

# Agreed Upon Universal Definitions

## Social Emotional Development

The developing capacity of the child from birth through five years of age to form close, safe, and secure adult and peer relationships; experience, regulate, and express emotions in developmentally, socially, and culturally appropriate ways; and explore the environment and learn—all in the context of family, community, and culture. Children's development in this domain affects their development and learning in every other domain.

## Challenging Behavior

Any repeated pattern of behavior, or adult perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in positive interactions with peers and adults. Young children can display challenging behavior as they are learning new skills, communicating their needs, and developing relationships.

Challenging behavior is part of the developmental trajectory of young children.

## Expulsion

An exclusionary practice in which a child is permanently dismissed from the program for what is deemed challenging behavior by the adults in the early learning environment.

This practice is harmful to children and families because it disrupts learning, relationship building, and access to consistent and reliable care.

This includes instances when a school/program dismisses a child or the parent/family is encouraged to disenroll from the school/program.

This does not include collaboratively planned transition to another environment (e.g., program, service, or classroom), deemed more appropriate for the child, such as special education services, transitional classrooms, or therapeutic preschool programs by the family, current and new program, and any other recommended services (e.g., therapy, behavior specialist, mental health consultant, IEP Team, IFSP Team, child welfare, etc.).

## Out-of-School Suspension

An exclusionary practice in which a child is sent home early or not allowed to return to school/program for one or more days and/or the school/program restricts the child's access to the full program day in response to challenging behavior.

This practice is harmful to children and families because it disrupts learning, relationship building, and access to consistent and reliable care.

## In-School Suspension

An exclusionary practice that involves removing or excluding a child from a classroom or from activities that include other children, while the child physically remains in the childcare/school setting, in response to challenging behavior. This includes when the child is removed from the classroom to spend time with administrator, counselor, behavior therapist or other adult.

This practice is harmful to children and families because it disrupts learning, relationship building, and access to consistent and reliable care.