This webinar provides an overview of SpecialQuest and an overview of the CPIP process and its use in your community.

Geneva Hallett is an early childhood educator with over thirty years’ experience. She has taught in and directed early childhood programs, taught early childhood courses at the university level, as well as trained and coached early childhood professionals. Geneva was among the first educators to be trained in the Pyramid Model in 2003. Before joining the Pyramid Plus staff, Geneva was the Vice President of Qualistar Ratings where she oversaw all aspects of the statewide rating in Colorado. She created the “Getting Ready for Ratings” binder and created and delivered the ‘train the trainer’ trainings specific to the Qualistar Rating. Geneva has given presentations on early childhood education topics at the local, national, and international level.

Wayla Murrow is the parent of a child with a disability who is now 18 years old. She has worked with parents of children with disabilities in a variety of settings, including being a member of an all parent governing board for Early Intervention. She has worked as a parent advisor and parent outreach connector for PEAK Parent Center and the Denver Metro Community Parent Resource Center. Wayla currently works as an Early Intervention Specialist for Early Intervention Colorado in the Office of Early Childhood. She has provided training for service coordinators and those working with families in the early intervention program for 7 years.

Laura Merrill is the Training and Personnel Development Coordinator for Early Intervention Colorado. She was a member of the SpecialQuest Leadership team and currently...
serves on the State Policy Team for the Pyramid Model and Inclusion Practices. She is a passionate supporter of inclusive environments and community opportunities for all children. As a parent of an adult with a disability, she has experienced first-hand the difference being included in life’s many experiences has made to her son.

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Inclusion/Special Quest Wordle from previous SpecialQuest webinar.

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SEE DEC NAEYC STATEMENT HANDOUT
Inclusion Wordle from A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The early childhood inclusion summary and definition have been adopted by the Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council.

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Learning Outcomes:

- Gain awareness of the SpecialQuest Approach and Materials
- Become familiar with the Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP) process and CPIP Facilitator Resource Packet
- Gather strategies for convening a community-wide, cross-systems team
- Gain knowledge of effective facilitation strategies for the CPIP process
- Consider how the CPIP process leads to planning, implementation, and evaluation of professional development activities to support inclusive practices
SEE SQ APPROACH – 1 Pager HANDOUT
The SpecialQuest approach contains 13 key elements of values and design. The approach is based on research and best practices in professional development, adult learning, teaming and collaboration, and supporting families as leaders.

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What are the SpecialQuest Approach and Materials?

- Designed to touch the “head, heart, and hands” of families and professionals.
- Relationship & team-based approach, sustains inclusive services, family leadership skills, and collaborative service delivery.
- Teams participate in engaging learning with parallel process and continuous improvement strategies.
- Teams are supported with coaching, facilitation, and follow-up to implement quality inclusive services.

SpecialQuest is designed to touch the “head, heart, and hands” of families and professionals working together to create inclusive communities for young children with disabilities. This relationship- and team-based approach enhances and sustains inclusive services, family leadership skills, and integrated, collaborative service delivery. Teams who are implementing the SpecialQuest approach participate in intensive and engaging learning experiences which use parallel process and continuous improvement strategies. In addition, teams utilize coaching, facilitation, and follow-up supports over time to implement high quality inclusive services. The SpecialQuest approach is built on a solid foundation of current theories of adult learning, systems change, and sustainability. The SpecialQuest approach has two components, values and design, which are woven together to create successful professional development.

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SpecialQuest Early Childhood Inclusion Training Materials

The volumes are organized by themes:
- Including Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities
- Building Relationships with Families
- Collaboration and Teaming
- Preschool Inclusion

SpecialQuest was first developed with a focus on birth-3, but there is content applicable to birth through adulthood. So even though the training materials say they are for infants and toddlers, it is really a philosophy of working with children and their families. The materials include videos with visuals of children and individuals with disabilities in natural environments. As the focus of SpecialQuest expanded to working with children birth to five, the Preschool Inclusion Series was added which provides videos and training sessions that support high quality inclusion of preschoolers (ages 3 – 5) in early care and education settings.

Each theme contains several different sessions. You can find all of these training materials, which include the facilitator’s guide, training script, handouts, videos and other supporting information, on the library tab at www.specialquest.org.
Including Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Rooted in the key concept of “belonging,” these sessions examine the beliefs and attitudes that influence and affect adults and children in inclusive settings and provide numerous practical strategies and tools to help families and providers implement high-quality inclusive services.

This volume includes all of the training materials for 9 different sessions. Each session has a specific focus. For example, Session 6 is “An Inclusion Story” and contains the script for the training, handouts, and a video vignette about a young boy named Christopher and his story of inclusion. Some of the sessions contain several handouts and videos and are all organized into a way that makes the information easy to present.

Building Relationships with Families

Families are the enduring presence in the lives of young children with disabilities. This volume contains activities to support staff members in early care and education and families in developing positive relationships that support collaboration and family leadership.

