



Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Policy statement is to support families, early childhood programs, and States by providing recommendations from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) for preventing and severely limiting expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings. Recent data indicate that expulsions and suspensions occur at high rates in preschool settings. This is particularly troubling given that research suggests that school expulsion and suspension practices are associated with negative educational and life outcomes. It is the intent of the Division of Child Development and Early Education to prevent, severely limit, and work toward eventually eliminating the expulsion and suspension – and ensure the safety and well-being – of young children in early learning settings.

The Suspension and Expulsion Policy Statement aims to:

- Raise awareness about expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices in early care and education settings;
- Provide recommendations on setting goals and using data to monitor progress in preventing, severely limiting, and ultimately eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings;
- Create a positive climate, and focus on prevention of suspension and expulsion across the early care and education settings, and applied across the settings where children learn;
- Develop and communicate clear behavioral expectations, appropriate interventions, and consistent policies and procedures to address challenging behaviors;
- Ensure fairness and continuous improvements for all children;
- Ensure that all children’s social-emotional and behavioral health are fostered in an appropriate high-quality early learning program, working toward eventually eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in all early care, and education settings;
- Provide free resources to support States, programs, teachers, and providers in addressing children’s social-emotional and behavioral health, strengthening family-program relationships; and
- Provide resources to support families in fostering young children’s development, social-emotional and behavioral health, and relationships.

Reducing Suspension and Expulsion in Early Care and Education Programs:

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) will work with the early care and education community and partners to address plans, procedures, and practices to support eliminating suspensions and expulsions in early care and education settings.