



EARLY EDUCATION

Early learning opportunities in preschool—whether in Title I programs, Head Start or other settings—are essential for children to gain the pre-literacy and social skills they need to enter Kindergarten ready to learn and thrive. As evidence shows, early recognition of learning problems combined with timely, effective intervening services are critical components of any successful early childhood program.

Because the majority of students identified after the age of six with learning disabilities (LD) have their primary deficit in the area of reading, NCLD has shaped policies and developed resources and tools to strengthen early childhood literacy programs. Working in partnership with practitioners and researchers, we have sought to increase the capacity of teachers and parents to understand young children's learning strengths and needs and to take action to support their readiness for instruction as they enter school. To build on the pre-K components of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), we recommend the following:

- 1. Promote and enhance national adoption of universal preschool developmental screening of young children's early literacy and other cognitive skills (e.g., Multi-Tier System of Supports [MTSS]).**
- 2. Support professional development programs that focus on early behavior and signs of learning difficulty.**
- 3. Evaluate programs in order to distinguish those best designed to demonstrate the most promising instruction and early intervention approaches for struggling learners.**
- 4. Make Multi-Tier System of Supports, which are systematic intervention models for both behaviour and academics targeting students most at risk, an allowable use of funds in ESEA for pre-K-12 education.**
- 5. Increase federal research shows how Title I and other early childhood funds directly impact pre-K learning and develop valid, reliable methods to improve evidence-based classroom instruction, interventions, and assessments to serve struggling students.**

NCLD Resources:

MTSS Overview

Roadmap to Pre-K RTI

www.GetReadytoRead.org