

CA-LEND Leadership Project 2022

Strengthening the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Process through Qualitative Research

Project Team

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Abstract

Preschool teachers and researchers alike identify early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) as the current most effective response to addressing challenging behaviors in children. Since preschool children, particularly boys and African-American boys, are suspended and expelled at twice the rate of school-age children, ECMHC is potentially a tool to improve the preschool experiences of children and teachers and a pathway to greater equity for young children of color. For this project, participants conducted a series of qualitative interviews with preschool teachers about their experiences with challenging behaviors and the kind of support they would like in order to improve their practice. The purpose of the interviews was to become familiar with teacher attitudes and challenges, and thereby strengthen the likelihood of a successful partnership between teachers and consultants. The product was the interview transcripts, which were used to identify preliminary themes which should inform the ECMHC process for LEND scholars.

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