This volume includes 9 sessions as well. An example of a session in this volume is Session 2: Listening to Families. This session builds on the previous session in this volume and lays the foundation for building relationships with families. Videos for this session are “Family Voices” and “Aracely and Elizabeth.” These provide opportunities for participants to practice hearing what families have to say and also explore communication when a family’s culture and/or language differs from that of the service provider. The session activities are designed to allow groups to consider ideas and strategies that would enhance building relationships with families in their own programs and communities.
Collaboration and Teaming

Inclusion depends on a team of family members and service providers who assume collective responsibility for coordinating services to young children with disabilities and their families. This makes teaming a vital part of the process. The sessions in this volume provide a comprehensive set of strategies and activities that support high-quality collaboration and teaming.

This volume includes 6 sessions. An example is Session 5, which is “Elements of Team Functioning”. This session explores the elements of effective teaming through a movie clip and offers fun activities for participants to think about what makes their own teams effective and how they might incorporate effective strategies for teaming in their own work.

The Preschool Inclusion Series of the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library focuses on several aspects of including preschool-age children who have disabilities in programs and settings with their typically developing peers. This series contains four videos. The first provides an overview of the benefits and rationale for inclusion, as well as perspectives from many stakeholders of what makes inclusion work. Two additional videos each feature a story about the successful inclusion of a child—in one, a girl named Samantha; in the other, a boy named Drew. In these videos, viewers learn how their families and their service providers worked together to ensure that these children were given the supports and opportunities they needed to flourish in programs with their typically developing peers. The fourth video provides practical and concrete strategies for making the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process collaborative and developing plans that ensure inclusion, with perspectives from family members, service providers, and administrators from several service delivery systems. Five sessions, complete with facilitator scripts and handouts, accompany the videos.
SEE BENEFITS HANDOUT
Here you see the outcomes from the Early Head Start community teams and what they shared about the benefits of using the SpecialQuest approach and materials. We have included this handout as a part of your materials for this webinar.

Those who participated in the implementation of the SpecialQuest approach in their communities noted that the benefits included increased numbers of young children with disabilities being served, the ability to support families as decision makers, enhanced collaboration among service providers and families, increased services to families, more training in the community, and better coordination of the skills of service providers.

One participant shared, “I didn’t realize what I didn’t know, or needed to know, about serving young children with significant disabilities, and their families before SpecialQuest.”

They also learned how much using the approach and materials over time increased staff comfort, confidence and skills in serving children with disabilities and their families.

The Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP) is based on the SpecialQuest goal of supporting continuous improvement through learning and reflection. The process is intended to support communities in understanding the current context in which services are delivered to young children with disabilities and their families in local programs across the community, including strategies for facilitating the process and supporting teams. The process of discussion and determining ratings allows teams to identify areas of strength and challenge, leading to action planning in priority areas of concern.

The CPIP is meant to be used over time to help communities identify how they are growing capacity to support sustainable and systematic improvements in the following four areas: Including Children Birth-5 with Disabilities; Involving Families of Young Children with Disabilities; Providing Integrated Services to Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers with Disabilities; and Supporting Implementation and Sustainability.

In each of these areas, there are three to four "promising practices" identified. The promising practices are based upon research and experience and reflect the content of the SpecialQuest curriculum. The tool (CPIP) is structured around measuring growth as it pertains to each "promising practice." The practices are not intended to be prescriptive, rather they are written to provide a context for action.
Prior to participating in a CPIP, communities may not “know what they don’t know.” Representatives of community teams have differing perspectives on how inclusion looks in their community. The CPIP tool fosters discussion of these differences, honoring all input and supports teams in coming to a unified understanding of areas of strength and challenges.

**SEE FACILITATOR RESOURCE PACKET**

You have received the CPIP facilitator’s packet as a separate handout. Contained in this packet are instructions for administering the tool, the facilitator’s version of the tool, the participant’s version of the tool and the action planning form. When facilitating a CPIP with a community team a copy of the participant’s version of the tool is needed for each team member. In addition, a sign-in sheet and Quality Improvement method to evaluate the process are needed.

The tool is intended to be completed by a community-wide team. The members will vary based upon who is involved in early childhood in the area.
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**Facilitator Resource Guide**

**Tips for Identifying your team:**
- Identify community and family members that bring a community systems-wide perspective and share a desire to improve inclusive services for young children and their families
- Start with individuals in your current agency and existing community partners
- Begin with a small group of partners, then build to a larger group over time
- Build on existing cross-systems teams
- Ensure that families are at the table
  - Ideally, have more than one parent voice represented

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**Facilitator Resource Guide**

**Timeframe for completing the Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP)**
- Entire process will take 2-3 hours
- Teams will have 5-15 minutes to discuss each of the practice areas
- Teams will have 1-2 minutes to determine where they are on the scale following discussion
- Allow 30-60 minutes for action planning at the end
- Assign a time-keeper to help stay on task

Complete tool at least annually to identify progress and areas for action.

