the one individual who perhaps had the greatest impact on the field of early childhood education. A student of Pestalozzi and a teacher in one of his schools, Froebel was a strong believer in the education of young children. He translated his beliefs into a system for teaching young children in addition to developing a curriculum, complete with methodology. His efforts have earned him the well-deserved title "Father of the Kindergarten."

Also influenced by the writings of Rousseau and Comenius, Froebel conceived an educational theory ("Law of Universal Unity") partly based on their thoughts as well as his own personal experiences and religious views. His basic idea was essentially religious in nature and emphasized a unity of all living things—a oneness of humans, nature, and God. His notion of unity led Froebel to advocate that education should be based on cooperation rather than competition. Like Comenius and Pestalozzi, he also considered development as a process of unfolding. Children's learning should, therefore, follow this natural development. The role of the teacher (and parent) was to recognize this process and provide activities to help the child learn whenever he or she was ready (Morrison, 2012).

Froebel used the garden to symbolize childhood education. Like a flower blooming from a bud, children would grow naturally according to their own laws of development. A kindergarten education, therefore, should follow the nature of the child. Play, a child's natural activity, was the basis for learning (Spodek, Saracho, & Davis, 1991).

Froebel established the first kindergarten (German for "children's garden") in 1837 near Blankenburg, Germany. This early program enrolled young children between the ages of one and seven. Structured play was an important component of the curriculum. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Froebel saw educational value and benefit in play. Play is the work of the child. Because he believed that education was knowledge being transmitted by symbols, Froebel devised a set of materials and activities that would aid the children in their play activities as well as teach the concept of unity among nature, God, and humankind. Education was to begin with the concrete and move to the abstract.

Froebel presented his students with "gifts" and "occupations" rich in symbolism. In his curriculum, **gifts** were manipulative activities to assist in learning color, shape, size, counting, and other educational tasks. Wooden blocks, cylinders, and cubes; balls of colored yarn; geometric shapes; and natural objects, such as beans and pebbles, are all examples of some of the learning tools used.

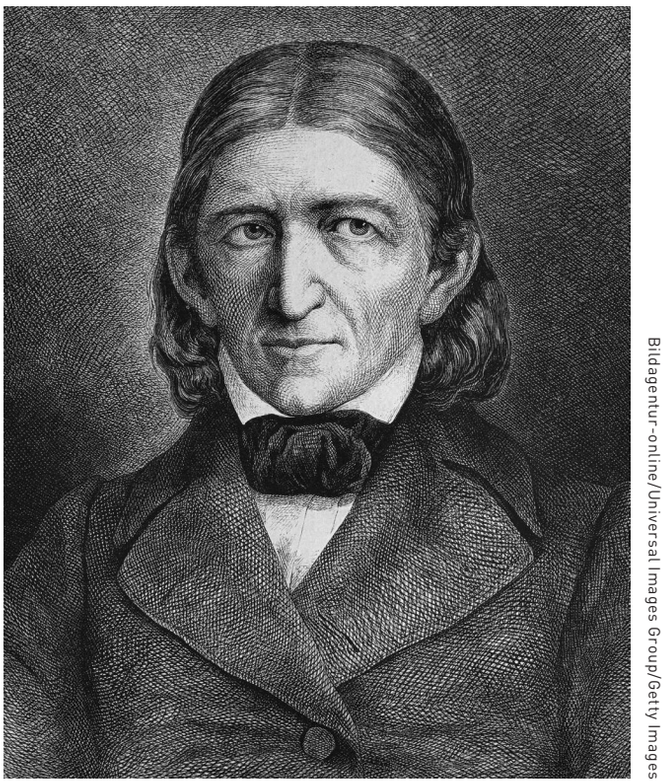
Occupations were arts-and-crafts-type activities designed to develop eye–hand coordination and fine motor skills. Illustrations of these activities include bead-stringing, embroidering, paper folding, cutting with scissors, and weaving. Froebel's curriculum also used games, songs, dance, rhymes, and finger play. Other components of his curriculum were nature study, language, and arithmetic in addition to developing the habits of cleanliness, courtesy, and punctuality.

According to Froebel, teachers were to be designers of activities and experiences utilizing the child's natural curiosity. They were also responsible for directing and guiding their students toward becoming contributing members of society (Morrison, 2012). This role of the teacher as a facilitator of children's learning would later be echoed in the work of Montessori and Piaget.

Influential Leaders of the Twentieth Century

We believe that the thinking and educational ideas espoused by John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and Jean Piaget, along with his contemporary, Russian theorist Lev Vygotsky, have significantly influenced the field of early childhood general education. Many of the practices that are common in today's classrooms can trace their origins to the work of these four individuals.

John Dewey. The influence of John Dewey (1859–1952) can be traced to the early days of the twentieth century when conflicting points of view about young children and kindergarten experiences began to emerge. Some individuals professed a strong allegiance to Froebel's principles and practices. Other professionals, known as Progressives, saw little value in adhering to Froebel's symbolism. Instead, they embraced the developing child study movement with its focus on empirical study. Because of the work of G. Stanley Hall, the father of the child study movement, formal observations and a scientific basis for understanding young children replaced speculation, philosophic idealism, and



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▲ Fröbel is considered to be the "Father of the Kindergarten."

[1] Information on Friedrich Froebel, John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and Jean Piaget is adapted from *Young Children: An Introduction to Early Childhood* by S. Graves, R. Gargiulo, and L. Sluder, St. Paul, MN: West, 1996.

religious and social values as a means for guiding the education of young children. Observations of young children led to new ideas about kindergarten practices and what should be considered of educational value for children.

Dewey, a student of Hall, was one of the first Americans to significantly impact educational theory as well as practice. He is generally regarded as the founder of a school of thought known as **Progressivism**. This approach, with its emphasis on the child and his or her interests, was counter to the then prevalent theme of teacher-directed, subject-oriented curriculum. According to Dewey, learning flowed from the interests of the child instead of from activities chosen by the instructor. Dewey, who taught at both the University of Chicago and Teachers College, Columbia University, coined the terms *child-centered curriculum* and *child-centered schools* (Morrison, 2015). Consistent with Dewey's beliefs, the purpose of schools was to prepare the student for the realities of today's world, not just to prepare for the future. In his famous work, *My Pedagogic Creed,* this philosopher emphasized that learning occurs through real-life experiences and that education is best described as a process for living. He also stressed the concept of social responsibility. Basic to his philosophy was the idea that children should be equipped to function effectively as citizens in a democratic society.

Traditionally, children learned predetermined subject matter via rote memory under the strict guidance of the teacher, who was in complete control of the learning environment. In Dewey's classroom, however, children were socially active, engaged in physical activities, and discovering how objects worked. They were to be continually afforded opportunities for inquiry, discovery, and experimentation. Daily living activities such as carpentry and cooking could also be found in a Dewey-designed classroom (Morrison, 2015).

Dewey (1916) advocated the child's interaction with the total environment. He believed that intellectual skills emerged from a child's own activity and play. He further rejected Froebel's approach to symbolic education.

Some have unfairly criticized Dewey as only responding to the whims of the child; this was a false accusation. Dewey did not abandon the teaching of subject matter or basic skills. He was merely opposed to imposing knowledge on children. Instead, he favored using the student's interest as the origin of subject matter instruction. Thus, curriculum cannot be fixed or established in advance. Educators are to guide learning activities, observe and monitor, and offer encouragement and assistance as needed. They are not to control their students.

Although Dewey's impact has diminished, his contributions to early childhood education in America and other countries are still evident. Many so-called traditional early childhood programs today have their philosophical roots in Dewey's progressive education movement.

Maria Montessori. As we examine the roots of modern early childhood special education, the work of Maria Montessori (1870–1952) stands out. Her contributions to the field of early childhood general education are significant. A feminist, she became the first female to earn a medical degree in Italy. (Montessori also held a PhD in anthropology.) She began working as a physician in a psychiatric clinic at the University of Rome. It was in this hospital setting that she came into frequent contact with "idiot children," or individuals with intellectual disability. At the turn of the century, intellectual disability was, unfortunately, often viewed as indistinguishable from mental illness. A careful observation of these youngsters led her to conclude that educational intervention rather than medical treatment would be a more effective strategy. She began to develop her theories for working with these children. In doing so, she was following an historical tradition upon which the early foundation of special education is built—the physician turned educator. Dr. Montessori was influenced by the writings of Pestalozzi, Rousseau, and Froebel and the work of Édouard Séguin, a French physician who pioneered an effective educational approach for children with intellectual disability. She concluded that intelligence is not static or fixed, but can be influenced by the child's experiences. Montessori developed an innovative, activity-based sensory education model involving teaching, or **didactic materials**. She was eminently successful. Young children who were originally believed to be incapable of learning successfully performed on school achievement tests.

Montessori believed that children learn best by direct sensory experience. She was further convinced that children have a natural tendency to explore and understand their world. Like Froebel, she envisioned child development as a process of unfolding; however, environmental influences also have a critical role. Education in the early years is crucial to the child's later development. Montessori also thought children pass through **sensitive periods**, or stages of development early in life when they are especially able,

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▲ Dewey found a school of thought known as Progressivism.

due to their curiosity, to more easily learn particular skills or behaviors. This concept is very similar to the idea of a child's readiness for an activity.

To promote the children's learning, Montessori constructed an orderly or **prepared environment** with specially designed tasks and materials. Much like Froebel's gifts, these materials included items such as wooden rods, cylinders, and cubes of varying sizes; sets of sandpaper tablets arranged according to the degree of smoothness; and musical bells of different pitches (see Table 1.1). Dr. Montessori's program also emphasized three growth periods—practical life experiences, sensory education, and academic education. Each of these components was considered to be of importance in developing the child's independence, responsibility, self-reliance, and productivity.

