



The Office of Head Start funded the SpecialQuest Birth–Five: Head Start/Hilton Foundation Training Program from October 2007 through September 2010 with the mission of embedding the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources at the local, state, and national levels in order to support inclusive services for young children who have disabilities and their families. SpecialQuest Birth–Five built upon ten years of work by the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program (1997–2007). The SpecialQuest approach to professional development on inclusion was implemented with over 500 Early Head Start/Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs and their community partners. These SpecialQuest teams participated in long-term, interactive learning experiences, using a skill-building curriculum and on-site follow-up support provided by Learning Coaches. Continuous improvement processes guided program development and provided summative evaluation information.

SpecialQuest Birth–Five focused on inclusion for children with disabilities ages birth through five (pre-kindergarten) and their families, particularly those in Head Start, along with child care, early intervention/Part C, early childhood special education, family support, and other related programs.

SpecialQuest Birth–Five:

- Supports and expands the SpecialQuest community, including
 - Approximately 500 SpecialQuest Graduate teams across the nation
 - Ten SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams, implementing cross-systems early childhood professional development for inclusion
- Disseminates the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources, through
 - The SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library (English and Spanish)
 - The Web-Based SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library
 - The activities of the SpecialQuest Community of Practice

The SpecialQuest Birth–Five program had three major goal areas. The first was to enhance cross-system professional development capacity by using the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources for early childhood inclusion in the ten selected State Leadership Team states. The second was to support SpecialQuest graduates nationwide to sustain and expand inclusive practices through the support of the SpecialQuest Ambassadors. The third was to expand and sustain the use of the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources at the local, state, and national levels using web-based resources and other networking and dissemination strategies.

SpecialQuest Birth–Five Evaluation

The evaluation of SpecialQuest Birth–Five was based on a Logic Model that was designed to ensure that feedback from diverse stakeholders was received on all core components of the grant. The evaluation was structured to gather data about the Program’s immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes, and to report on the overall implementation and subsequent impact of the activities. The evaluation was also designed to provide information that highlighted challenges and issues identified by the State Leadership Team members, Coaches, Ambassadors, staff, and other relevant members of the SpecialQuest community in order to support staff in making data-based decisions about how best to address challenges as they arose. Finally, the evaluation design was both formative with a significant focus on the process while the program activities were happening (or forming), as well as summative with a focus on outcomes, judging the value and impact of SpecialQuest Birth–Five at the mid-point and end of the activities. This evaluation summary highlights the work of SpecialQuest Birth–Five over the three-year grant.



SpecialQuest has given our program the opportunity and resources to make a positive impact in our community to support inclusion.

State Systems Integration: Supporting Quality Cross-Systems Professional Development

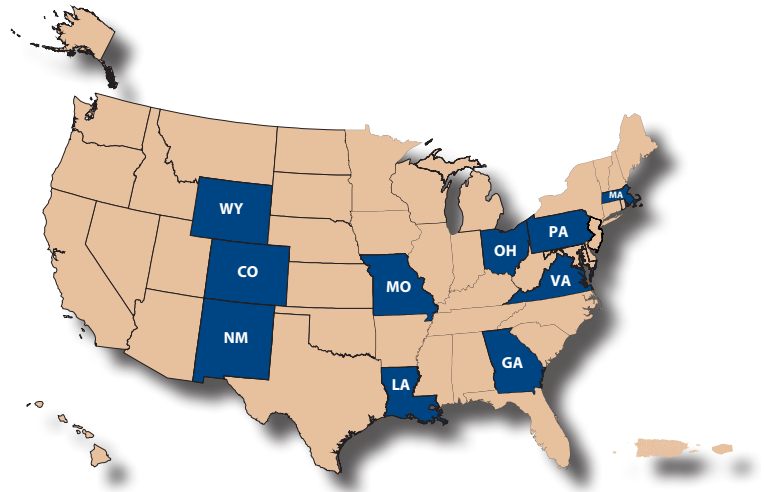
Selection of SpecialQuest States

In December 2007, all 50 states and territories were invited to apply to be a part of the SpecialQuest Birth–Five Program. As a part of the state application process, applicants were required to include individuals on their State Leadership Team representing key administration, policy and professional development roles, as well as individuals familiar with the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources. Applicant teams were required to have representation from Head Start, child care, family leaders, early intervention/Part C, early childhood special education, and Institutions of Higher Education. Teams were also invited to include individuals representing other early childhood state-wide initiatives, including; health, mental health, maternal and child health, child welfare, advocacy organizations, and other key groups that were focused on inclusive practices. Each team identified a SpecialQuest Liaison to be the link between the State Leadership Team and SpecialQuest Birth–Five.

In February 2008, the following states were selected to be a part of the SpecialQuest Birth–Five Program:

- Colorado
- Louisiana
- Missouri
- Ohio
- Virginia
- Georgia
- Massachusetts
- New Mexico
- Pennsylvania
- Wyoming

The SpecialQuest staff assisted each state in identifying two SpecialQuest Graduate Communities, expanding their State Leadership Team membership to include these additional representatives. The intent of adding these communities was multi-faceted, including having them serve as energizers, sounding boards, and perhaps pilots for the ideas generated by the State Leadership Teams.



At the onset of the grant, the State Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (SPIP) was completed in all states to identify their strengths and needs and establish a baseline. The SPIP process focused on 15 specific practices in the area of inclusion that relate to (1) inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families throughout the state, (2) support for families as partners and leaders, (3) integrated service delivery systems, and (4) implementation and sustainability. (Findings highlighted on pages 4-8) The ten SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams used the SPIP process, annually, over the three-year grant period to guide the development and implementation of action plans. The work of each of the State Leadership Teams was unique, and their plans reflect the context and existing infrastructure in their state. The major themes from the action plans were in three broad areas:

1. Supporting cross-sector professional development activities related to enhancing quality inclusive services for children with disabilities birth–five and their families.
2. Using the SpecialQuest approach and materials to promote inclusive policies and practices.
3. Increasing public awareness related to inclusive practices.

All of the SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams are making positive progress toward implementing their action plans.

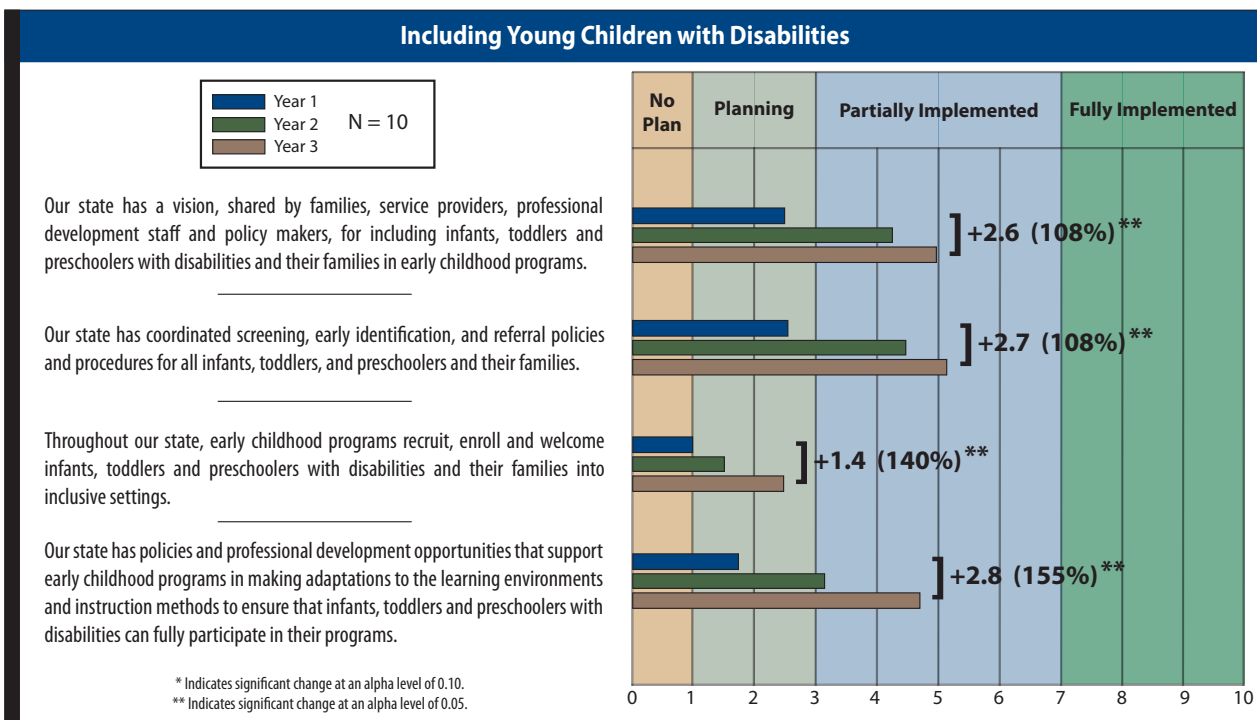


[The work of the State Leadership Team] has added greatly to the resources being disseminated around the state and supported the inclusion efforts for professional development using a regional cross-sector approach.

