

Providing Services to Students With Special Needs Across Various Settings

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter focuses on the past and present of educating students with special education needs. Historically, these children were shunned, were the victims of credulity, and were sometimes even killed simply because they learned differently than the rest of the human race. The chapter includes an overview of the various laws and court cases that helped to shape special education as we know it today, as well as a discussion of a variety of educational models in which special education students can be educated depending on their needs. These models include a range of environments, from home-based programs to inclusion with peers for either the entire school day or part of it to a specialized school. The chapter also includes a discussion on ethics and thoughts about what the future may hold for the field of special education. Finally, the chapter presents a way to evaluate any service delivery model using the program evaluation theory.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1975 inception of Public Law 94-142, known as the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), how to educate students with exceptionalities has been a controversy. This escalated with the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2004, which stated that all students with identified special needs had to be educated within the least restrictive environment (LRE). However, the law provided no guidelines on LRE, and to this day, LRE is the subject of many court cases.

Despite the lack of guidance on how students with exceptionalities should be educated, several service delivery models have emerged and have been found to be successful with this population. These service delivery models should serve only as a guideline for educational placement, as each child's specific needs should always be in the forefront when determining services. The type of disability should never be considered in the placement or service delivery decision.

This chapter will:

- Analyze the history behind the education of students with special needs.
- Contrast the various types of service delivery models that are currently available when educating students with exceptionalities from birth to age 2.
- Contrast the various types of service delivery models that are currently available when educating students with exceptionalities from age 3 to 5 (preschool).
- Contrast the various types of service delivery models that are currently available when educating students with exceptionalities from elementary through high school.
- Synthesize the program evaluation theory.
- Discuss how to evaluate the various service delivery models.
- Hypothesize about the future trends in special education service delivery models.

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