Practical life experiences focused on personal hygiene, self-care, physical education, and responsibility for the environment. Examples of this last activity include tasks such as sweeping, dusting, or raking leaves utilizing child-size equipment. Sensory education was very important in Montessori's education scheme. She designed a wide variety of teaching materials aimed at developing the student's various senses. Her didactic materials are noteworthy for two reasons. They were self-correcting—that is, there was only one correct way to use them. Thus, the materials could be used independently by the children and help them become self-motivated students. The sensory training equipment was also graded in difficulty—from easiest to the most difficult and from concrete to abstract. Her sensory training materials and procedures reflected her educational belief that cognitive ability results from sensory development. The final stage, academic instruction, introduced the child to reading, writing, and arithmetic in the sensitive period, ages two to six. Various concrete and sensory teaching materials were used in the lessons of this last stage (Montessori, 1965).

Montessori's classrooms were distinguished by their attractive and child-size materials and equipment. The furniture was movable, and the beautifully crafted materials were very attractive—appealing to the child's senses. Teaching materials were displayed on low shelves in an organized manner to encourage the pupil's independent use. Children worked at their own pace, selecting learning materials of their choice. They must, however, complete one assignment before starting another. Dr. Montessori fully believed in allowing children to do things for themselves. She was convinced that children are capable of teaching themselves through interaction with a carefully planned learning environment. She identified this concept as **auto-education**.

Teachers in Montessori classrooms are facilitators and observers of children's activities. By using skillfully crafted lessons, the teacher (or *directress* in Montessori terminology) slowly and carefully demonstrates concepts to the children.

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▲ Montessori classrooms are characterized by their attractive learning materials and equipment.

TABLE 1.1 ● Examples of Montessori's Sensory Materials

Material	Purpose	How It Is Used by Children
Wooden cylinders	Visual discrimination (Size)	Ten wooden cylinders varying in diameter, height, or variations of both dimensions. Child removes cylinders from wooden holder, mixes them up, and replaces in correct location.
Pink tower	Visual discrimination (Dimension)	Ten wooden cubes painted pink. Child is required to build a tower. Each cube is succeedingly smaller, varying from ten to one centimeter. Repeats activity.
Green rods	Visual discrimination (Length)	Ten wooden pieces identical in size and color but varying in length. After scattering rods, youngster arranges them according to gradations in length—largest to smallest.
Material swatches	Sense of feel	Matches identical pieces of brightly colored fabric (e.g., fine vs. coarse linen, cottons, and woolens). Initially performs task without blindfold.
Sound cylinders	Auditory discrimination	Double set of cylinders containing natural materials such as pebbles or rice. Child shakes cylinder and matches first according to similarity of sound and then according to loudness.
Tonal bells	Auditory discrimination	Two sets of eight metal bells, alike in appearance but varying in tone. Youngster strikes the bells with a wooden hammer and matches the bells on the basis of their sound; first according to corresponding sounds and then according to the musical scale.

Source: Adapted from R. Orem (Ed.), *A Montessori Handbook: Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1966).

Mark Kauffman/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

▲ Montessori believed that children learn best by direct sensory experiences.

Ideas are presented to the students in small, sequential steps and build on previous experiences that form the basis for the next level of skill development. Teachers foster the development of independence in their students. A Montessori-designed classroom is typically focused on individual student activities rather than group work.

Many of Montessori's beliefs and concepts are directly applicable to young children with disabilities. Some of the elements of her work that are relevant to teaching young children with disabilities include

- *The use of mixed-age groupings.* The mixed-age groupings found within a Montessori classroom are conducive to a successful inclusion experience. Mixed-age groupings necessitate a wide range of materials within each classroom to meet the individual needs of children rather than the average need of the group.
- *Individualization within the context of a supportive classroom community.* The individualized curriculum in Montessori classrooms is compatible with the individualization required for children with disabilities. Work in a Montessori classroom is introduced to children according to individual readiness rather than chronological age.
- *An emphasis on functionality within the Montessori environment.* Real objects are used rather than toy replications whenever possible (for example, children cut bread with a real knife, sweep up crumbs on the floor with a real broom, and dry wet tables with cloths.) In a Montessori classroom, the primary goal is to prepare children for life. Special education also focuses on the development of functional skills.
- *The development of independence and the ability to make choices.* Montessori classrooms help all children make choices and become independent learners in many ways; for example, children may choose any material for which they have had a lesson given by the teacher. This development of independence is especially appropriate for children with delays or disabilities.
- *The development of organized work patterns in children.* One objective of the practical life area and the beginning point for every young child is the development of organized work habits. Children with disabilities who need to learn to be organized in their work habits and their use of time benefit from this emphasis.
- *The classic Montessori demonstration.* Demonstrations themselves have value for learners who experience disabilities. A demonstration uses a minimum of language selected specifically for its relevance to the activity and emphasizes an orderly progression from the beginning to the end of the task.
- *An emphasis on repetition.* Children with delays or disabilities typically require lots of practice and make progress in small increments.
- *Materials with a built-in control of error.* Materials that have a built-in control of error benefit all children. Because errors are obvious, children notice and correct them without the help of a teacher.
- *Academic materials that provide a concrete representation of the abstract.* Montessori classrooms offer a wide range of concrete materials that children can learn from as a regular part of the curriculum. For children with disabilities, the use of concrete materials is critical to promote real learning.
- *Sensory materials that develop and organize incoming sensory perceptions.* Sensory materials can develop and refine each sense in isolation. A child who cannot see will benefit enormously from materials that train and refine the sense of touch, hearing, and smell, for example. (Morrison, 2009, p. 148; North American Montessori Center, 2016)

Jean Piaget. Jean Piaget (1896–1980) is one of the major contributors to our understanding of how children think. He is considered by many to be the premiere expert on the development of knowledge in children and young adults.

Piaget studied in Paris, where he had the opportunity to work with Théodore Simon, who in conjunction with Alfred Binet was constructing the first test for assessing children's intelligence. While standardizing the children's responses to test questions, Piaget became extremely interested in the incorrect answers given by the youngsters. His careful observations led him to notice that they gave similar wrong answers. He also discovered that the children made different types of errors at different ages. This paved the way for Piaget to investigate the thinking process that led to incorrect responses.

According to Piaget's (1963, 1970) point of view, children's mode of thinking is qualitatively and fundamentally different from that of adults. He also believed that children's thought processes are modified as they grow and mature. Because Piaget's ideas about intellectual development are complex, only his basic concepts will be presented.

Patrick Grehan/Corbis Historical/Getty Images

▲ Piaget is widely recognized for his ideas on the development of the intellect.

First, it is important to understand Piaget's (1963, 1970) view of intelligence. He was concerned with *how* knowledge is acquired. Piaget avoids stating a precise definition of intelligence; instead, he attempts to describe it in general terms. Piaget speaks of intelligence as an instance of biological adaptation. He also looks at intelligence as a balance or equilibrium between an individual's cognitive structures and the environment. His focus is on what people *do* as they interact with their environment. Knowledge of reality must be discovered and constructed—it results from a child's actions within, and reactions to, his or her world. It is also important to note that Piaget is not concerned with individual differences in intelligence (Ginsburg & Opper, 1969).

Piaget's (1970) theory rests on the contributions of maturational and environmental influences. Maturation establishes a sequence of cognitive stages controlled by heredity. The environment contributes to the child's experiences, which dictate how the child develops. Thinking is a process of interaction between the child and the environment. An individual's capacity to learn, according to Piaget, is derived from experiences. He viewed children as active learners and initiators of learning (Cook, Klein, & Chen, 2016). Youngsters are self-motivated in the construction of their own knowledge, which occurs through activity.

One consequence of interaction with the environment is that the person soon develops organizing structures or **schema**. These schema, or mental concepts, become a basis from which later cognitive structures are established. Piaget developed three concepts that he believed individuals use to organize their personal experiences into a blueprint for thinking. He called these adaptive processes assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration.

Assimilation occurs when the child is able to integrate new experiences and information into existing schemes—that is, what the child already knows. Children will view new situations in light of previous experiences in their world. As an illustration, when a toddler first encounters a pony, she will most likely call it a dog, something the toddler is already familiar with.

Accommodation is Piaget's second process. It involves modifying existing cognitive structures so that new data can be effectively utilized. Current thought patterns and behavior are changed to fit new situations. Accommodation involves a change in understanding. For example, two-year-old Victoria visits Santa Claus at the mall. Later that day, she is shopping with her mother and sees an elderly gentleman with a long white beard whom she calls Santa Claus. Victoria's mother corrects her daughter's mistake by saying that the man is old. When Victoria next meets a man with a white beard, she asks, "Are you Santa Claus, or are you just old?" Victoria has demonstrated accommodation—she changed her knowledge base.

Assimilation and accommodation are involved in the final process of equilibration. Here an attempt is made to achieve a balance or equilibrium between assimilation and accommodation. Piaget believed that all activity involves both processes. The interaction between assimilation and accommodation leads to adaptation, a process of adjusting to new situations. **Equilibration** is the tendency to reach a balance, which accounts for the formation of knowledge. Intellectual growth, according to Piaget, is achieved through the interplay of these three processes.

Four stages of cognitive development were identified by Piaget. Children pass through these stages in an orderly, sequential fashion. Each stage is a prerequisite for the next one. The ages identified in Table 1.2 are only rough estimates of when a youngster enters each stage. Children progress at their own rate, which is influenced by their experiences and existing cognitive structures, in addition to their maturation.

Lev Vygotsky. Russian psychologist Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1896–1934) was a contemporary of Piaget and another influential contributor to present understanding of how children learn and develop.