Including Young Children with Disabilities

The first of four sections of the SPIP tool has a focus on four specific practices in the area of inclusion that relate to identifying and providing inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families in the state. As the figure below illustrates, SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams indicate they were partially implementing three of the four inclusive practices. The difference in average ratings from Year 1 to Year 3 was significant for the four items at an alpha level of 0.05.

The largest increase from Year 1 to Year 3 was 155% on the fourth item: Our state has policies and professional development opportunities that support early childhood programs in making adaptations to the learning environments and instruction methods to ensure that infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities can fully participate in their programs. This is not surprising, given that many of the State Leadership Teams emphasized statewide training on inclusion in their work in Year 3. Overall, all four items indicated significant change from Year 1 to Year 3, and the State Leadership Teams are moving into



partially implementing on three of the four items under this area of including children birth through five with disabilities. Each of the 10 State Leadership Teams developed strong vision statements that served as a guide for their work. Teams increased public awareness regarding early childhood inclusion and their State Leadership Teams through brochures, newsletters, websites, PowerPoint presentations and webinars. These activities helped to advance understanding of inclusion, promote buy in to the state’s vision for inclusion, and provide credibility for the work of the team, demonstrating

The State Leadership Teams explored coordination of screening, early identification and referral across the various systems represented. They identified many strong examples of community early care and education programs welcoming and including young children with disabilities and their families.

The State Leadership Teams worked with early childhood faculty in colleges and universities in order to train new practitioners entering the field of early childhood on inclusion and increase inclusive opportunities in local programs. The State Leadership Teams influenced policies as well as shaped cross-system professional development systems that are designed to promote inclusive practices.

Family Empowerment: Supporting Families as Partners and Leaders

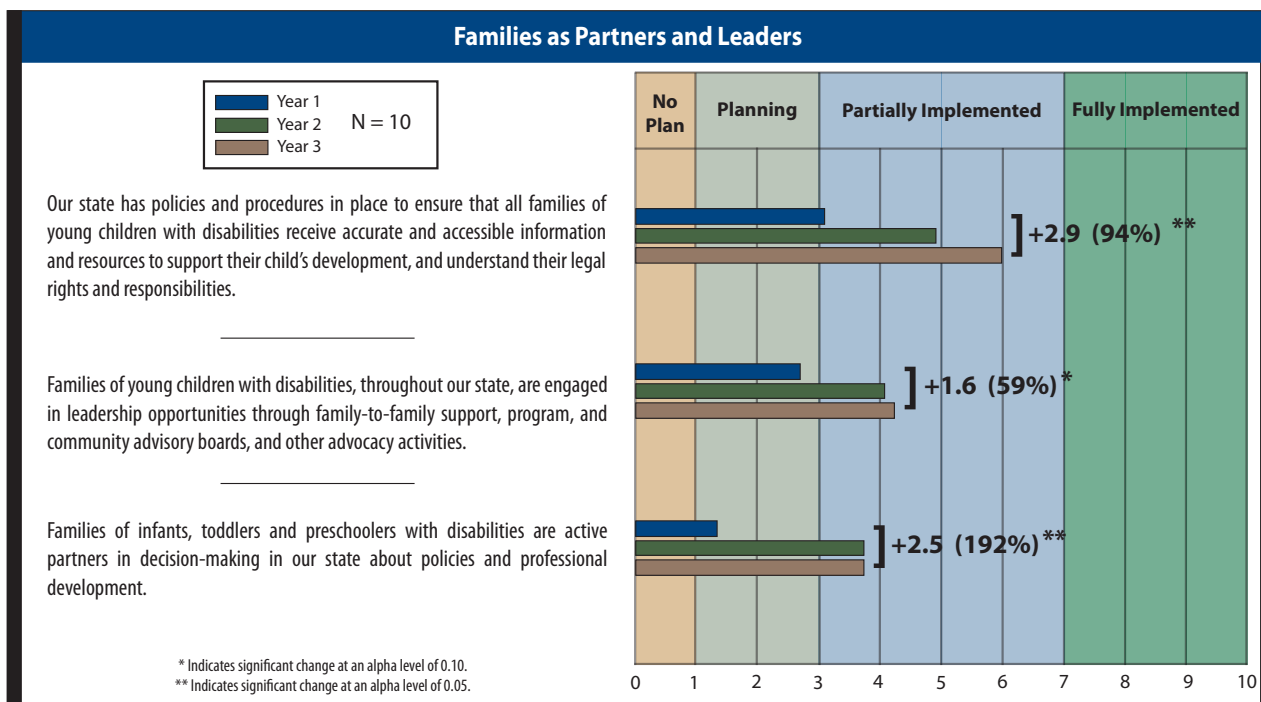


Families of children with disabilities served as important members of the state and community SpecialQuest teams in meetings, trainings, and other activities. The State Leadership Teams promoted family leadership and family-professional partnerships within their states. In each of the 10 State Leadership Teams, families were engaged in a variety of leadership activities, and the teams valued the input, perspectives, and experiences of families. Families brought a unique “real world” perspective, as well as a constant reminder about why the State Leadership Team’s work to support inclusion was important.

The theme of families as partners and leaders was embedded into each of the State Leadership Teams’ action plans. In some states there were specific plans related to family leadership, and in others the content was infused throughout their work. Several of the State Leadership Teams elicited family stories during their meetings or provided family representatives with opportunities to share as standing agenda items at the state and community levels. State Leadership Team members reported that they now advocate for the importance of family involvement in discussions and decision-making on other boards and advisory groups on which they serve in their state.

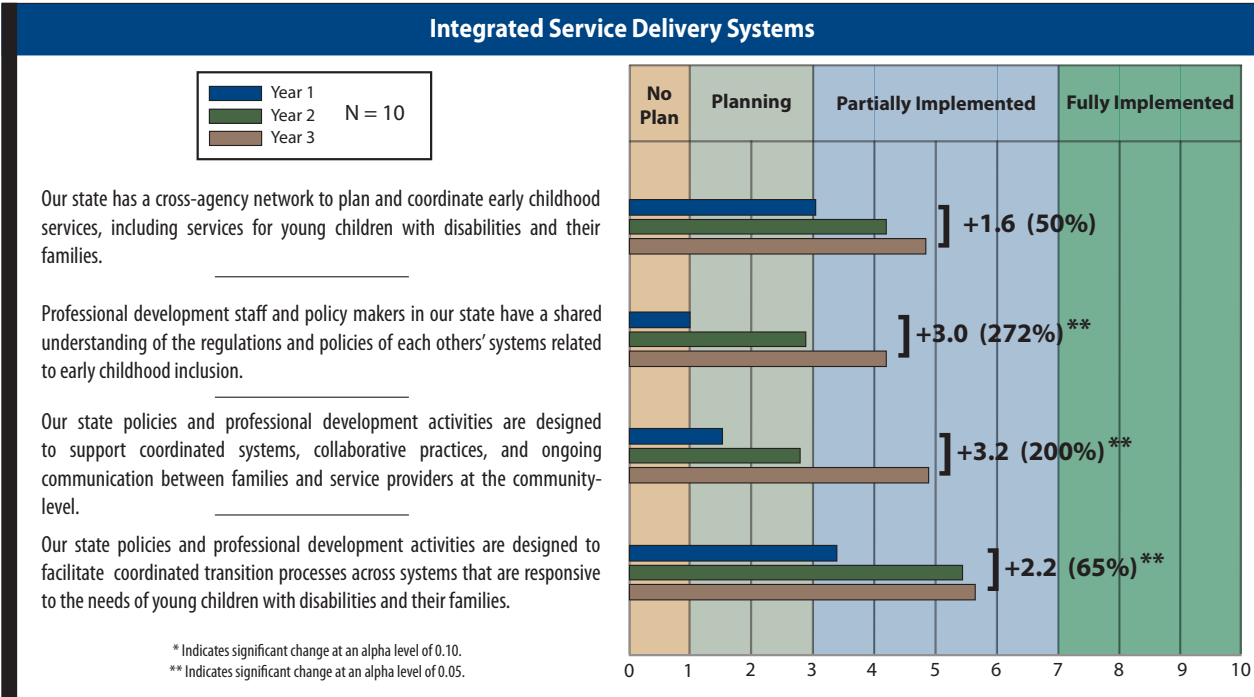
As we continue our work, we have become even more focused on assuring that the family voice is included in all aspects. We have added additional members to the Leadership Team and worked to assure that all trainings involve a family member.

