

Examples of Use of Smart Start Funds to Promote Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

- √ increased child care rates for providers serving special needs children
- √ renovations, expansion of existing facilities such as developmental day centers or therapeutic preschools so they can enroll typically developing children
- √ case management/child service coordination
- √ community forums about inclusion
- √ child mental health personnel to work with children with atypical development and their families (assessment and intervention)
- √ enhanced resource and referral services for parents of children with special needs
- √ contracts with parents of children with special needs to serve as trainers in staff development and public awareness activities
- √ screening/evaluation teams to work at community sites and child care programs
- √ special needs related equipment (indoor and outdoor) for participating child care programs
- √ funds for child care centers to hire substitutes to free up regular staff for training events
- √ employ and train a pool of teachers/aids to serve as substitutes or in crisis situations where child care programs need additional “hands-on” staff on a temporary basis for a special needs child
- √ outreach/resource person for deaf/hard of hearing community
- √ respite and crisis nursery services
- √ additional/enhanced transportation services (van modifications, adapted car seats, etc.)
- √ enhance or establish local Parent-to-Parent Programs
- √ inclusion training for front line staff from all participating agencies
- √ after school services
- √ flexible support services to allow children with special needs to participate in other community activities (i.e., aide to assist a child with physical disabilities who attends a YMCA recreation program)

SERVING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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- √ mini-grants to child care providers (a flexible pot of money to respond to any kind of need experience by child care providers in serving children with special needs)
- √ outreach specialists with special needs background to provide consultation and support to child care providers
- √ provide vouchers to parents of children with special needs to obtain speech, physical or occupational therapy from the provider of their choice
- √ family support funds with cash subsidies or voucher to be used by parents of children with special needs for such things as respite care
- √ enhanced cultural diversity; translations of outreach/public awareness materials and outreach personnel
- √ funds to acquire broader variety of developmentally appropriate educational supplies and materials for special needs self-contained programs to enroll typically developing children
- √ placing a family support specialist with a neonatal intensive care unit to provide information and other support to parents of children with or at risk for disabilities before they leave the hospital

Note: The above is not an exhaustive list of all allowable activities. It is sampling of those that have been reported by local Partnerships.