A brilliant young man (he was literate in eight languages), Vygotsky entered Moscow University in 1914, where he studied law, one of the few vocations open to a Jew in tsarist Russia. Upon graduation in 1917, he returned to the city of Gomel, where he had spent most of his youth, and taught in several local institutions. The massive changes brought about by the Russian Revolution provided Vygotsky with the opportunity to teach at Gomel's Teacher's College. It was here that he became attracted to the fields of psychology and education, where his lack of formal training

TABLE 1.2 ● Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Approximate Age	Stage	Distinguishing Characteristics
Birth—1½–2 years of age	Sensorimotor	• Knowledge constructed through sensory perception and motor activity • Thought limited to action schemes • Beginning to develop object permanence
2–7 years of age	Preoperational	• Emergence of language, symbolic thinking • Intuitive rather than logical schemes • Egocentric in thought and action
7–11 years of age	Concrete operations	• Beginning of logical, systematic thinking; limited, however, to concrete operations • Diminished egocentrism • Understands reversibility and laws of conversation
12 years of age to adulthood	Formal operations	• Abstract and logical thought present • Capable of solving hypothetical problems • Deductive thinking and scientific reasoning is possible • Evidences concern about social issues, political causes

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▲ Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of social interaction.

as a psychologist proved a distinct advantage. It allowed Vygotsky to look at the field of psychology as an outsider, someone with fresh perspectives and creative ideas about child development (Berk & Winsler, 1995). A visionary thinker, Vygotsky significantly shaped contemporary theories and beliefs about children's language, play, cognition, and social development.

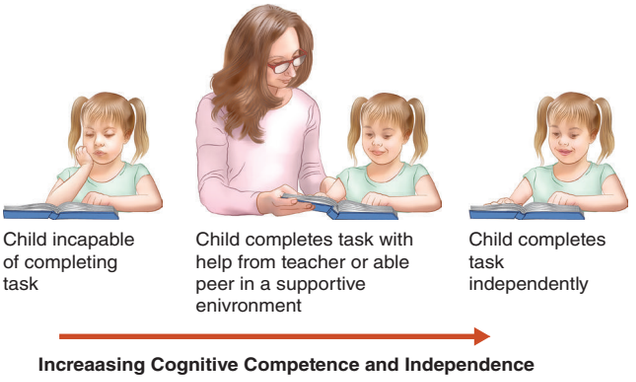
In his book, *Mind in Society,* Vygotsky (1978) argues that people—children in particular—are the products of their social and cultural environments. Children's development is significantly influenced by their social and cultural worlds and the individuals they come into contact with such as parents, teachers, and peers. Social experiences were very important to Vygotsky because he believed that higher-order cognitive processes, such as language and cognition, necessitate social interaction. What begins in a social context is eventually internalized psychologically. In his writings, Vygotsky emphasized the link between the social and psychological worlds of the youngster. Learning and development occur via social interaction and engagement.

> Learning awakens a variety of developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in collaboration with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90)

Vygotsky (1978, 1986) believed that social interaction not only fosters intellectual development but also is vital to the development of social competence. Vygotsky's emphasis on the reciprocity of social relationships, however, is contrary to the theorizing of Piaget. Recall that Piaget saw children as active yet solitary and independent discoverers of knowledge.

Perhaps the best-known Vygotskian concept is the **zone of proximal development (ZPD)**. Simply described, it is a hypothetical region defined by Vygotsky (1978) as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential

FIGURE 1.2 • Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development



development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). The ZPD exists between what a child can presently accomplish independently and what the child is capable of doing within a supportive environment. Support is typically viewed as coming from more mature thinkers like adults and competent peers, although, according to Hills (1992), it may be derived from materials and equipment. The ZPD is actually created, Tudge (1992) writes, through social interaction. It is the arena or "magic middle" (Berger, 2017) in which learning and cognitive development take place. Figure 1.2 portrays Vygotsky's concept of ZPD.

Scaffolding is an idea related to Vygotsky's notion of a ZPD. It refers to the assistance given to a child by adults and peers that allows the individual to function independently and construct new concepts. Social interaction and collaboration with others typically provide youngsters with opportunities for scaffolding. One of the primary goals of scaffolding is to keep children working on tasks that are in their ZPD. This goal is generally obtained by providing the minimum amount of assistance necessary and then further reducing this aid as the child's own competence grows (Berk & Winsler, 1995). Within this context, the teacher's role is one of promoting and facilitating pupils' learning.

As we have just seen, collaboration and social interaction are key tenets in Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to understanding children's learning and development. For Vygotsky, learning leads to development rather than following it. Learning is not itself development; rather, structured learning experiences play a major role giving impetus to developmental processes that would be difficult to separate from learning (Tudge, 1992). According to Vygotsky, development and learning are neither identical nor separate processes; instead, they are interrelated and integrative functions. This perspective sees developmental change as arising from a child's active engagement in a social environment with a mature partner. Growth occurs, therefore, within this ZPD. His approach to education could accurately be described as one of assisted discovery, also known as guided practice or assisted performance (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

Vygotsky also spoke on the issue of children with disabilities. In fact, he enjoyed the title "Father of Soviet Defectology," which loosely translates to mean special education. Vygotsky (1993) was of the opinion that the principles that govern the learning and development of typical youngsters also apply to children with disabilities. He was firmly convinced that the optimal development of young children with disabilities rested on fully integrating them into their social environment while ensuring that instruction occurs within their ZPD (Berk & Winsler, 1995). Children with learning problems should be educated, according to Vygotsky, in the same fashion as their peers without disabilities.

One of the major difficulties encountered by children with disabilities is how the impairment modifies their interaction with, and participation in, their social environment and not the disability itself. A child's disability results in restricted interactions with adults and peers, and this contributes to the creation of a secondary—yet more debilitating—social deficit. Potentially more harmful than the primary disability, Vygotsky believed that these cultural deficits are more amenable to intervention than the original disorder is.

Several contemporary practices in early childhood special education can be traced to Vygotsky's thinking. His conceptualizations suggest that young children with disabilities should be included as much as possible in environments designed for typically developing learners. As an early advocate of integration, Vygotsky believed that a segregated placement results in a different social climate, thus restricting students' interactions and collaborative opportunities and thereby limiting cognitive development. Furthermore, educators should focus on students' strengths and abilities rather than their needs. What a student can do (with or without assistance) is more important than what he or she cannot do. Finally, a student's learning (social) environment should be rich with opportunities for scaffolding, which is seen as assisting in development of higher-order cognitive processes.

Vygotsky's contributions to children's learning and development were not limited to children with disabilities. Many well-known instructional strategies are grounded in his theories. Teachers who engage in cooperative learning activities, peer tutoring, guided practice, and reciprocal teaching and incorporate mixed-age groupings or a whole-language approach can thank Vygotsky.

A Concluding Thought. Our brief examination of the historical roots of early childhood general education suggests two conclusions. First, efforts on behalf of young children were and are frequently constrained by the political and social realities of the times. Second, much of what we often consider new or innovative has been written about and tried before. Present services for young children with disabilities have been influenced significantly by the history of education for young children. As an illustration, many contemporary programs for young children with delays or disabilities emphasize parent involvement, a child-centered curriculum, and interventions based on practical applications of

TABLE 1.3 ● Key Contributors to the Development of Early Childhood Education

Sixteenth Century	
Martin Luther	Strong believer in publicly supported schools. Advocate of universal, compulsory education.
Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century	
Jan Ámos Comenius (Komenský)	Advanced the notion of lifelong education, beginning in the early years. Realized the importance of a child's readiness for an activity. Stressed student's active participation in the learning process.
John Locke	Believed that children are similar to a blank tablet (tabula rasa). Environmental influences strongly impact a child's development. Sensory training is a critical aspect of learning.
Jean-Jacques Rousseau	Emphasized the importance of early education, which should be natural and allow for the unfolding of a child's abilities. School should focus on the interests of children.
Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi	Advocated education through nature and following the child's natural development. Early champion of the whole child and involving parents in the education process. Promoter of sensory education.
Nineteenth Century	
Robert Owen	Theorized that the early years were important in developing a youngster's character and behavior. Linked social change and education. His infant school served as a forerunner of kindergartens.
Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel	Established the first kindergarten. Believed in the educational value and benefit of play. Considered development as a natural process of unfolding that provides the foundation for children's learning.
Twentieth Century	
John Dewey	Founder of the school of thought known as Progressivism. Argued that learning flows from the interests of the child rather than from activities chosen by the teacher. Coined the phrases ***child-centered curriculum*** and ***child-centered schools.*** Saw education as a process for living; stressed social responsibility.
Maria Montessori	Believed that children learn best by direct sensory experience; was also convinced that there are sensitive periods for learning. Designed learning materials that were self-correcting, were graded in difficulty, and allowed for independent use. Classroom experiences were individualized to meet the needs of each pupil.
Jean Piaget	Developed a stage theory of cognitive development. Cognitive growth emerges from a child's interaction with and adaptation to his or her physical environment. Youngsters are self-motivated in the construction of their own knowledge, which occurs through activity and discovery.
Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky	Russian psychologist who theorized that children's development is significantly influenced by their social and cultural environments and the youngster's interactions with individuals therein. Saw learning and development as interrelated and integrative functions. Originator of the concept of a zone of proximal development (ZPD).

child development theory. These programs also recognize that early experiences impact later social, emotional, and intellectual competency (Meisels & Shonkoff, 2000).

Table 1.3 presents a brief summary of the contributions of key individuals to the development of the field of early childhood education. We now turn our attention to the contributions emerging from our second parent field—special education.

The Development of Special Education: Historical Perspectives on Children With Delays or Disabilities

The history of special education provides a second point of departure for examining the evolution of early childhood special education. Society has chosen to deal with such individuals in a variety of ways. Oftentimes, programs and practices for individuals with delays or disabilities are a reflection of the prevailing social climate, in addition to people's ideas and attitudes about exceptionality. A change in attitude is often a precursor to a change in the delivery of services. The foundation of societal attitude in the United States can be traced to the efforts and philosophies of various Europeans. We now turn our attention to the historical contributions of these individuals with vision and courage.