The second of four sections of the SPIP tool has a focus on three specific practices for increasing families’ access to information, resources, and support that allow family members to be leaders for their own families, for other families, and for policy-making activities throughout the state. As the figure below illustrates, SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams indicate they were partially implementing the three practices related to family leadership. The difference in average ratings from Year 1 to Year 3 was significant for two of the three items at an alpha level of 0.05 and for the other at an alpha level of 0.10.



Integrated Service Delivery Systems

The State Leadership Teams were asked on the third of four sections of the SPIP, to discuss and rate the implementation of four practices related to collaboration to effectively serve young children with disabilities. As the figure below illustrates, SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams indicate they were partially implementing the four promising practices related to integrated services. The difference in average ratings from Year 1 to Year 3 was significant for three of the four items at an alpha level of 0.05. The most significant change was in the area of developing of a shared understanding of other agencies' policies and regulations.

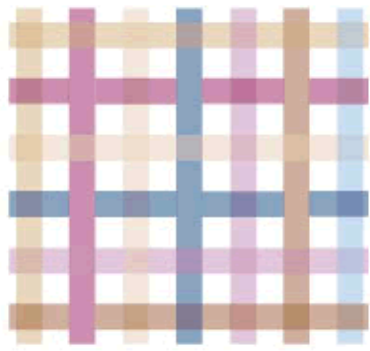


State and Community Teams increased their understanding of each other's laws and regulations. States developed Memoranda of Understanding or Interagency Agreements that clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the various systems in serving young children with disabilities and their families. Other states developed side-by-side comparisons of the laws and regulations for the various systems. States also revised their regulations, standards and other policies to address integration of services to support inclusion.

State Leadership Teams created policy changes and implemented some important new practices in integrating service delivery systems at the state, regional, and community levels. These practices affected services to young children and their families and supported high quality inclusive practices. States modified program or personnel standards that promoted inclusion or required training on inclusion for early childhood staff and administrators. Several states reported embedding inclusion content into both preservice and inservice early childhood training programs, using the SpecialQuest approach and materials. More than half of the states planned and developed regional cross-system professional development teams to address inclusion, representing Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral, early childhood special education, early intervention, and family support.

The SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams had ongoing opportunities for cross-state sharing resulting in cross-fertilization of ideas, sharing of strategies for developing policies or regulations, and joint problem solving. The relationships among the State Leadership Teams created a strong network and support for the SpecialQuest approach across the country.

Implementation of the SpecialQuest Approach and Materials



*SpecialQuest Approach
Weaving Image*

The State Leadership Teams have worked to implement and sustain the SpecialQuest approach to professional development to promote inclusive practices for young children with disabilities and their families. The participation of all ten states in the SpecialQuest Intensive in July 2009, and in SpecialQuest Training of Trainer events in 2009 and 2010 helped to solidify the understanding of the SpecialQuest approach and spread the word about the SpecialQuest materials.

SpecialQuest Birth-Five provided support to the SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams on the use of the SpecialQuest approach and materials through 13 SpecialQuest Intensive and State Training of Trainer events, which directly impacted the spread of SpecialQuest throughout the 10 State Leadership Team states. All of the State Leadership Teams conducted SpecialQuest Training of Trainers (TOT) or SpecialQuest Intensives and provided follow up to the over 500 participants.

Participants were expected to:

- Learn about SpecialQuest Birth-Five;
- Explore the contents and structure of the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library;
- Become able to effectively plan and facilitate professional development on inclusion using the SpecialQuest approach and materials;
- Develop action plans and make personal commitments for how they will apply their learning to professional development activities; and
- Become prepared to support and sustain statewide cross-system professional development for inclusion with the SpecialQuest approach and materials.

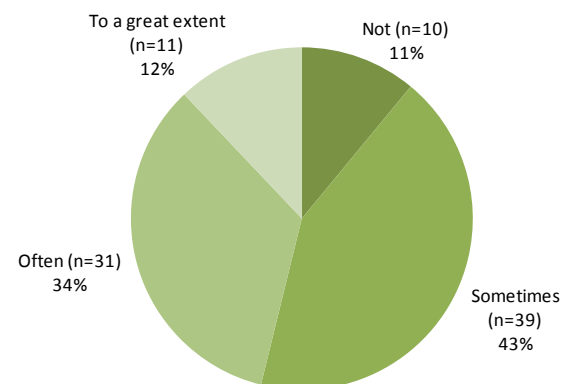
There was strong indication that the Training of Trainer events increased knowledge and skills in using the SpecialQuest approach and SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library.

Faculty from colleges and universities were included in each of the state SpecialQuest Training of Trainers events. As a result of the experience, many of the states revised their community college coursework to include SpecialQuest content on inclusion through the use of the materials. In three of the states, a common set of early childhood courses was conducted in the community colleges, and SpecialQuest was embedded in their curricula. In addition, several of the states noted that faculty are using families as co-presenters in their courses. The impact of SpecialQuest on the preservice training system has great potential, so that new early childhood professionals are entering the field with knowledge and skills in serving children with disabilities and their families in early childhood settings.

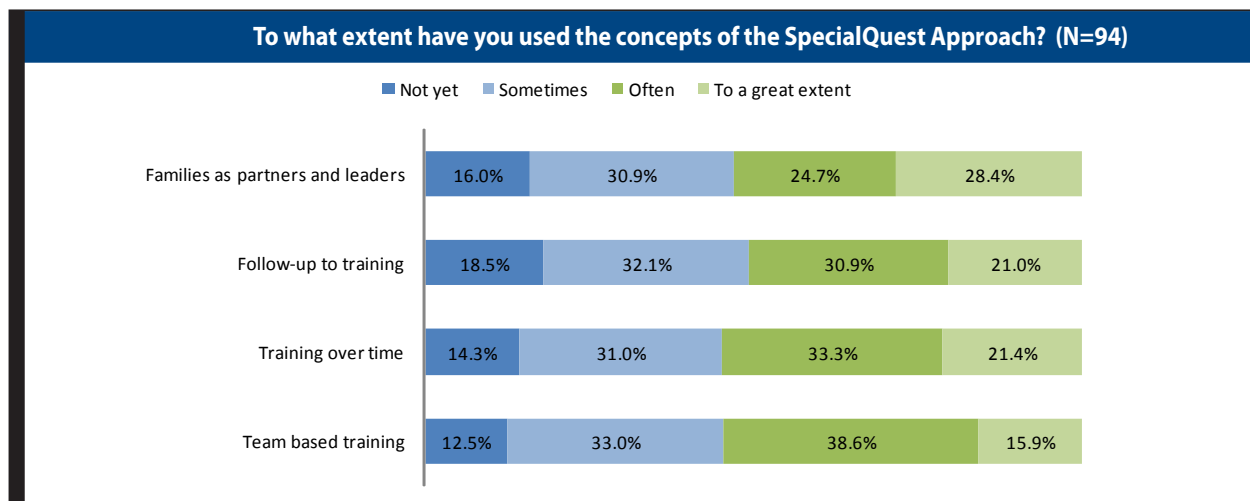
STATE LEADERSHIP TEAM QUESTIONNAIRE

In July 2010, all State Leadership Team members were asked to complete a questionnaire in order to gather information about their experiences, accomplishments and challenges in the work of their State Leadership Teams to support inclusion in their states. Participants were asked to what extent they have used the SpecialQuest materials. As seen in the chart below, over 89% of all respondents have used the materials at some point. Additionally, 46% of respondents report using the materials often or to a great extent.