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This is a selection from the facilitator’s version of the CPIP. You will see that the promising practice is noted directly after the focus area at the top of the page. Listed below are the characteristics related to that promising practice.

The Facilitator’s version gives more detail on what the different levels of ranking mean for each question.

Review the Facilitator’s version and question #1. “Our community has a vision, shared by families and service providers for including infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities and their families in early childhood programs.” Below the promising practice is a 0-10 ranking, encompassing a range from not implemented, to partially implemented, to fully implemented and a place for notes of the discussion for each question. Read the question aloud or have team members take turns reading and then ask them to decide where they see themselves in the ranking. Teams should reach consensus on the rating. The richness is in the discussion, not just the rating.
Part of the process of ranking will be rating each practice from 0-10. The facilitator is neutral and should not engage in the determination of the ranking. Page three (3) of the introduction in the Facilitator’s guide can help you determine this ranking. You will find that different programs will be at differing places in implementation. The CPIP is used to measure the implementation of these practices in the community as a whole. Everyone needs to be able to share their perception. Facilitators may need to prompt teams on what each ranking level means, and encourage input from all members.

This is a selection from the Participant’s version of the tool. The Participant’s version gives more space for recording. Each team member will have their own copy of the tool and should record comments from their perspective. In addition, one member of team may be asked to be the recorder and take notes of the factors in the determination of the team score for each benchmark, such as how the determination that the implementation score is a 4, rather than a 5 was made.

This slide shows the summary page from the Participant’s version of the tool. At the end of the process, the team should summarize the strengths and challenges, and complete the Action Planning Form (also provided) to determine the next steps to move forward in the implementation of promising practices for inclusion. Be sure to allow sufficient time to complete the action planning process, which is the first step in making progress toward increasing inclusive opportunities for children and families and sustaining these changes.

Teams then evaluate their process regularly to see if what they are doing is achieving the desired outcomes. They might use a process of identifying what is working and make suggestions for improvement. Teams then use the problem-solving process to make necessary course corrections to make their services most effective for the infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families in the community.
This is an example of an evaluation model that may be used in the Quality Improvement Process. It is important for the team to evaluate the process itself. The facilitator does not add to this process, she simply encourages sharing from the team members and records. Example: If a comment is made that the meeting started late, the facilitator makes note of that, but does not add information, such as problems with the equipment, etc.

This example is from a community that implemented the SpecialQuest approach in 2008, including the use of the CPIP. In 2008, First Steps Early Head Start in Canon City participated in the SpecialQuest Leadership Initiative. Part of the process was to facilitate the CPIP with the leadership team. The Leadership Team consisted of the managers and coordinators from all children’s programs. CPIPs were also conducted with the policy council and the Board of Directors. Information gathered through the CPIP was assessed and a plan of action developed. As part of the plan of action, the leadership team formed a new group consisting of parents, local school district representatives, managers from Early Head Start, home visiting, directors of early care and education centers, and early intervention managers and administrators. This new team, known as “The Model Development Team”, began with a CPIP action plan and worked to build the promising practices into systems. Progress was assessed three times throughout the year and reported back to the leadership team. The Leadership Team continues to meet weekly and the Model Development Team meets monthly.

Policies and procedures were developed and put into practice to maintain the highest standards for early childhood programs, including inclusive practices. The CPIP continues to be used yearly as a self-assessment of inclusive practices.
This is an example of the collection and examination of data over time. This is the state of Colorado's State Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (SPIP), which is the same tool and same process as the CPIP, done at a state level. This shows the implementation ratings for Colorado for the three years that they used the tool to guide inclusive practice. Using the CPIP, communities can chart their progress over time and develop a strong visual to illustrate progress made toward the implementation of the promising practices for inclusion.

The purpose of collecting CPIP data is to capture a broader picture of inclusion. It is used for setting goals and making an action plan for the community. It is also used to celebrate what is in place and successes along the way, as in the previous example. The CPIP continues to guide the work of early childhood in Canon City.

Sharing data with the larger community is an important contribution to inclusive education.

Community team members need to give permission to share the results of the CPIP if they are to be shared outside of the team participating in the CPIP.

Next steps for moving toward increasing the use of promising practices for inclusion are to identify a facilitator and a community team and begin the work of building a community that fully supports young children with disabilities and their families.
A historical perspective: CPIP facilitators worked with 80 local communities to implement the CPIP process annually from 2007-2010. This graphic illustrates what the CPIP facilitators said worked best for them. They shared their insights on CPIP planning and effective facilitation strategies for the CPIP process. The bigger letters indicate the most important considerations for them as facilitators in this process.

When conducting a “live” webinar or, conduct the Continuous Quality Improvement activity to help evaluate the process.

Contact any of the presenters with questions about the use of the CPIP in your community.

Facilitating a CPIP in the community is the first step in increasing opportunities for inclusion of children with special needs. This process allows communities to identify areas of strength and challenges in implementing promising practices to support inclusion. .