People and Ideas

Present educational theories, principles, and practices are the product of pioneering thinkers, advocates, and humanitarians. These dedicated reformers were catalysts for change. Historians typically trace the roots of special education to the late 1700s and early 1800s. It is here that we begin our brief examination of early leaders in the field.

One of the earliest documented attempts at providing special education involved the efforts of Jean Marc Gaspard Itard (1775–1838) to educate Victor, the so-called wild boy of Aveyron. A French physician and expert on hearing impairment, Itard endeavored in 1799 to "civilize" and teach Victor through a sensory training program and what today would be known as operant procedures. Because this adolescent failed to fully develop language after years of instruction and only mastered basic social and self-help skills, Itard considered his efforts a failure. Yet Itard demonstrated that learning is possible even for an individual

described by other professionals as a hopeless and incurable idiot. The title "Father of Special Education" is bestowed on Itard because of his groundbreaking work more than two hundred years ago.

Another important pioneer was Itard's student, Édouard Séguin (1812–1880), who designed instructional programs for children his contemporaries thought to be incapable of learning. He believed in the importance of sensorimotor activities as an aid to learning. Séguin's methodology was based on a comprehensive assessment of a youngster's strengths and needs coupled with an intervention plan of sensorimotor exercises prescribed to remediate specific disabilities. Seguin also emphasized the critical importance of early education. He is considered one of the first early interventionists. His theorizing also provided the foundation for Montessori's later work with the urban poor and children with intellectual disability.

The work of Itard, Séguin, and other innovators of their time helped to establish a foundation for much of what we do today in special education. Table 1.4 summarizes the work of European and American pioneers whose ideas have significantly influenced special education in the United States.

The Establishment of Institutions

Taking their cues from the Europeans, other American reformers such as Boston physician and humanitarian Samuel Gridley Howe (1801–1876) spearheaded the establishment of residential programs. A successful teacher of students who were both deaf and blind, Howe was instrumental in establishing the New England Asylum for the Blind (later the Perkins School) in the early 1830s. Almost two decades later, he played a major role in founding an experimental residential school for children with intellectual disability, the Massachusetts School for Idiotic and Feebleminded Youth. This facility was the first institution in the United States for individuals with intellectual disability. Now known as the Fernald Developmental Center in honor of its third superintendent, the center closed its doors in November 2014.

Residential schools for children with disabilities received additional impetus due to the untiring and vigorous efforts of social activist Dorothea Lynde Dix (1802–1887). A retired teacher, Dix was very influential in helping to establish several state institutions for people believed to be mentally ill, a group of individuals she felt to be grossly underserved and largely mistreated.

TABLE 1.4. ● Pioneering Contributors to the Development of Special Education

Contributors	Their Ideas
Jacob Rodrigues Péreire (1715–1780)	Introduced the idea that persons who were deaf could be taught to communicate. Developed an early form of sign language. Provided inspiration and encouragement for the work of Itard and Séguin.
Philippe Pinel (1745–1826)	A reform-minded French physician who was concerned with the humanitarian treatment of individuals with mental illness. Strongly influenced the later work of Itard.
Jean Marc Gaspard Itard (1775–1838)	A French doctor who secured lasting fame due to his systematic efforts to educate an adolescent thought to be severely intellectually disabled. Recognized the importance of sensory stimulation.
Thomas Gallaudet (1787–1851)	Taught children with hearing impairments to communicate via a system of manual signs and symbols. Established the first institution for individuals with deafness in the United States.
Samuel Gridley Howe (1801–1876)	An American physician and educator accorded international fame due to his success in teaching individuals with visual and hearing impairments. Founded the first residential facility for the blind and was instrumental in inaugurating institutional care for children with intellectual disability.
Dorothea Lynde Dix (1802–1887)	A contemporary of Howe, Dix was one of the first Americans to champion better and more humane treatment of people with mental illness. Instigated the establishment of several institutions for individuals with mental disorders.
Louis Braille (1809–1852)	A French educator, who himself was blind, who developed a tactile system of reading and writing for people who were blind. His system, based on a code of six embossed dots, is still used today. Today this standardized code is known as Unified English Braille.
Édouard Séguin (1812–1880)	A pupil of Itard, Séguin was a French physician responsible for developing teaching methods for children with intellectual disability. His training program emphasized sensorimotor activities. After immigrating to the United States, he helped found the organization that was a forerunner of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.
Francis Galton (1822–1911)	Scientist concerned with individual differences. As a result of studying eminent persons, he believed that genius is solely the result of heredity. Those with superior abilities are born, not made.
Alfred Binet (1857–1911)	A French psychologist, Binet authored the first developmental assessment scale capable of quantifying intelligence. Also originated the concept of mental age with his colleague Théodore Simon.
Lewis Terman (1877–1956)	An American educator and psychologist who revised Binet's original assessment instrument. The result was the publication of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales. Terman developed the notion of intelligence quotient (IQ). Also famous for lifelong study of gifted individuals. Credited as being the grandfather of gifted education.

By the conclusion of the nineteenth century, residential institutions for persons with exceptionalities were a well-established part of the American social fabric. Initially established to offer training and some form of education in a protective lifelong environment, these institutions gradually deteriorated, for a variety of reasons, in the early decades of the twentieth century. The mission of the institutions changed from training to one of custodial care and isolation. The early optimism of special education was replaced by prejudice, unproven scientific views, and fear that helped to convert institutions into gloomy warehouses for the forgotten and neglected (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2018).

Special Education in Public Schools

It was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that special education began to appear in the public schools. In fact, in 1898, Alexander Graham Bell (1847–1922), a teacher of children who were deaf, advocated that public schools begin serving individuals with disabilities. Services for pupils with exceptionalities began slowly and served only a small minority of those who needed it. The first public school class was organized in Boston in 1869 to serve children who were deaf. Children with intellectual disability first attended public schools about three decades later when a class was established in Providence, Rhode Island. The Chicago public schools inaugurated a class for children with physical impairments in 1899, quickly followed by one for children who were blind in 1900 (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2018). By the mid-1920s, well over half of the largest cities in America provided some type of special education services. The establishment of these programs was seen as an indication of the progressive status of the school district. Still, these earliest ventures mainly served children with mild disabilities; individuals with severe or multiple impairments were either kept at home or sent to institutions.

Meisels and Shonkoff (2000) assert that the economic depression of the 1930s and the ensuing world war led to the decline of further expansion of special education programs in public schools; instead, greater reliance was placed on institutionalization. The residential facilities, however, were already overcrowded and provided educationally limited experiences. The postwar years saw an increase in the recognition of the needs of Americans with disabilities. Impetus for the shift of societal attitude resulted from two related factors—the large number of men and women deemed unfit for military service and the large number of war veterans who returned home with disabilities.

With the Second World War behind the nation, the stage was set for the rapid expansion of special education. This growth has been described as a virtual explosion of services occurring at both the state and federal levels. Litigation at all levels, legislative activities, increased fiscal resources, and federal leadership, in addition to social and political activism and advocacy, are some of the factors that helped fuel the movement and revitalize special education (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2018). Significant benefits for children with exceptionalities resulted from these efforts. For example, in 1948, approximately 12 percent of children with disabilities were receiving an education appropriate for their needs (Ballard, Ramirez, & Weintraub, 1982), yet from 1947 to 1972, the number of pupils enrolled in special education programs increased an astonishing 716 percent as compared to an 82 percent increase in total public school enrollment (Dunn, 1973).

The last decades of the twentieth century also witnessed a flurry of activity on behalf of students with delays or disabilities. Evidence of this trend includes the 1975 landmark legislation PL 94–142, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (originally known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act) and its 1986 amendments—PL 99–457; they constitute one of the most comprehensive pieces of legislation affecting infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with delays or disabilities and their families. The growth of services for preschoolers who are at risk or disabled, programs for infants and toddlers, the transition initiative, and calls for full integration of pupils with disabilities (discussed in Chapter 4) are additional indications of a changing attitude and expansion of opportunities for children and youth with exceptionalities.

Jerry Cooke/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

▲ Institutions at one time were very common across the United States.

Compensatory Education Programs

The **compensatory education** movement of the 1960s also played a major role in the development of early childhood special education. As the name implies, this effort was designed to compensate for or ameliorate the environmental conditions and early learning experiences of youngsters living in poverty. Such children were thought to be disadvantaged or "culturally deprived" (a popular term in the 1960s). The goal of compensatory education programs was to assist these students "by providing educational and environmental experiences that might better prepare them for the school experience" (Gearhart, Mullen, & Gearhart, 1993, p. 385). The compensatory education movement had its foundation in the idealism and heightened social consciousness that typified America over five decades ago. It was also aided by the convergence of three distinct social

issues: President Kennedy's interest in the field of intellectual disability, President Johnson's declaration of a War on Poverty, and the emerging civil rights movement (Meisels & Shonkoff, 2000).

In addition to sociological reasons, the compensatory education movement was aided by solid theoretical arguments. The cogent and persuasive writings of J. McVicker Hunt (1961) and fellow scholar Benjamin Bloom (1964) raised serious questions about the assumption of fixed or static intelligence. The malleability of intelligence and the importance of the early years for intellectual development were recognized by scientists and policymakers alike. Thus the powerful contribution of early and enriched experiences on later development laid the cornerstone for programs like Head Start. It also set the stage for the concept of early intervention. It was thought that the deleterious effects of poverty could be remediated by early and intensive programming. The emphasis of preschool programs shifted from custodial caregiving to programming for specific developmental gains (Thurman & Widerstrom, 1990).