To what extent have you used the SpecialQuest materials? (N=91)

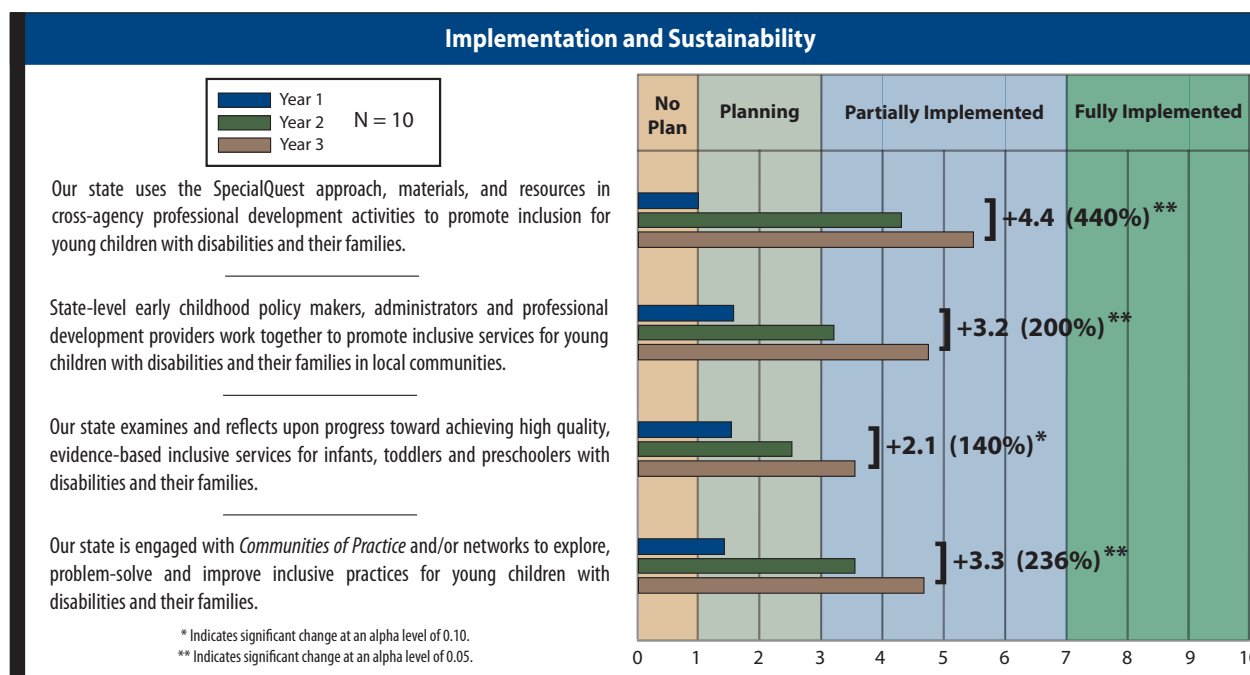


In addition to sharing details on the SpecialQuest materials, participants were asked to what extent they have used the concepts of the SpecialQuest approach. The question identified four specific areas of focus: team-based training, training over time, follow-up to training, and families as partners and leaders. Participants indicated to what extent they are using each of the four concepts from the SpecialQuest approach. Overall, across all four concepts, approximately 85% of participants indicated that they have used the concept at least sometimes, if not more frequently. Based on the limited time to implement, perhaps not surprisingly, participants indicated the least amount of change related to the use of “follow-up to training content.”



IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The State Leadership Teams were asked on the fourth and final section of the SPIP, to discuss and rate the implementation of four practices related to the implementation and sustainability of SpecialQuest in their states. As the figure below illustrates, SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams indicate they were partially implementing the four practices related to implementation and sustainability. The difference in average ratings from Year 1 to Year 3 was significant for all three of the four items at an alpha level of 0.05 and for the other item at an alpha level of 0.10.



State Leadership Community Teams

Each of the ten selected State Leadership Teams identified two SpecialQuest Community Teams (graduates of SpecialQuest) to participate as members of the team. The involvement of these communities provided examples of how communities used SpecialQuest to implement inclusive practices, and served as energizers, sounding boards, and pilots for the ideas generated by the State Leadership Team. They shared inclusion challenges and successes from their experiences. Team membership was expanded to include additional representatives to address services for children with disabilities from birth through age five. These Community Teams participated in the State Leadership Team.

Community Team Questionnaire

In August 2010, all SpecialQuest Community Team members were asked to complete a questionnaire in order to gather information about their experiences, accomplishments and challenges in the work of their SpecialQuest Community Team to support inclusion in their communities.

Participants were asked to reflect on the impact of having their SpecialQuest Community Team on the State Leadership Team. Respondents indicated that the Community Team was:

- Proud of the work they have been doing to support inclusion.
- Reinvigorated by the work being done at the state level.
- Well informed about inclusion across the state and nation.
- Increasing networking and partnerships across the state.

Participants were asked to share their highlights and accomplishments that have occurred in their communities around inclusion as a result of their work of with SpecialQuest.

By getting SpecialQuest embedded in all of the local community college early childhood classes, inclusion has become an expectation for these graduates rather than the exception. We connected a wide range of providers around this common goal of improving inclusive practices in our communities. We have utilized the resources and expertise of the network to provide professional development to the early childhood community as a whole. We wrote continued professional development goals using SpecialQuest as the core, into grants that will provide CEUs. We have made a commitment to sustain the 'Quest' in our community.

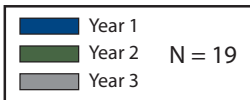
Our team completed a family needs assessment with over 300 families providing input from a diverse representation of the community. In addition, our team presented a community viewing of one of the SpecialQuest videos. This event was attended by educators and parents—many of whom are from outside of our geographical area.

Cooperative relationships and partnerships among Local Education Agencies. Community agencies such as health and social services, child care centers, parish government and churches has resulted in an Annual Transition Fair around inclusion of individuals with disabilities birth-adulthood.

Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP)

A similar strategy to the SPIP process was used with the 21 selected SpecialQuest State Leadership Team Communities who completed the CPIP process annually. The CPIP was developed to support SpecialQuest graduate programs in understanding the current context in which services were delivered to young children with disabilities and their families in their communities. See the chart on the following page for a summary of the Year 1 through 3 ratings on the CPIP for 19 of the 21 SpecialQuest State Leadership Team Communities. The ratings indicate they were partially implementing 14 of 15 indicators of inclusive practices listed on the CPIP and had moved into full implementation around a coordinated transition process. There was significant change indicated on all 15 items at an alpha level of 0.05. Given that a major focus of the SpecialQuest Birth–Five Grant over the past three years was to infuse the SpecialQuest approach and materials across the state, it is not surprising that the greatest change was on the item: “Our community uses the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources to promote inclusion for young children with disabilities and their families.”

Community Perceptions of Inclusion - Implementation Ratings State Leadership Team Graduate Communities - Year 1-3 Comparison



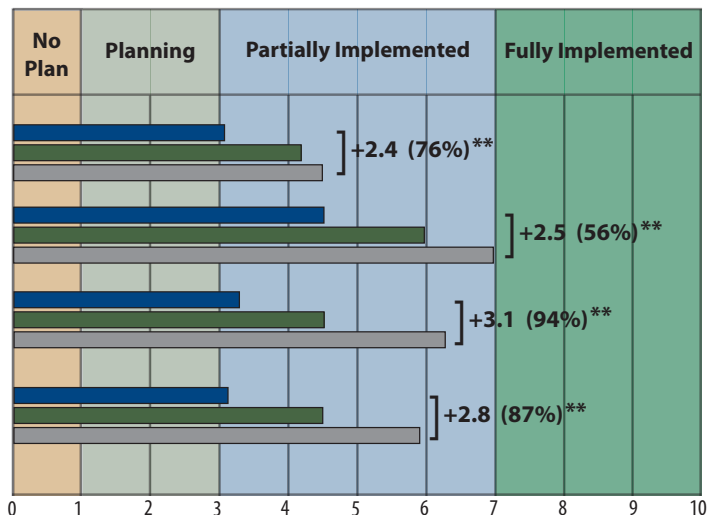
Including Children Birth-Five with Disabilities

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.

