

Spring 5-13-2022

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Recommended Citation

Lund, Adria, "Early Childhood Special Education: Increasing Family Collaboration" (2022). *Dissertations, Theses, and Projects*. 692.

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Early Childhood Special Education: Increasing Family Collaboration

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Spring 2022

ABSTRACT

Until 1976, when P.L. 94-482 was passed, families of children with disabilities were not actively involved in their children's education. Even after this, many families continue to feel as if they are in unfamiliar ground when it comes to matters of special education. Those who haven't studied special education will have a hard time making sense of the many various sorts of meetings, definitions, and processes involved. Throughout their child's special education experience, families are given the Parental Rights for Public School Students Receiving Special Education Services: Notice of Procedural Safeguards. Even though this document was written with families in mind, it might be challenging to navigate and understand. Regardless of the approach or language used, families and teachers should feel connected and understood throughout the special education process. The research conducted for this project reviewed literature on family engagement in the special education process and identified the themes of communication, collaboration, and mutual understanding. A handbook with definitions of common terms, descriptions of the purpose and possible outcomes of each meeting in the special education process, an overview of the disability categories of special education, and resources for families was established in response and to help families and caregivers. The goal was to assist them have a better understanding of the special education process, allowing them to feel more comfortable with it - including planning and comprehending their child's development.