Representative Compensatory Programs

Project Head Start. **Project Head Start** came into existence as a result of the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act. Federally sponsored, Head Start was a critical component of a larger national agenda called the War on Poverty. As the first nationwide compensatory education program, Head Start was conceived as an early intervention effort aimed at reducing the potential for school failure in disadvantaged young children from low socioeconomic (impoverished) communities. Initiated in the summer of 1965 as an eight-week pilot program, Project Head Start served approximately 560,000 four- and five-year-old youngsters in more than 2,500 communities. As of 2016, almost 916,000 preschoolers from low-income families received services. Since its inception over five decades ago (Head Start celebrated its golden or fiftieth anniversary in 2015), Head Start has served more than 34 million children and their families ("Head Start Program Facts," 2016).

According to Zigler and Valentine (1979), the first volley on the War on Poverty was constructed around three fundamental ideas:

1. Compensatory experiences initiated in the preschool years would result in successful adjustment to school and enhanced academic performance.
2. Early intellectual growth and development is directly dependent upon the quality of care and type of experiences to which young children are exposed.
3. Socioeconomically impoverished environments include biological, environmental, and other risk factors, which can adversely affect chances of school success and impede intellectual growth.

Head Start was envisioned to be a comprehensive, multidimensional intervention effort aimed at the very roots of poverty in communities across America. It represented a coordinated federal effort at comprehensive intervention in the lives of young children (Zigler & Valentine, 1979). Head Start was unique in its emphasis on the total development of the youngster and on strengthening the family unit, as well as in its comprehensive nature of the services provided. The goals of the Head Start effort included increasing the child's physical, social, and emotional development; developing the youngster's intellectual skills and readiness for school; and improving the health of the child by providing medical, dental, social, and psychological services. Head Start was also unusual not only in its intent—to bring about a change for the child, his or her family, and the community—but also for its use of a multidisciplinary intervention model wherein the importance of seeing the whole child was recognized (Brain, 1979).

Parents played an unprecedented role in the Head Start program. Parents' involvement and their meaningful participation were considered vitally important. They had a key voice in the local decision-making process in addition to opportunities for employment in the program or for volunteering their expertise. The inclusion of training programs for low-income adults and the establishment of a career development ladder for employees and volunteers also distinguished the Head Start program.

It is important to remember that Head Start was not specifically directed at children with disabilities, although many of the youngsters served would today be identified as an at-risk population. The enactment of PL 92–424 in 1972 did require, however, that the project reserve no less than 10 percent of its enrollment for children with disabilities.

Fortunately, thanks to changes in federal regulations regarding Head Start, this program is now able to play a larger role in the lives of young children with disabilities. In January 1993, new rules for providing services to preschoolers with disabilities enrolled in Head Start were published in the *Federal Register*. Some of the many changes guiding Head Start agencies are the following requirements:

- A model designed to locate and serve young children with disabilities and their parents
- The development of an individualized education program (IEP) for each youngster determined to be disabled
- Quicker screening of children suspected of needing special services
- Revised evaluation procedures for determining who might be eligible for special education and related services
- The establishment of a disability services coordinator who would be responsible for overseeing the delivery of services to preschoolers with disabilities ("Head Start Program Final Rule," 1993)

These goals are to be met through a detailed and comprehensive disabilities service plan, which outlines the strategies for meeting the needs of children with disabilities and their families. Among the several provisions are standards that call for the assurance that youngsters with disabilities

will be included in the full range of activities and services provided to other children; a component that addresses the transitioning from infant and toddler programs into Head Start, as well as exiting Head Start to the next placement; and a provision stipulating that eligible children will be provided a special education with related services designed to meet their unique needs. Currently, 12.5 percent of preschoolers or approximately 105,000 youngsters enrolled in Head Start have an identified disability (Office of Head Start, 2017b).

In December 2007, Head Start was reauthorized through 2012 via the enactment of PL 110–134, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (also simply called the Head Start Act). The legislation was aimed at helping greater numbers of children from low-income families and youngsters whose families are homeless begin kindergarten ready to succeed. Emphasis was also placed on ensuring that educators working in Head Start programs are well prepared with at least 50 percent of these teachers possessing a baccalaureate degree in early childhood education or related area by 2013. Yearly professional development activities are also required of all full-time Head Start teachers. Additionally, individuals providing direct services to children and families in Early Head Start programs were mandated to possess a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential by 2010. Lastly, Head Start programs are to incorporate research-based early childhood curricula that support children's emerging literacy skills and vocabulary development.

One consequence of the passage of PL 110–134 in 2007 was the development of new Head Start performance guidelines that define standards and minimum requirements for Head Start programs. Almost ten years in the making, these standards represent the first revision since the original standards were promulgated in 1975. These revisions, published on September 1, 2016, affect both Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The goal of these efforts is to promote effective teaching and learning via a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and aids in school readiness. Some of the other provisions call for the phase-in of all-day, year-round schooling in an effort to better prepare students for kindergarten. Additionally, individualized professional development activities aimed at improving teacher skills and competencies were set forth while the new rules also strengthen Head Start's commitment to children with disabilities, youngsters in foster care, families experiencing homelessness, and bilingual students. Finally, these new guidelines retain parents' role as key decision makers in program governance (Administration for Children and Families, 2017).

We consider Head Start to be a visionary program model. The framers of the project had the foresight to insist on comprehensive services, meaningful parent involvement, and a multidisciplinary approach to intervention. Many of these aspects can be found in contemporary programs and legislation. Head Start also served as a forerunner of other compensatory initiatives, which we will now briefly examine.

Project Follow-Through. **Project Follow-Through** was developed in 1967 in response to controversy surrounding the effectiveness of the Head Start efforts. Some educational research data suggested that the cognitive gains of the Head Start experiment were not maintained once the children enrolled in elementary school (Cicerelli, Evans, & Schiller, 1969). Professionals quickly realized that a short-term intervention program was ineffective in inoculating young children against the deleterious effects of poverty. Follow-Through was introduced in an effort to continue the gains developed in Head Start. A new model was designed, which extended the Head Start concept to include children enrolled in kindergarten through the third grade. Like its predecessor, Project Follow-Through was comprehensive in its scope of services while maintaining the Head Start emphasis on creating change in the home and community. Unfortunately, a congressional funding crisis precipitated a retooling of the project's original goals and objectives. According to Peterson's (1987) analysis, the focus shifted from a service operation very much like Head Start to an educational experiment dedicated to assessing the effectiveness of various approaches aimed at increasing the educational attainment of young disadvantaged and at-risk students. Rather than offering a single model of early childhood education for low-income pupils, Project Follow-Through studied a variety of approaches and strategies, realizing that a singular model would not meet the needs of all children. Local public schools were free to adopt the program model that they believed best met the unique needs of their communities.

Home Start. In 1972, another program variation, **Home Start**, was created. Simply stated, this program took the education component typically found in Head Start centers into a child's home. The focus of Home Start was low-income parents and their preschool-aged children. Efforts were aimed at providing educational stimulation to the children in addition to developing and enhancing the parenting skills of adults. This task was accomplished through the utilization of home visitors who were skilled and trained residents of the community.

Early Head Start. **Early Head Start** emerged from a growing recognition among service providers, researchers, policymakers, and politicians of the need to extend the Head Start model downward to the birth-to-three age group. This awareness of the need for comprehensive, intensive, and year-round services for very young children resulted

Chicago Tribune/Tribune News Service/Getty Images

▲ Head Start was the first nationwide compensatory education program.

in Early Head Start (Halpern, 2000; Meisels & Shonkoff, 2000). The 1994 reauthorization of Head Start (PL 103–252) created Early Head Start, a program focusing on low-income families with infants and toddlers as well as on women who are pregnant. The mission of this program, which began in 1995, is to

- promote healthy pregnancy outcomes;
- enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development;
- enable parents to be better caregivers and teachers to their children; and
- help parents meet their goals, including economic independence.

Early Head Start incorporates what its framers call a "four corner emphasis," which embodies child, family, community, and staff development (Allen & Cowdery, 2012). Services provided through this program include high-quality early education and care both in and out of the home; home visits; child care; parent education; comprehensive health services including services before, during, and after pregnancy; nutrition information; and peer support groups for parents. Early Head Start is currently serving approximately 191,000 infants and toddlers (over 62 percent of the children are either one- or two-year-olds). Slightly fewer than 172,000 families also received a wide range of health, educational, and social services. Additionally, over 14,600 pregnant women were served by Early Head Start programs (Office of Head Start, 2017a).

Research Activities

In addition to involvement and action by the federal government, individual scientists and researchers have been concerned about the damaging consequences of poverty on young children and their families. Two representative intervention projects include the Carolina Abecedarian Project and the Perry Preschool Project. Both of these programs focus on improving the cognitive skills of young children, thereby increasing their chances for later scholastic success.

The Carolina Abecedarian Project attempted to modify environmental forces impinging upon the intellectual development of young children living in poverty. Designed in 1972 as a longitudinal experiment, Craig Ramey and his colleagues (Ramey & Campbell, 1977, 1984; Ramey & Smith, 1977) found that children enrolled in a center-based preschool intervention program who were exposed to intensive and stimulating early learning experiences achieved higher IQ scores when compared to matched age-mates who did not participate in the project. A follow-up of participants found that, at age twelve and fifteen, youngsters exposed to early intervention continued to outperform control subjects on standardized measures of intellectual development and academic achievement. Additionally, these individuals had significantly fewer grade retentions and special education placements (Campbell & Ramey, 1994, 1995). As young adults, these individuals scored higher on measures of intellectual and academic achievement and were more likely to attend a four-year college (Campbell, Ramey, Pungello, Sparling, & Miller-Johnson, 2002). The Carolina program clearly demonstrates, as we noted earlier, the plasticity of intelligence and the positive effects of early environmental intervention.