Our community has coordinated screening, early identification, and referral procedures for all infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their families.

Our community recruits, enrolls and welcomes infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities and their families into inclusive early childhood programs.

Early childhood programs in our community make adaptation to the learning environment and instruction methods to ensure that infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities can fully participate in their programs.

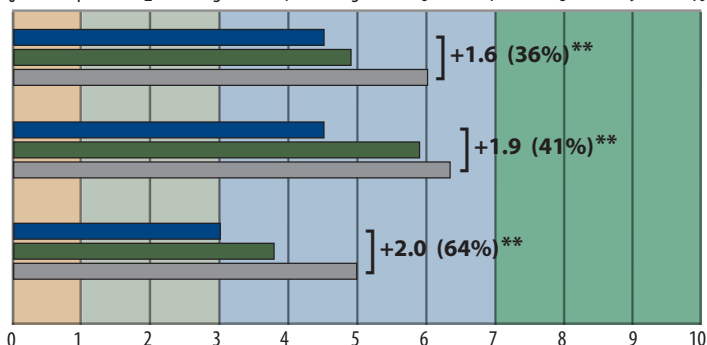


Families as Partners and Leaders

All families of young children with disabilities in our community receive information and resources to support their child's development, and understand their legal rights and responsibilities.

All families of infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities in our community are active partners in decision-making about their child, based on their priorities and preferences.

Families of young children with disabilities in our community are engaged in leadership opportunities through family-to-family support, program and community advisory boards, and other advocacy activities.



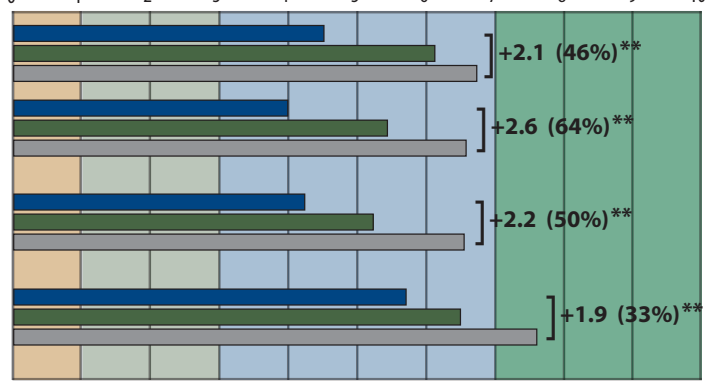
Integrated Service Delivery Systems

Our community has a cross-agency network to plan and coordinate early childhood services, including services for young children with disabilities and their families.

Our community service providers have a shared understanding of each others' roles and responsibilities.

For children and families jointly served, our community has coordinated systems, collaborative practices, and strategies to support ongoing communication between families and service providers.

Our community has a coordinated transition process across systems for young children with disabilities and their families.



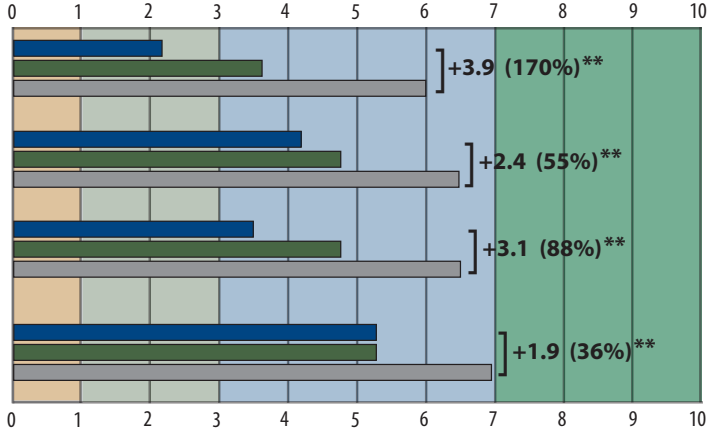
Implementation and Sustainability

Our community uses the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources to promote inclusion for young children with disabilities and their families.

Early childhood administrators in our community work together to support staff to promote inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families.

Our community examines and reflects upon progress toward achieving our plans in order to enhance the quality of inclusive services for infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities and their families.

Our community networks with others to share information, provide mutual support, and promote inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families.



* Indicates significant change at an alpha level of 0.10. ** Indicates significant change at an alpha level of 0.05.

Sustaining the Use of the SpecialQuest Approach and Materials

SpecialQuest Ambassadors are graduates from the first and second phase of SpecialQuest who are leaders and advocates for the inclusion of children with disabilities and their families, and are continuing the 'Quest' in and beyond their communities. In 2008, 70 Ambassadors representing diverse roles, cultures, and geographical locations were recruited to work with SpecialQuest Birth–Five to build a nationwide network of leaders and advocates. They serve as the link between SpecialQuest Birth–Five and the 500 graduate communities.

Each of the ten State Leadership Team states had one or more Ambassadors. In some states, the Ambassador was a member of the State Leadership Team. Ambassadors provided perspectives on the impact of SpecialQuest in local communities. They were also able to share information on other SpecialQuest graduate communities that they contacted on a regular basis. Some of the State Leadership Teams had a standing agenda item for SpecialQuest Ambassador reports.



The privilege of serving as an Ambassador has raised my level of awareness of the important work that has been done to implement inclusive practices for children with disabilities and their families, as well as how much more needs to be done.

Contacting Graduate Programs

Ambassadors were assigned between five and ten of the nearly 500 SpecialQuest graduate programs and were encouraged to have an ongoing conversation with these programs, as well as share information about the latest SpecialQuest resources and materials available. Ambassadors indicated that they were able to meaningfully connect with over 66% of the SpecialQuest graduate programs nationwide in 2010. Over the course of the three years, it became more and more difficult to reach graduate programs due to staff turnover, defunding, or organizational change. However, when Ambassadors were able to connect with the programs, many seemed interested in continuing to expand their use of the materials or learning about the SpecialQuest resources and incorporating the tools into their work.

Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP)

The Ambassadors also used the CPIP process in their "home" communities to understand the current context in which services are delivered to young children with disabilities and their families in their community. The Ambassadors each facilitated this annual process for the third time in 2010.

As depicted in the chart on the next page, SpecialQuest Ambassador communities report significant change and were partially implementing all of the 15 promising practices. The communities have even begun to move into full implementation on two of the items in the area of integrated service delivery systems. It should be noted that the most significant change was on the item related to the community using the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources to promote inclusion for young children with disabilities and their families. Considering this is a primary focus for the work of the Ambassadors, it is encouraging to see this significant increase in the rating from Year 1 to Year 3.

