

# A submission to the Day of General Discussion (DGD) on the right to education for persons with disabilities <sup>[1]</sup>

Policy brief No.2

**Source:** Inclusive Early Childhood Service System

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## AVAILABILITY

Brief No.2 available in English <sup>[2]</sup> and French <sup>[3]</sup>

## Introduction:

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) identifies the right of parents to have state funded facilities for the purpose of assisting parents in their child rearing responsibilities (Article 18, s. 2). The CRC further states that rights set out in the convention should be delivered without discrimination including on the grounds of disability (Article 2, s. 1). In addition, Goal 1 of the Education for All Declaration (2000) calls for expanding early childhood care and education for all children. Based on these international rights-defining protocols, we suggest that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2007) should be interpreted to include young children with disabilities.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities clearly identifies the right of all children to "access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live"(A.24, s.2.b). This right to inclusive education does not make any reference to early childhood, leaving out this critical time in life for education and development.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) includes child care, nursery or preschool programs, as well as family support and developmental programs. The fact that the right to early childhood education and care has not been specifically referenced in the CRPD should not preclude the interpretation that young children with disabilities also have a right to inclusive, quality and free early childhood education and care in their community.

We believe that the early childhood education and care sector has a contribution to make in enacting the right to inclusive ECEC in three ways. First, education begins in early childhood and having education and care opportunities supports children at a critical time in their development. Second, the early childhood education and care sector are more effective than schools at connecting family support, community development, and child development as integrated and equally important outcomes of inclusive practice. Third, parents of young children with disabilities also need to be supported in their child rearing responsibilities. The ECEC sector, therefore, has the opportunity to embed inclusive values and support healthy interpretations of inclusive practice that children and their families can carry into school.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** special needs <sup>[5]</sup>

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## Links

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