Our second illustration is the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. This program is one of the best examples of the long-term educational benefit of early childhood experiences. The Perry Preschool Project was designed as a longitudinal study to measure the effects of a quality preschool education on children living in poverty. Based on the work of Jean Piaget, it strongly emphasized cognitive development. More than 120 disadvantaged youngsters were followed from age three until late adolescence. The results of the investigation can be summarized as follows:

> Results to age 19 indicate long-lasting beneficial effects of preschool education in improving cognitive performance during early childhood; in improving scholastic placement and achievement during the school years; in decreasing delinquency and crime, the use of welfare assistance, and the incidence of teenage pregnancy; and in increasing high school graduation rates and the frequency of enrollment in postsecondary programs and employment. (Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, Epstein, & Weikart, 1984, p. 1)

Additional longitudinal follow-up (Schweinhart, Barnes, & Weikart, 1993; Schweinhart et al., 2005) demonstrated that, in comparison to a control group, individuals in their midtwenties and at age forty who participated in this project as preschoolers had higher incomes, were more likely to own a home, had significantly fewer arrests, and had less involvement with community social service agencies.

Likewise, other investigators (Bakken, Brown, & Downing, 2017; Campbell et al., 2012; Reynolds & Temple, 2005; Temple & Reynolds, 2007) also report long-term positive outcomes for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who participated in high-quality early education intervention programs.

Despite the methodological difficulties inherent in conducting early intervention research in a scientifically rigorous fashion, this research evidence unequivocally illustrates that early intervention generates positive academic outcomes and significantly improves the quality of participants' later lives. We fully agree with Guralnick's (2005) observation that "the early years may well constitute a unique window of opportunity to alter children's' developmental trajectories" (p. 314).

A Concluding Thought. It is safe to conclude that, generally speaking, compensatory education programs do benefit young children who are at risk for limited success in school. The optimism exhibited by the early supporters

of various intervention initiatives has been tempered, however, by a host of political, financial, and other factors. Reality has reminded educators, policymakers, and researchers that there are no quick or magical solutions to complex social problems like poverty. Yet we must not be overly pessimistic; education does remain an important vehicle for successfully altering the lives of young children and their caregivers.

Summary

Although early childhood special education is a relatively young field, the forces that have helped to shape its identity have a rich and distinguished history. Drawing upon the work of earlier educational theorists and writers such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Montessori, Dewey, and others, early childhood special education has evolved into a distinct field with its own identity and theoretical underpinnings. Yet it is interesting to note that many of the current practices in early childhood special education (for example, individualized instruction, family-based services) and the values to which we subscribe are not especially contemporary. Perhaps there is truth to the maxim that "The past is prologue." Three distinct fields—general early childhood education, special education, and compensatory education—have contributed, in their own ways, to the emergence of a wide array of programs and services for young children with delays or disabilities and their families. Professionals recognize how very important the early years of a child's life are for later social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development.

Today's early childhood special education is perhaps best conceptualized as a synthesis of various theories, principles, and practices borrowed from each of its parent fields. It is a concept that continues to evolve. We are in a strong position to successfully build on the accomplishments and achievements of the past.

Key Terms

Early intervention 3
Early childhood special education 3
Tabula rasa 4
Gifts 6
Occupations 6
Progressivism 7
Didactic materials 7
Sensitive periods 7
Prepared environment 8
Auto-education 8
Schema 10
Assimilation 10
Accommodation 10
Equilibration 10
Zone of proximal development (ZPD) 11
Scaffolding 12
Compensatory education 15
Project Head Start 16
Project Follow-Through 17
Home Start 17
Early Head Start 17

Check Your Understanding

1. Various religious leaders, philosophers, and educational theorists played major roles in the development of early childhood education. List five of them and their contributions found in contemporary early childhood programs.
2. Describe the "gifts" and "occupations" of Froebel's children's garden.
3. Explain Dewey's ideas about educating young children.
4. Identify the major elements of Montessori's approach to teaching young children.
5. How did Piaget believe intelligence develops?
6. Describe Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD).
7. Why would Vygotsky be considered an early advocate of integration?
8. What role did Europeans play in the development of special education in the United States?
9. Define the term *compensatory education*.
10. What is the purpose of Project Head Start and Early Head Start?
11. List five significant events that have helped to shape the field of early childhood special education.

Reflection and Application

1. What evidence do you see of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky in today's early childhood education settings? What are the strengths of each philosophy? Compare and contrast the three philosophies.
2. In what ways do you see contemporary educators building on the work of earlier philosophers? How does each of the philosophers mentioned in this chapter describe curriculum? What are their fundamental ideas about how children learn?
3. What influence does the environment have on infants, toddlers, and young children in today's society? What did Dewey say about the environment and its impact on teaching and learning? What did Piaget and Vygotsky say about the environment and early childhood learning?
4. How has the development of compensatory programs helped to strengthen today's children and families living in poverty? In what ways can early childhood special education programs make compensatory programs available to their children and families? Provide examples.

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The Context of Early Childhood Special Education

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Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you will be able to

- Define the terms *disability, handicap, developmental delay,* and *at risk*
- Discuss how judicial decisions and legislative enactments have benefited young children with delays or disabilities
- Summarize the major provisions contained in both PL 94–142 and PL 99–457
- Identify at least four benefits of early intervention/education for young children with delays or disabilities
- Explain the concept of ecology and its importance to the field of early childhood special education

Early childhood special education is a relatively young field drawing upon the long history, rich legacy, and contributions of early childhood general education, special education, and compensatory education. Yet early childhood special education is a distinct field with its own identity and purpose (McLean, Sandall, & Smith, 2016). In order to fully appreciate this discipline, several topics basic to the understanding of its development need to be explored. These issues will help provide a firm foundation for the later examination of programs and services for young children with delays or disabilities and their families. Attention will be focused on key terminology, the impact of litigation and legislation on the growth of the field, the prevalence of young children with special needs, the research evidence on the efficacy of early intervention and early childhood special education, and the validity of an ecological approach for looking at the world of young children with delays or disabilities.

Definitions and Terminology

Early childhood professionals serve a wide range of individuals. An increasing number of these young children exhibit disabilities, some may have developmental delays, and others might be at risk for future school difficulties or failure. What do these terms mean? Is a disability synonymous with a handicap? What is a developmental delay? What factors jeopardize a child's future academic success? Unfortunately, clear-cut answers to these basic questions are sometimes difficult to achieve. Confusion and misinterpretation are not unusual, even among professionals. Hence, the following descriptions are an attempt to clarify key terminology and provide a common foundation for understanding infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary students with delays or disabilities.

Exceptional Children

Early childhood special educators will frequently identify the children they serve as being **exceptional children**. This inclusive term generally refers to individuals who differ from societal or community standards of normalcy. These children will, therefore, require early intervention or an educational program customized to their unique needs. Some exceptionalities are obvious and easy to identify, while others are less obvious, such as an infant who is deaf.

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▲ Young children with special needs are first and foremost children.

Furthermore, some young children may greatly benefit from their exceptionality in their daily lives—for example, a child who is intellectually talented—while in other situations an exceptionality may prove to be a significant problem.

Professionals must not lose sight, however, of the fact that a young child with an exceptionality is first and foremost a child—an individual who is more like his or her typically developing peers than he or she is different. The fact that a young child is recognized as exceptional should never prevent professionals from realizing just how typical the individual is in many other ways.

Disability *and* Handicap

All too often, professionals, as well as the general public, use the terms *disability* and *handicap* interchangeably. These terms, however, have distinct meanings and are not synonymous. When professionals talk about a **disability**, they are referring to the inability of an individual to do something in a certain way. A disability may be thought of as an incapacity to perform as other children will due to impairments in sensory, physical, cognitive, and other areas of functioning. A **handicap**, on the other hand, refers to the problems that young children with a disability encounter as they attempt to function and interact in their environment. Mandy, for example, has cerebral palsy. This is a disability. If her disability prohibits her from becoming a professional ice skater, then we would say Mandy has a handicap. Stephen, a four-year-old who is legally blind (a disability), would have a handicap if his preschool teacher inadvertently used an overhead projector while explaining a cooking activity. A disability may or may not be a handicap depending upon the specific circumstances. For instance, a six-year-old child with braces on his legs might have difficulty walking upstairs, but in the classroom art center, his creativity and talents are easily demonstrated. Today, professionals rarely use the term *handicap* and then only when explaining the consequences or impact imposed on a young child by his or her disability. Gargiulo and Bouck (2018) urge educators to separate the disability from the handicap.

Early Intervention *and* Early Childhood Special Education

Continuing our discussion on terminology, we would like to clarify the terms *early intervention* and *early childhood special education*. Generally speaking, *early intervention* refers to the delivery of a coordinated and comprehensive set of specialized supports and services to infants and toddlers (from birth through age two) who have a disability, have a developmental delay, or are at risk and their families. The term *early intervention* can be found in federal legislation—specifically, Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 99–457), commonly known as IDEA (to be discussed later in this chapter). Describing the nature of early intervention is not an easy task. Early intervention can be characterized according to the type of service provided (physical therapy, vision services), location of service (home, child care center), and even service provider (occupational therapist, nurse), to mention just some of the critical features of this concept (McWilliam, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

The goal of early intervention is twofold. One purpose is to minimize the impact or effect of a disability or delay, while the second goal is to prevent the occurrence of future learning and developmental difficulties in children considered to be at risk while also providing support to their families (Smith & Guralnick, 2007; McWilliam, 2016). Accordingly, we see the purpose of early intervention as an opportunity to enhance and maximize the potential of our youngest citizens.

The term *early childhood special education* is typically used when talking about the provision of customized services uniquely crafted to meet the individual needs of young children from three through five years of age with delays or disabilities. It is important to note that when describing special education, we are talking about not a particular location but rather a system of supports and services for young children with delays or disabilities (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2018; Walsh, Smith, & Taylor, 2000).