Community Perceptions of Inclusion - Implementation Ratings SpecialQuest Ambassador Communities - Year 1-3 Comparison



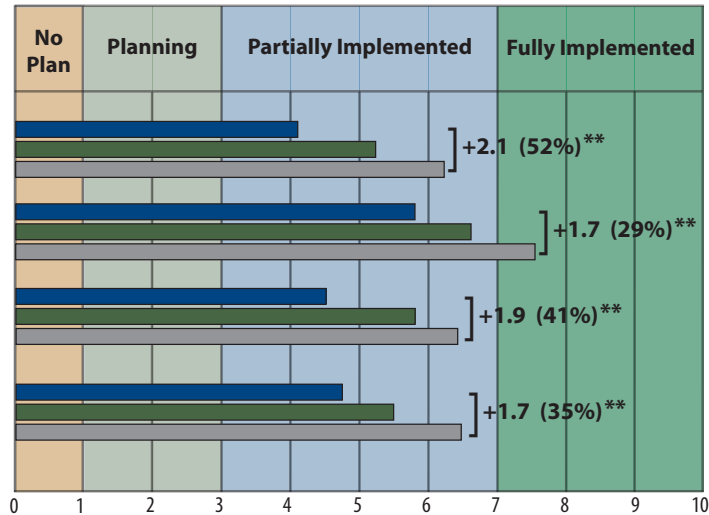
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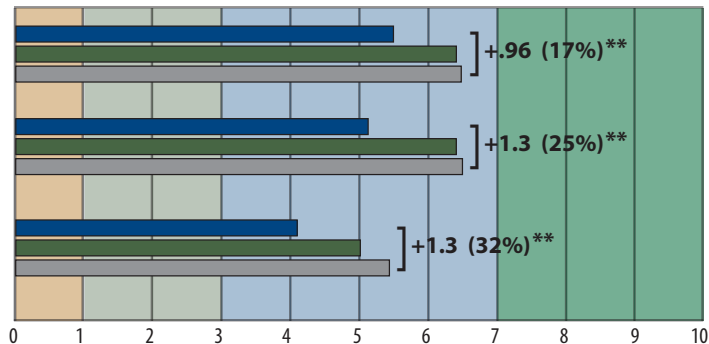


Families as Partners and Leaders

All families of young children with disabilities in our community receive information and resources to support their child's development, and understand their legal rights and responsibilities.

All families of infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities in our community are active partners in decision-making about their child, based on their priorities and preferences.

Families of young children with disabilities in our community are engaged in leadership opportunities through family-to-family support, program and community advisory boards, and other advocacy activities.



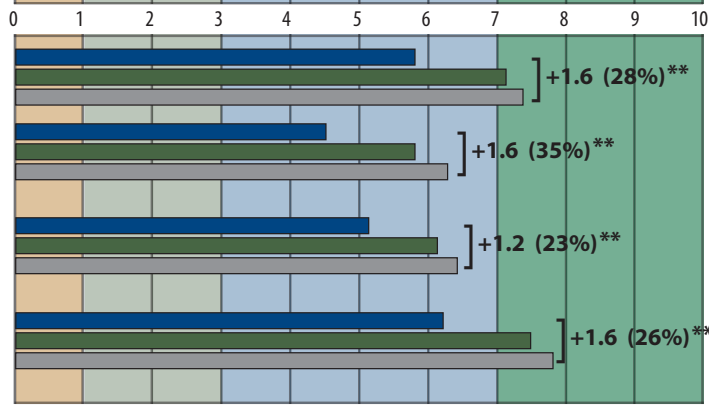
Integrated Service Delivery Systems

Our community has a cross-agency network to plan and coordinate early childhood services, including services for young children with disabilities and their families.

Our community service providers have a shared understanding of each others' roles and responsibilities.

For children and families jointly served, our community has coordinated systems, collaborative practices, and strategies to support ongoing communication between families and service providers.

Our community has a coordinated transition process across systems for young children with disabilities and their families.



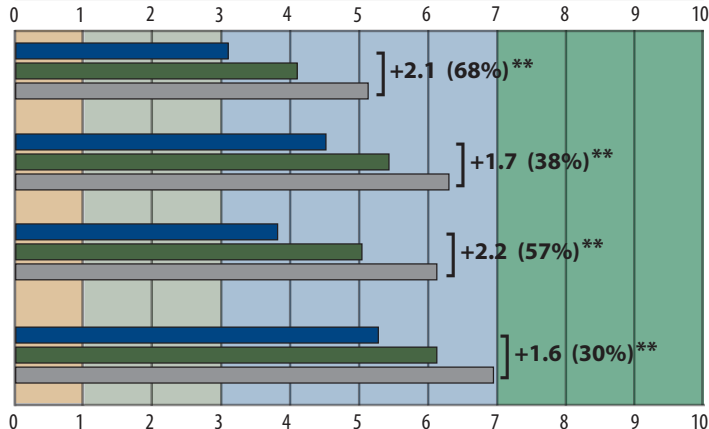
Implementation and Sustainability

Our community uses the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources to promote inclusion for young children with disabilities and their families.

Early childhood administrators in our community work together to support staff to promote inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families.

Our community examines and reflects upon progress toward achieving our plans in order to enhance the quality of inclusive services for infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities and their families.

Our community networks with others to share information, provide mutual support, and promote inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families.



* Indicates significant change at an alpha level of 0.10. ** Indicates significant change at an alpha level of 0.05.

Sustaining the Use of the SpecialQuest Approach and Materials

An overall goal of SpecialQuest Birth–Five is to promote and sustain the use of the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources at the local, state, and national levels. Activities related to communications, technology, and materials development through (a) increasing awareness, (b) disseminating materials and resources, and (c) supporting the use of the SpecialQuest materials and approach across the broader SpecialQuest community.

SPECIALQUEST IMPACT *(See graph on page 13)*

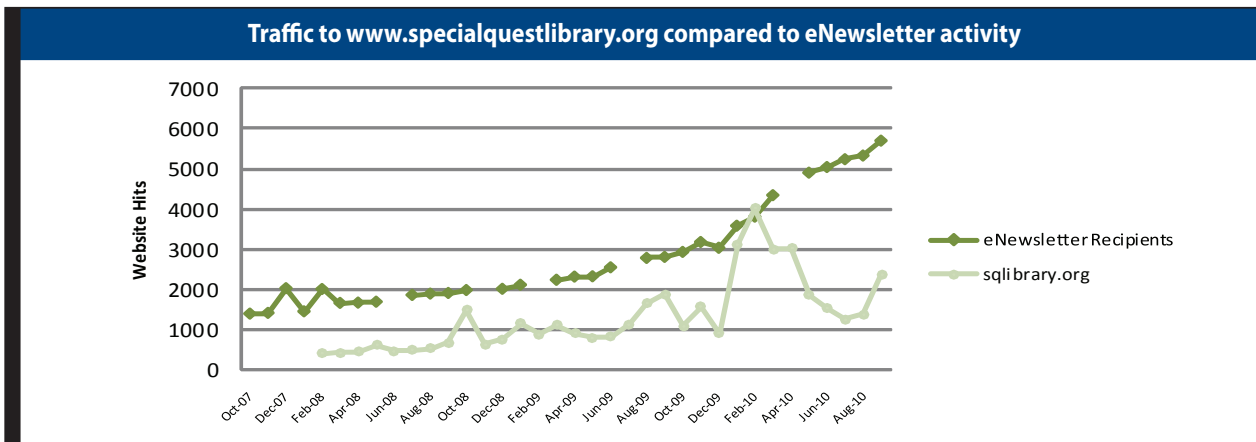
SpecialQuest had an exponential impact over time on individuals supporting the inclusion of young children with disabilities and their families as illustrated in the graphic on page 13. SpecialQuest began in 1998 by training 241 teams from Early Head Start/Migrant Seasonal Head Start Programs and their community partners, over five years. In 2002, the second five-year phase of SpecialQuest training began with an additional 238 Early Head Start/Migrant Seasonal Head Start teams being trained. In 2007, the third phase of SpecialQuest began and focused on the implementation of statewide high quality cross-systems professional development through the use of the SpecialQuest approach and materials.

Throughout the course of SpecialQuest, participants were supported by SpecialQuest Staff and Consultants on many levels through coaching, periodic contact from Ambassadors, or additional training. SpecialQuest supported participants and consultants to expand and sustain the use of the SpecialQuest approach and materials. The magnitude and diversity of the impact of this sharing is evident in the graph in the blue band. Although the program has been able to measure the reach to well over 200,000 individuals, there has been a large spread of effect to many other individuals that has not been feasible to collect. We know many more programs, communities, and states across the nation have been impacted, and many more yet could benefit from using the SpecialQuest approach and materials to support inclusion for all children.

