



# Summary Report for the 2017 National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute

Summer 2017

The National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute has become one of the premier educational opportunities for anyone involved in the care and education of young children with special needs in inclusive settings. For 16 years, the Institute has drawn people from around the nation and from foreign countries to Chapel Hill:

- to learn about the latest research findings, models, and resources to guide inclusive policy, professional development and practice;
- to develop collaborative relationships and cross-agency systems to support early childhood inclusion;
- to have the opportunity to meet, learn from, and problem solve with peers.

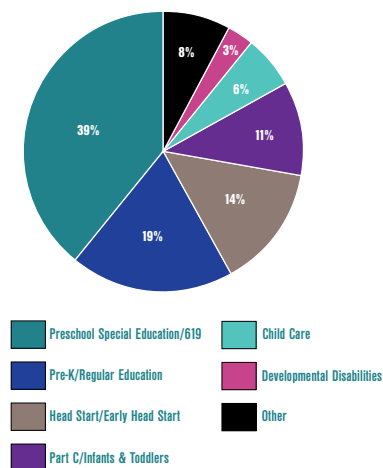
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute is the major sponsor and organizer of the Inclusion Institute.



**I**t started with stories and ended with stories ... stories of partnerships, stories of challenges, stories of success, and stories of the journey that is inclusion. Throughout the Institute we heard participants tell the story about what touched them, what they learned, and what they are going to do next. Invariably it led back to listening and learning from each other, knowing that everyone's story and voice mattered, and that we have so much to offer one another.

Your feedback illustrates the impact of the three days of the conference from the beginning keynote and plenaries that launched the 2017 theme of *Trusting Partnerships in a Time of Change* through the reflection sessions at the close of the Institute. Motivation, passion, and ideas for moving forward together resonated throughout the Institute.

**Figure 1.**  
**Percentage of Participants Representing**  
**One of Seven Sectors**



## Program

The Institute included multiple opportunities for learning and sharing including:

- ◆ 4 pre-institute, ½-day workshops
- ◆ 1 keynote
- ◆ 2 plenaries
- ◆ 11 reflection sessions (at the beginning and the end of the Institute)
- ◆ 53 concurrent sessions

Session breaks provided opportunities to extend conversations and networking.

The following quotes begin to tell the story of this year’s conference:

*“Passion for early childhood inclusion, motivation to learn new ideas and concepts. . . I left the Institute truly motivated!”*

*“It was really great to be able to talk with people in the field from all over the country. Hearing mothers and their children share their stories was very moving. In addition, having time to meet with those individuals after their presentation was a humbling experience. Thank you.”*

The Institute also broke boundaries this year in an effort to meet the needs of a larger audience. The keynote address and the federal and national panel were livestreamed to provide those on the waiting list an opportunity to share in this experience. In addition, these sessions are available online to share the message of inclusion, and the link to them has been shared with over 75,000 people through the FPG listserv as well as with social media audiences.

## Participants

Reaching capacity in record speed, the Institute sold out in a matter of weeks. We were pleased that the Institute again achieved a balance of participants representing all of those who work together for inclusion (See Figures 1 & 2). This



provided the opportunity for those representing early childhood and special education sectors, participants in administrative and supervisory positions, family members, and those on the front line providing direct services to children and families the opportunity to share and learn from each other. We appreciate the support from the NC Department of Instruction and UNC’s Early Childhood Inclusion Master’s grant, both of which enabled

a record number of attendees without their own source of support to cover registration costs and attend.

## Participant Ratings of the Institute

We used an online survey to obtain feedback about the overall Institute. In addition, we collected ratings for each workshop, plenary, and concurrent session. Based on these two data sources, we are pleased to report that participants once again rated all aspects of the Institute highly. Mean ratings of the overall Institute using a 1-5 scale with 5 being highest, were 4.65 for the overall quality of Institute, 4.47 for the quality of presenters and resource people, and 4.66 for the relevance of Institute.

The voices of participants tell the story of the impact of the keynote:

*“Very relevant! I loved how she framed collaboration with families around storytelling. It really helped me reframe some key relationships.”*

*“Inspirational and much needed. Affirmed beliefs and left me with reminders that have since helped me re-center my practice.”*



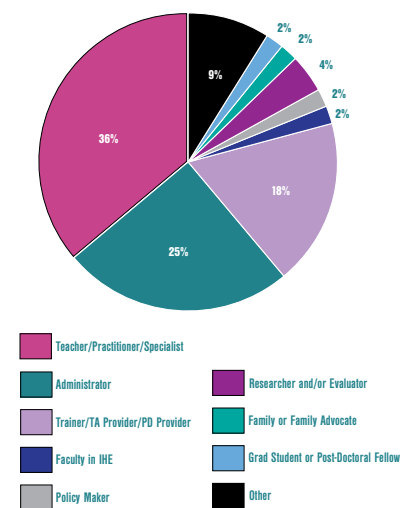
The individual ratings collected at the end of each session provided additional data on how the Institute hit the mark on topics and presenters. The summary means across all sessions on a 1-5 scale with 5 being highest were extremely positive: 4.44 for quality, 4.47 for organization and clarity of content, 4.35 for usefulness, and 4.53 for relevance.

*“The presenters were very knowledgeable and engaging. Every session I went to had great energy and a wonderful ‘vibe’ between presenter and participants.”*

As we move forward we realize there is still much for all of us to learn and to do in early childhood inclusion. Providing answers to questions like the one asked during the Federal and National Plenary shows us a path forward, as we work together to build the capacity to provide high quality services in every program:

*“Who is being identified to provide the specialty level training and consultation to classroom teachers to build our capacity to provide high quality services in every program?”*

Figure 2. Percentage of Participants Representing One of Eight Roles



We thank our partners who contribute to covering the time and travel of our presenters as well as our sponsors who contribute to our key parent speakers. We also offer our thanks to the Planning Committee, the sponsors who provide additional financial support for the Institute, and our staff. Your support of and vision for the Institute make the Institute a source of motivation and inspiration. We look forward to hearing about your work on behalf of inclusion over the next year and seeing you in 2018!

Sincerely,  
Tracey West (Institute Chair and Coordinator) and  
Pam Winton (Institute Chair Emerita)

**save the date!**  
**May 8–10, 2018**



**2018  
National Early Childhood  
Inclusion Institute**

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### suggested citation

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