Developmental Delay *and* At Risk

Because of the adverse effects of early labeling, recommended practice suggests that young children with special needs be identified as eligible for services as either developmentally delayed or, in some instances, at risk. These terms, in fact, are incorporated in PL 99–457. This significant enactment requires that local schools provide comprehensive services to children from ages three to five with delays or disabilities. The children, however, do *not* have to be identified with a disability label. The 1991 amendments (PL 102–119) to IDEA allow states to use a generic category like "children with disabilities." According to one national survey (Danaher, 2011), nine states utilize a noncategorical description exclusively when classifying preschoolers with special needs. Examples of these generic labels include

"preschool child [student] with a disability" (Colorado, New Jersey, New York); "preschool special needs" (West Virginia); and "noncategorical early childhood" (Texas). Many professionals believe that the use of a categorical disability label for most young children is of questionable value, unfairly stigmatizes young children, and creates a self-fulfilling prophecy (Danaher, 2011; Division for Early Childhood, 2009). A noncategorical approach to serving young children with delays or disabilities is, therefore, perfectly acceptable as well as legal. Many early childhood special education programs offer services without categorizing children on the basis of a disability. Thus, instead of a categorical approach, we find that programs serving young children with special needs frequently use the broad terms *developmental delay* and *at risk*.

As a result of the passage of PL 105–17, it is now permissible, at the discretion of the state and local education agency, to use the term *developmental delay* for children ages three through nine. The most recent reauthorization of IDEA, PL 108–446, reiterated the appropriateness of this term for children ages three to nine (or any subset of this group). Forty-two states currently use the term *developmentally delayed* or a similar variation (for example, *significant developmental delay*) when describing these children (Danaher, 2011).

Developmental Delay

Congress realized that establishing a national definition of **developmental delay** would be an almost insurmountable task and, therefore, left the responsibility of developing a satisfactory definition to the individual states. One consequence of this action is the tremendous diversity of criteria found in the various meanings of this term. Many states incorporate a quantitative approach when determining which children meet the developmentally delayed eligibility criteria (Danaher, 2011; Shackelford, 2006). Typical of this strategy is a reliance on data derived from various assessment instruments. Two common criteria for a developmental delay include

- a delay expressed in terms of standard deviations (SD) below the mean on a norm-referenced assessment (Georgia, Indiana: 2 SD in one developmental area or 1.5 SD in two areas[1]), and
- a delay expressed in terms of a difference between a child's chronological age and actual performance level (Michigan: 50 percent delay in one or more developmental areas, West Virginia: 25 percent delay in one or more developmental areas).

Table 2.1 illustrates some of the various criteria used by the states when quantifying a developmental delay. Obviously, there is no one correct way to define this concept. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages. In fact, fourteen states allow for the use of a qualitative determination when considering whether or not a child has a developmental delay (Danaher, 2011). Nebraska and New Mexico are but two examples of states that permit the use of professional judgment, informed team consensus, or the informed clinical opinions of members of a multidisciplinary team in lieu of quantitative criteria.

TABLE 2.1 ● Representative Examples of Definitions of Developmental Delay

State	Criteria
Florida	2 SD or 25% delay in one area, 1.5 SD or 20% delay in two areas; or informed clinical opinion
Maryland	25% delay in one area; or atypical development or behavior; or diagnosed condition with high probability of delay
Michigan	50% delay in one or more areas
Nebraska	2 SD in one area, 1.3 SD in two areas; or informed clinical opinion; or diagnosed physical or mental condition with high probability of resulting in developmental delay
New Hampshire	A delay in one of the five developmental areas and needing special education and related services
Tennessee	2 SD or 40% delay in one area, or 1.5 SD or 25% delay in two areas
Utah	2.5 SD or less than 1 percentile in one area, 2 SD or less than 2 percentile in two areas, 1.5 SD or less than 7 percentile in three areas
Virginia	Delay in one or more areas or an established physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay

Source: Adapted from J. Danaher. (2011). *Eligibility Policies and Practices for Young Children Under Part B of IDEA.* (NECTAC Notes 27). Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

Note: SD = standard deviation below the mean on a norm-referenced assessment instrument.

Areas refers to physical, communication, cognitive, social or emotional, and adaptive areas of development.

A qualitative determination is allowed due to the lack of valid and reliable dependent measures appropriate for young children. The predictive validity of these assessment instruments is also suspect. As a result, the regulations accompanying IDEA require that informed clinical opinion be included as part of eligibility determination (Shackelford, 2006; Taylor, Smiley, & Richards, 2015).

There are several advantages to using the term *developmental delay*. First, because it suggests a developmental status rather than a category, it is anticipated that placement of young children in developmentally appropriate classrooms will be more likely. Second, it is hoped that this concept will

[1] Developmental areas include physical, communication, cognitive, social or emotional, and adaptive.

lead to services being matched to the needs and abilities of the child rather than having services decided by a categorical label. Third, professionals believe that the utilization of this term is likely to encourage inclusive models of service delivery instead of services being primarily driven by a disability label. Finally, the use of this term avoids the possibility of misidentifying a young child when the etiology or cause of the child's delay is not clearly evident (Division for Early Childhood, 2009).

At Risk

When professionals talk about children being **at risk**, they are speaking of children "who have not been formally identified as having a disability, but who may be developing conditions that will limit their success in school or lead to disabilities. This can be the result of exposure to adverse genetic, biological, or environmental factors" (Spodek & Saracho, 1994a, p. 16). This definition parallels an earlier description of risk factors identified by Kopp (1983). She defines risk as "a wide range of biological and environmental conditions that are associated with increased probability for cognitive, social, affective, and physical problems" (p. 1081).

In both of these definitions, we see that exposure to adverse circumstances *may* lead to later problems in development and learning, but it is not a guarantee that developmental problems will occur. Risk factors only set the stage or heighten the probability that differences will arise. Many young children are subject to a wide variety of risks, yet they never evidence developmental problems. Table 2.2 presents some of the common factors and conditions that may place a child at risk.

Professionals typically classify risk factors into two (Lipkin & Schertz, 2008) or three (Shackelford, 2006) at-risk categories. Shackelford's work is but one example of a model that is widely accepted today. This tripartite classification scheme includes established, biological, and environmental risk categories. These categories are not mutually exclusive and frequently overlap. In some instances, a young child identified as being biologically at risk due to prematurity may also be at risk due to environmental factors like severe poverty. As a result of this "double vulnerability," the probability for future delays and learning difficulties dramatically increases.

TABLE 2.2 ● Representative Factors Placing Young Children at Risk for Developmental Problems

Maternal alcohol and drug abuse
Children born to teenage mothers or women over age 40
Home environment lacking adequate stimulation
Maternal diabetes, hypertension, or toxemia
Exposure to rubella
Chronic poverty
Primary caregiver is developmentally disabled
Infections such as encephalitis and meningitis
Oxygen deprivation
Child abuse and neglect
Accidents and head trauma
Inadequate maternal and infant nutrition
Genetic disorders such as Down syndrome, phenylketonuria, and galactosemia
Family history of congenital abnormalities
Exposure to radiation
Prematurity
Rh incompatibility
Low birth weight
Ingestion of poisons and toxic substances by child
Prolonged or unusual delivery

Note: Factors are not ranked in order of potential influence.

Established Risk

Children with a diagnosed medical disorder of known etiology and predictable prognosis or outcome are considered to manifest an **established risk**. Illustrations of such conditions would include children born with cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, spina bifida, an inborn error of metabolism such as PKU (phenylketonuria), or severe sensory impairments. Young children identified with an established risk condition *must* be served if the state receives IDEA Part C monies.

Biological Risk

Included in this category are children with a history of pre-, peri-, and postnatal conditions and developmental events that heighten the potential for later atypical or aberrant development. Examples of **biological risk** factors include conditions or complications such as premature births, infants with low birth weights, maternal diabetes, rubella (German measles), anoxia, bacterial infections like meningitis, and HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infection.

Environmental Risk

Environmentally at-risk children are biologically typical, but their life experiences and/or environmental conditions are so limiting or threatening that the likelihood of delayed development exists. Extreme poverty, child abuse, absence of adequate shelter and medical care, parental substance abuse, and limited opportunities for nurturance and social stimulation are all examples of potential **environmental risk** factors. This risk category, as well as children who are biologically at risk, results in discretionary services. States may elect to provide early intervention if they wish to, but

rubberball/Brand X Pictures/Getty Images

▲ Some young children may be at risk for future difficulties in learning and development due to biological risk factors.

TABLE 2.3 ● Federal Classification of Disabilities

Autism	Orthopedic impairment
Deaf-blindness	Other health impairments
Developmental delay*	Speech or language impairment
Emotional disturbance	Specific learning disability
Hearing impairment	Traumatic brain injury
Intellectual disabilities**	Visual impairment
Multiple disabilities	

Note: *Defined according to individual state guidelines.

**Formerly known as mental retardation. Federal legislation (PL 111–256) changed this designation on October 5, 2010.

they are not mandated to serve infants and toddlers who are biologically or environmentally at risk. Eight states have elected to serve infants and toddlers in these two risk categories (Shackelford, 2006).

Given the magnitude of factors that may place a child at risk for developing disabilities, the value of prevention and early intervention cannot be underestimated. Of course, prevention is better than remediation.

Federal Definition of Disability

As we previously noted, early childhood special educators serve a variety of young children with special needs; but who are these children? The federal government, via legislation, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) (PL 108–446), defines a student with a disability according to thirteen distinct categories listed in Table 2.3. The government's interpretation of these labels is presented in Appendix C. Individual states frequently use these federal guidelines to construct their own standards and policies as to who is eligible to receive early intervention and special education services.

We have chosen to use the term *children with delays or disabilities* to describe the infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary students who are the focus of this textbook. Yet, we cannot stress enough the importance of remembering that a child, or any individual with a disability, is first and foremost a person. It is imperative that teachers focus on the child and not the impairment. Early childhood special educators should look for the similarities between children with delays or disabilities and their typically developing peers, not differences. Attention should also be focused on the children's strengths and abilities, not their disabilities.

