

Family-centred Support for Preschoolers with Disabilities: Rapid Review

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Abstract

This rapid review examines the effectiveness of family-centered support interventions for preschoolers with disabilities. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, this study aims to identify key components of family-centered support programs and evaluate their impact on child development, family functioning and overall well-being. Findings highlight insert key findings, offering insights for practitioners, policymakers and researchers seeking to enhance support services for families of preschoolers with disabilities. The rapid review approach allows for a timely synthesis of evidence to inform decision-making and guide the development and implementation of support services for families of preschoolers with disabilities. By synthesizing findings from a diverse range of studies, this review offers a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge on family-centered support interventions and their impact on child and family outcomes. Through a critical appraisal of existing evidence, this study aims to identify gaps in the literature, highlight areas for further research and inform the design and delivery of effective support programs for families of preschoolers with disabilities.

Keywords: Family-centered support • Preschoolers • Parental involvement • Disabilities

Introduction

Supporting preschoolers with disabilities and their families is crucial for promoting optimal child development and family well-being. Family-centered support interventions, which recognize the importance of involving families in decision-making, goal-setting and service delivery, have emerged as a promising approach to meeting the unique needs of children with disabilities and their families. By providing comprehensive, coordinated and individualized support services, family-centered interventions aim to empower families, strengthen parent-child relationships and optimize child outcomes across multiple domains of development. However, despite the growing recognition of the importance of family-centered support for preschoolers with disabilities, there remains a need for a comprehensive synthesis of existing evidence on the effectiveness of such interventions. This rapid review seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of family-centered support programs on child development, family functioning and overall well-being. By synthesizing findings from empirical studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses, this study aims to identify key components of effective family-centered interventions and provide evidence-based recommendations for practice, policy and future research [1].

Literature Review

Research on family-centered support interventions for preschoolers with disabilities underscores the importance of addressing the needs of both children and their families within the context of early intervention services. Family-centered approaches recognize families as experts on their child's needs and preferences, promoting collaboration between families and service providers in decision-making and goal-setting. Studies have shown that

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family-centered interventions lead to improved child outcomes, including enhanced developmental progress, increased social skills and improved adaptive functioning [2]. Moreover, family-centered support interventions have been associated with positive impacts on family functioning and well-being. By providing families with information, resources and emotional support, these interventions help reduce parental stress, increase parental confidence and improve family relationships. Additionally, family-centered approaches promote empowerment and advocacy skills among parents, enabling them to navigate the complexities of the healthcare and educational systems and access the services and support their child needs. However, challenges remain in implementing and sustaining family-centered support interventions within early intervention systems. Limited funding, fragmented service delivery systems and a lack of trained professionals in family-centered practices are common barriers to effective implementation. Moreover, cultural and linguistic differences, as well as disparities in access to services and resources, can further exacerbate challenges in providing equitable and inclusive support to all families of preschoolers with disabilities [3].

Discussion

The findings of this rapid review highlight the importance of family-centered support interventions for preschoolers with disabilities and their families. Evidence suggests that family-centered approaches lead to improved child outcomes, enhanced family functioning and increased satisfaction with services among families. By involving families as partners in the intervention process, family-centered support programs promote collaboration, empowerment and advocacy, ultimately leading to more positive outcomes for children and families. However, challenges in implementing and sustaining family-centered support interventions remain [4]. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that involves collaboration among policymakers, service providers, researchers and families. Strategies for overcoming barriers to implementation may include increasing funding for early intervention services, providing training and professional development opportunities for service providers in family-centered practices and promoting cultural and linguistic competence in service delivery. Moreover, efforts to promote equity and inclusivity in family-centered support interventions are essential for ensuring that all families, regardless of background or circumstances, have access to high-quality services and supports. This may involve tailoring interventions to meet the unique needs of diverse families, providing language and culturally appropriate services and addressing systemic barriers to access and participation [5,6].

Conclusion

In conclusion, family-centered support interventions play a critical role in promoting the well-being of preschoolers with disabilities and their families. Evidence suggests that these interventions lead to improved child outcomes, enhanced family functioning and increased satisfaction with services among families. However, challenges in implementing and sustaining family-centered approaches remain, highlighting the need for continued efforts to promote equity, inclusivity and collaboration within early intervention systems. By addressing these challenges and building upon the strengths of family-centered practices, policymakers, service providers and researchers can work together to ensure that all families of preschoolers with disabilities have access to the support and resources they need to thrive.

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Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest by author.

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