SPECIALQUEST WEBSITES

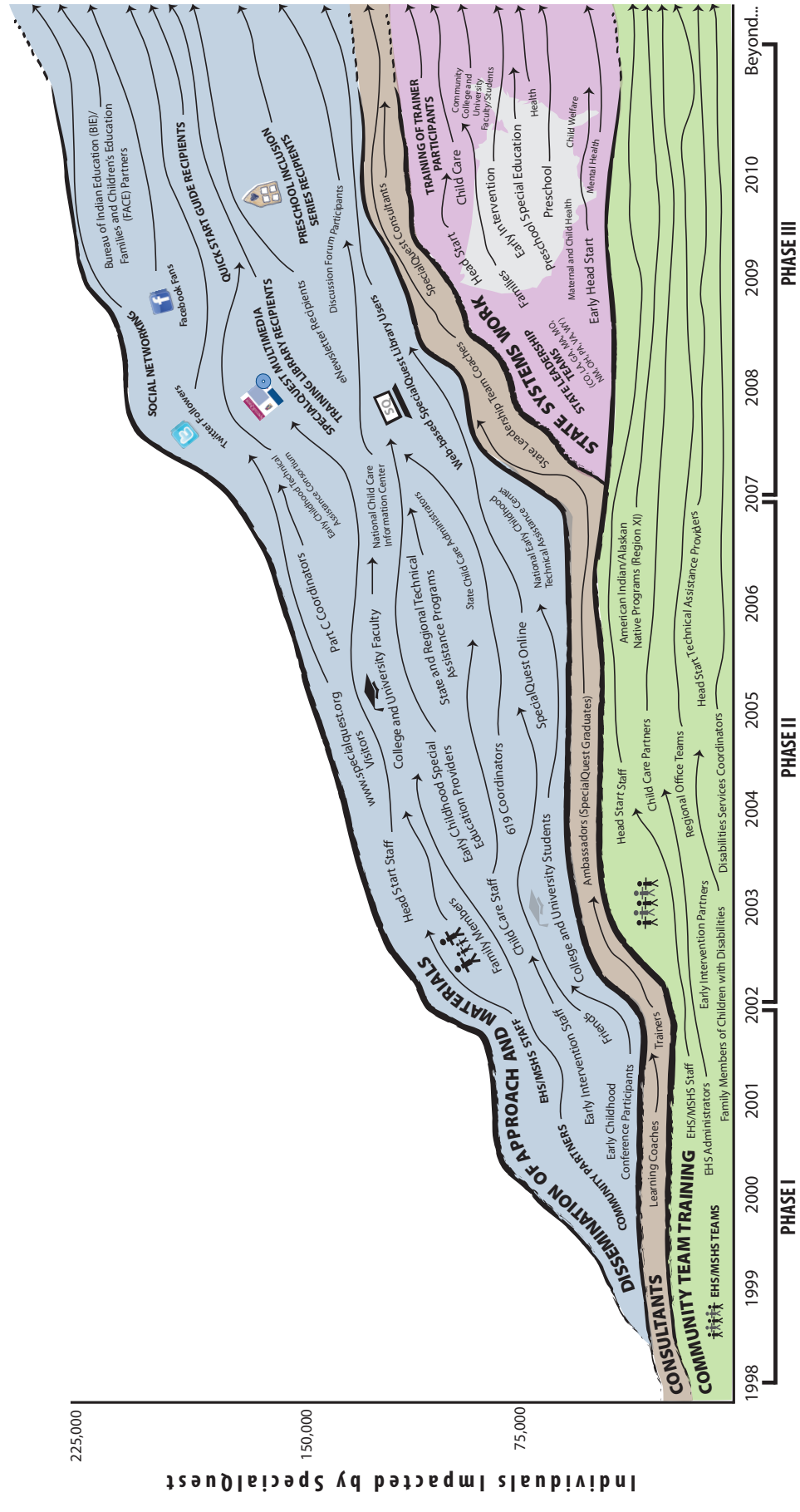
The SpecialQuest websites were the most significant formats used to ensure that broad audiences were aware of the SpecialQuest materials and approach. Specifically, SpecialQuest Birth–Five maintained two websites: the main website, www.specialquest.org, and the Web-based SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library website, www.specialquestlibrary.org. The library website was developed as the central location and primary mechanism for accessing the SpecialQuest training materials, as well as information about the SpecialQuest approach and support for designing and implementing professional development activities. Over the length of the grant, 22,136 unique visitors came to the site, representing 42,390 total visits with a total of 230,882 page views.

As the graph below illustrates, there was a steady increase in traffic to the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library website between February 2008 and September 2010. Some of the trends and spikes on this graph appear to correlate to the use of the eNewsletter supporting individuals to visit the site, as well as announcements about the Preschool Inclusion Series, the inclusion blog, and news of the final deadline for ordering sets of the materials.



SPECIALQUEST IMPACT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSION:

Impact on Individuals Supporting the Inclusion of Young Children with Disabilities and their Families



EXPAND AND SUSTAIN

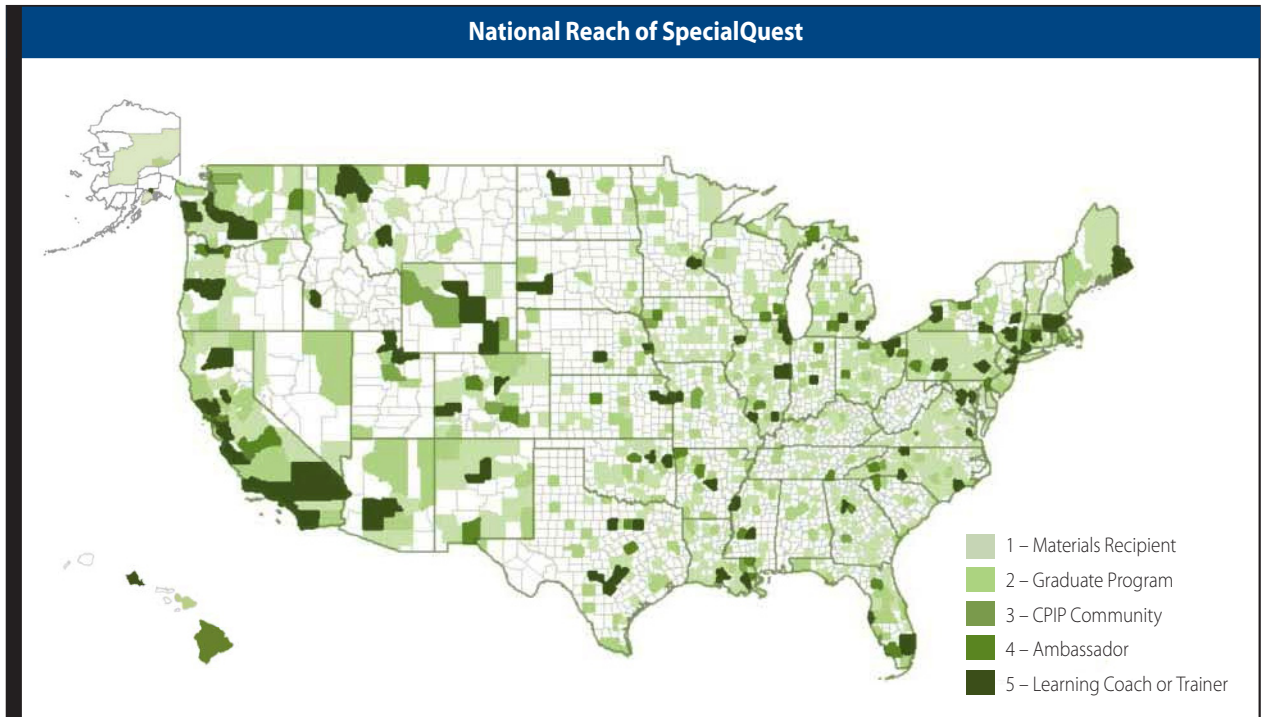
NATIONAL REACH OF SPECIALQUEST

The graphic below illustrates both the extent to which the SpecialQuest materials were distributed across the nation, as well as the additive impact of individual contact with the SpecialQuest program over the past 13 years. The map is split into states and then county boundaries. A county is shaded if an individual was or multiple individuals were touched by SpecialQuest. The shading reflects the intensity of knowledge about SpecialQuest, with the darkest shading indicating the deepest level of knowledge present in a county.

A SpecialQuest Coach or Trainer was present in a county shaded with the darkest green. These individuals were consultants for SpecialQuest and worked with early childhood professionals to use the SpecialQuest approach and materials. The second darkest level of shading indicates that a SpecialQuest Ambassador was present within the county. Ambassadors were consultants who worked with the SpecialQuest graduate programs and communities to continue to support inclusion.