Litigation and Legislation Affecting Children With Delays or Disabilities

Key Judicial Decisions

Early childhood special education is an evolving discipline. In addition to drawing upon its three parent fields (general early childhood education, special education, and compensatory education), judicial action has played a key role in the growth of the field. Litigation instigated by parents and special interest groups has helped pave the way in securing numerous rights for children with disabilities and their families. Since the 1960s and early 1970s, a plethora of state and federal court decisions have continually shaped and defined a wide range of issues that impact contemporary special education policies and procedures. Table 2.4 summarizes some of the landmark cases affecting the field of special education. Many of the judicial remedies emanating from these lawsuits form the cornerstones of both federal and state legislative enactments focusing on children with delays or disabilities. Furthermore, many accepted practices in today's special education programs, such as nondiscriminatory assessments and due process procedures, have their roots in various court decisions.

Key Federal Legislation

Federal legislative intervention in the lives of persons with disabilities is of relatively recent origin. Prior to the late 1950s and early 1960s, little federal attention was devoted to citizens with special needs. When legislation was enacted, it primarily assisted specific groups of individuals such as those who were visually impaired or had an intellectual disability. The last sixty years, however, have witnessed a flurry of federal legislative activity, which has aided the growth of special education and provided educational benefits and other opportunities and rights to children and adults with disabilities.

Due to the multitude of the public laws (PL) affecting special education, discussion will be reserved for landmark legislation. We will examine seven significant pieces of legislation that have dramatically affected the educational opportunities of infants, toddlers, preschool children, and school-age children with delays or disabilities. Our initial review will focus on PL 94–142, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or, as it was previously called, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This change came about due to the enactment on October 30, 1990, of PL 101–476. Provisions contained in this legislation will be reviewed later.

TABLE 2.4 • A Synopsis of Selected Court Cases Influencing Special Education

Case	Year	Issue	Judicial Decision
Brown v. Board of Education	1954	Educational segregation	Segregation of students by race ruled unconstitutional. Children are being deprived of equal educational opportunity. Effectively ended "separate but equal" schools for white and black pupils. Used as a precedent for arguing that children with disabilities cannot be excluded from a public education.
Hobson v. Hansen	1967	Classifying students	Grouping or "tracking" of students on the basis of standardized tests, which were found to be biased, held to be unconstitutional. Tracking systems discriminated against poor and minority children. Equal protection clause of Fourteenth Amendment violated.
Diana v. State Board of Education	1970	Class placement	Linguistically different students must be tested in their primary language as well as in English. Students cannot be placed in special education classes on the basis of tests that are culturally biased. Test items were to be revised so as to reflect students' cultures. Group-administered IQ tests cannot be utilized for placement of children in programs for students with intellectual disability.
Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	1972	Right to education	State must guarantee a free public education to all children with intellectual disability, ages 6–21, regardless of degree of impairment or associated disabilities. Students were to be placed in the most integrated environment. Definition of *education* expanded. Case established the right of parents to participate in educational decisions affecting their children.
Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia	1972	Right to education	Extended the *Pennsylvania* decision to include all children with disabilities. Specifically established the constitutional right of children with exceptionalities to a public education regardless of their functional level. Presumed absence of fiscal resources is not a valid reason for failing to provide appropriate educational services to students with disabilities. Due process procedures established to protect the rights of the child.
Larry P. v. Riles	1972, 1979	Class placement	A landmark case parallel to the *Diana* suit. African American students could not be placed in classes for the educable mentally retarded (EMR)* solely on the basis of intellectual assessments found to be culturally and racially biased. The court instructed school officials to develop an assessment instrument that would not discriminate against minority children. The failure to comply with this order resulted in a 1979 ruling, which completely prohibited the use of IQ tests for identifying African American students for placement in EMR classes. Ruling applies only to the state of California.
Jose P. v. Ambach	1979	Timelines and delivery of services	A far-reaching class action lawsuit that completely restructured the delivery of special education services in New York City public schools. Judgment established (1) school-based support teams to conduct evaluations and provide services; (2) stringent timelines for completing evaluations and placement; (3) due process procedures; (4) guidelines for nondiscriminatory evaluation; (5) detailed monitoring procedures; and (6) accessibility of school facilities.
Armstrong v. Kline	1979	Extended school year	States' refusal to pay for schooling in excess of 180 days for pupils with severe disabilities is a violation of their rights to an appropriate education as found in PL 94–142. The court moved that some children with disabilities will regress significantly during summer recess and have longer recoupment periods; thus, they are denied an appropriate education if not provided with a year-round education.

Case	Year	Issue	Judicial Decision
Tatro v. State of Texas	1980	Related services	A U.S. Supreme Court decision, which held that catheterization qualified as a related service under PL 94–142. Catheterization not considered an exempted medical procedure as it could be performed by a health care aide or school nurse. Court further stipulated that only those services that allow a student to benefit from a special education qualify as related services.
Board of Education v. Rowley	1982	Appropriate education	First U.S. Supreme Court interpretation of PL 94–142. Court addressed the issue of what constitutes an "appropriate" education for a student who was deaf but making satisfactory academic progress. Supreme Court ruled that an appropriate education does not necessarily mean an education that will allow for the maximum possible achievement; rather, students must be given a reasonable opportunity to learn. Parents' request for a sign language interpreter, therefore, was denied. An appropriate education is not synonymous with an optimal educational experience.
Honig v. Doe	1988	Exclusion from school	Children with special needs whose behavior is a direct result of their disability cannot be expelled from school due to misbehavior. If behavior leading to expulsion is not a consequence of the exceptionality, pupil may be expelled. Short-term suspension from school not interpreted as a change in pupil's individualized education program (IEP).
Daniel R. R. v. State Board of Education	1989	Class placement	A Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision that held that a segregated class was an appropriate placement for a student with Down syndrome. Preference for integrated placement viewed as secondary to the need for an appropriate education. Court established a two-prong test for determining compliance with the least restrictive environment (LRE) mandate for students with severe disabilities. First, it must be determined if a pupil can make satisfactory progress and achieve educational benefit in a regular classroom through curriculum modification and the use of supplementary aids and services. Second, it must be determined whether the pupil has been integrated to the maximum extent appropriate. Successful compliance with both parts fulfills a school's obligation under federal law. Ruling affects LRE cases in Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi, but has become a benchmark decision for other jurisdictions as well.
Oberti v. Board of Education of the Borough of Clementon School District	1992	Least restrictive environment	Placement in a general education classroom with the use of supplementary aids and services must be offered to a student with disabilities prior to considering more segregated placements. A pupil cannot be excluded from a regular classroom solely because curriculum, services, or other practices would require modification. A decision to exclude a learner from the general education classroom necessitates justification and documentation. Clear judicial preference for educational integration established.
Agostini v. Felton	1997	Provision of services	A U.S. Supreme Court decision that reversed a long-standing ruling banning the delivery of publicly funded educational services to students enrolled in private schools. Interpreted to mean special educators can now provide services to children in parochial schools.
Cedar Rapids Community School District v. Garret F.	1999	Related services	A U.S. Supreme Court decision that expanded and clarified the concept of related services. This case affirmed that intensive and continuous school health care services necessary for a student to attend school, and which are not performed by a physician, qualify as related services.

(*Continued*)

TABLE 2.4 ● (Continued)

Case	Year	Issue	Judicial Decision
Arlington Central School District Board of Education v. Murphy	2006	Recovery of fees	At issue in this U.S. Supreme Court case is whether parents are able to recover the professional fees of an educational consultant (lay advocate) who provided services during legal proceedings. The Court ruled that parents are not entitled to reimbursement for the cost of experts because only attorneys' fees are addressed in IDEA.
Winkelman v. Parma City School District	2007	Parental rights	One of the more significant Supreme Court rulings. The Court, by unanimous vote, affirmed the right of parents to represent their children in IDEA-related court cases. Ruling seen as an expansion of parental involvement and the definition of a free appropriate public education. Decision also interpreted to mean that IDEA conveys enforceable rights to parents as well as their children.
Forest Grove School District v. T. A.	2009	Tuition reimbursement	A Supreme Court decision involving tuition reimbursement for a student with learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder as well as depression who was never declared eligible for special education and never received services from the school district. Parents removed the child from the school and unilaterally enrolled the child in a private school. Subsequently they sought reimbursement from the school district for expenses. In a 6–3 decision, the Court found that IDEA authorizes reimbursement for private special education services when a public school fails to provide a free appropriate education and the private school placement is appropriate, regardless of whether the student previously received special education services from the public school.
Fry v. Napoleon Community Schools	2017	IDEA exhaustion doctrine	A suit filed on behalf of a young girl with a severe form of cerebral palsy who used a service animal. Because the school provided the student with a personal aide in accordance with her individualized education program (IEP), the school district refused to allow her the use of her service dog. The girl's parents sought relief under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act rather than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which required the parents to exhaust all administrative remedies (e.g., due process hearing) prior to suing under the ADAAA and 504. As this was a disability discrimination issue and the adequacy of the student's educational services were not in question, the Court, in a unanimous decision, found that because the parents were not seeking relief under the free appropriate public education clause of IDEA, the exhaustion requirement of IDEA was not applicable.
Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District	2017	Educational benefit	A far-reaching Supreme Court decision involving an eight-year-old boy with autism. The child's parents removed him from public school and enrolled him in a private school due to an individualized education program (IEP), which they believed did not provide sufficient academic and social progress. The school district refused the parents' request for tuition reimbursement. Although the lower courts agreed with the school district, the parents appealed to the Supreme Court. The Court found, in a unanimous decision, that an IEP must provide more than *de minimis* or minimal educational benefit. It stated that an IEP must be "appropriately ambitious" in light of a pupil's circumstances and every student must be given the opportunity to meet challenging objectives.

Source: Adapted from R. Gargiulo and E. Bouck, *Special Education in Contemporary Society,* 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), pp. 42–44.

Note: *Considered appropriate terminology at this time period.