The third level of shading indicates that a graduate community using the Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices (CPIP) was present in this county. These communities used the CPIP process to evaluate their progress annually toward implementing promising practices that support inclusion. The fourth level of shading indicates that the county contained a SpecialQuest graduate program. These 451 Early Head Start programs participated in four years of SpecialQuest training. The lightest level of shading indicates that the county contained a recipient(s) of the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library. These individuals have ordered and received a set of the SpecialQuest materials and, in many cases, used the resources to support inclusion in their programs, communities and states.

As you can see in the map, the SpecialQuest program had a broad reach across the nation in terms of sharing the SpecialQuest materials. Of a possible 3,109 counties, SpecialQuest reached at least one individual in 1,047 of these counties across the nation. In particular, the ten State Leadership Team states have a high concentration of contact across the state in terms of individuals who have the materials, as well as a strong experience with the materials. While there are still many areas yet to be touched by SpecialQuest, it is encouraging that the SpecialQuest materials have reached over 34% of the counties in the United States.



NETWORKING

SpecialQuest utilized various networking approaches and tools to reach individuals with an interest in early childhood inclusion. Social networking, conference presentations, and the e-Newsletter were the primary strategies employed.

Social Networking

Social networking strategies included Facebook, Twitter, discussion forums, LinkedIn, and MySpace. SpecialQuest currently has over 477 fans through Facebook, while over 825 individuals are following the program through Twitter. Twenty discussion forums have been hosted including during this grant period, with 261 posts made across the topics. All of these strategies have helped to promote networking among the SpecialQuest Birth–Five community and facilitate the sharing of valuable resources.

Conference Presentations

SpecialQuest Birth–Five staff were active in state, regional, and national conferences, such as the National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, Head Start Association Conferences, and the Early Head Start Orientations. Through this mechanism, SpecialQuest Birth–Five reached over 4,000 additional people and increased awareness about SpecialQuest resources.

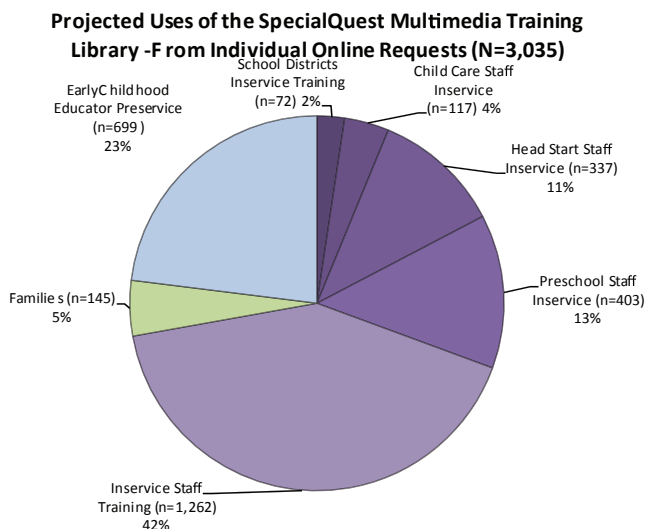
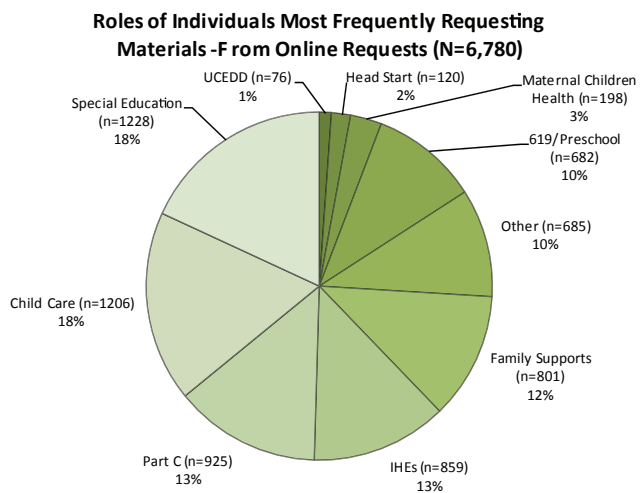
eNewsletters

eNewsletters were developed and sent out monthly, starting in March 2008. As of the end of September 2010, nearly 5,700 individuals subscribed to the newsletter. The newsletter linked individuals to SpecialQuest resources and networking opportunities.

Individuals receiving the DVD/CD sets with Quick Start Guides were asked how they intended to use the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library material. The most frequently mentioned usages are illustrated in the graph to the left, with in-service professional development accounting for nearly two-thirds of the usage and pre-service coursework in community colleges and universities representing an additional 18%.

DISSEMINATING MATERIALS

Much effort was made to disseminate SpecialQuest materials throughout the three years. Dissemination activities included both the shipment of the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training DVD/CD Edition Including Preschool Inclusion Series, as well as communications that promoted the Web-based SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library and activities of SpecialQuest Birth–Five. Over the three years of the grant, a total of 8,641 sets of the Library were disseminated across the country.



Individuals who received the DVD/CD sets with Quick Start Guides were asked how they intended to use the SpecialQuest Multimedia Training Library materials. The most frequently mentioned usages are illustrated in the graph below, with in-service professional development accounting for 72% of the usage and pre-service coursework in community colleges and universities representing 23%.

SpecialQuest Birth–Five Evaluation Conclusion

At the end of the three-year grant period of the SpecialQuest Birth–Five: Head Start/Hilton Foundation Training Program, the data suggest that the program has had significant impacts on policies, professional development, and inclusive practices for young children with disabilities and their families throughout the country.

- The ten SpecialQuest State Leadership Teams have implemented action plans, documented changes in inclusive practices, and developed integrated state and community cross-system professional development for inclusion for young children with disabilities and their families.
 - The State Leadership Teams are active, effective, enthusiastic groups representing diverse systems involved with inclusive services to young children with disabilities and their families. The teams are committed to continuing their work to support inclusive practices within their states.
 - The State Leadership Teams and Community Teams have made progress in planning and implementing inclusive practices as documented in the SPIP and CPIP processes.
 - Families are valued as key members of the state and community SpecialQuest teams, providing input and perspectives that guide the development of policies, professional development, and practices.
 - The State Leadership Teams have changed how professional development is provided for both preservice and inservice education. They are designing relationship- and team-based, cross-system professional development, conducted over time, with follow-up, including families as trainers and participants.
 - The State Leadership Teams have raised awareness of the importance and benefits of inclusion as well as the availability of SpecialQuest materials and resources to support inclusion.
 - The State Leadership Team work has shown the importance of joining state and community efforts to implement and expand capacity for inclusion.
- SpecialQuest Ambassadors are connecting with SpecialQuest Graduates nationwide to share information on SpecialQuest resources. They have implemented inclusive practices in their own communities.
 - Ambassadors have continued connections with 66% of the nearly 500 SpecialQuest graduate communities.
 - The SpecialQuest Ambassadors continued commitment to inclusion has expanded beyond Early Head Start programs into the larger birth through five community.
 - The SpecialQuest Ambassadors have documented significant progress in implementing inclusive practices in their communities through the Community Perceptions of Inclusive Practices process.
- SpecialQuest Birth–Five accomplished and exceeded the goal to expand and sustain the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources at the local, state, and national levels.
 - The SpecialQuest approach and materials have been widely disseminated across the country.
 - The use of printed materials, the SpecialQuest website, Internet, and networking strategies has provided information and resources on the SpecialQuest approach and materials to thousands of individuals across the country.
 - New resources have been developed that augment the use of the SpecialQuest approach and materials.
 - The expanding awareness and enthusiastic use of the SpecialQuest approach and materials by faculty in colleges and universities is impacting people coming into the field of early childhood.



The momentum and progress of the state and community teams in implementation of inclusive services for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities and their families continues to grow. While the need still exists for developing a skilled workforce to effectively care for all young children, the use of the SpecialQuest approach, materials, and resources holds promise for promoting effective approaches to professional development, improving inclusive practices, and ultimately improving the quality of early childhood services for all children.