

RESOURCES FOR INCLUSION SUPPORT IN EARLY LEARNING SETTINGS (R.I.S.E.) PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for early learning and child care professionals

Last updated: January 30, 2023

1. Who is eligible for R.I.S.E. supports and services?

Currently, programs that are eligible for R.I.S.E. include:

- Licensed preschool programs for children from birth to 3.8 years of age that have an existing service contract with Child Care Services and have Inclusion Support Services' children enrolled in their program.
- Licensed school-age programs for children ages 3.8 to 12 years that have an existing service contract with Child Care Services and have requested program-focused intervention which can either be classroom consultations or child-specific consultations to enhance inclusive practices.

Early learning and child care programs that are not currently eligible for R.I.S.E. supports may also be provided with information on how to apply for a service contract with Child Care Services or be redirected to community supports, as appropriate.

For more information, please visit york.ca/childcareoperators under the Resources for Inclusion Support in Early Learning Settings (R.I.S.E) and Classroom Supports (R.I.S.E) tabs.

2. What are the eligibility criteria for R.I.S.E. classroom funded supports?

The eligibility criteria are as follows:

- a. Guidelines to apply for a classroom assistant:
 - Classroom is working with an Inclusion Support Services (ISS) Early Interventionist
 - A classroom plan has been developed and in place for at least thirty working days, while ongoing wraparound supports are provided
 - The application is endorsed by the Early Interventionist and supported by the Capacity Building Support Identification Tool (CBSIT)
 - Classroom operating capacity is 80% or more

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- Approved application will be funded for a 12-week period with a possible one-time extension of an additional 12 weeks, with decreased hours. *Exceptions to these short-term funding periods will be made available to classrooms supporting complex, medically fragile children (see question 4) and under extenuating circumstances supported by the manager of ISS.*
- Programs will need to demonstrate their progress on the classroom plan and how they will continue to utilize the funds to transition from the continued need

b. Guidelines to apply for funding for training:

- Training amount is not to exceed \$1,500 per application, excluding taxes
- There is alignment of the topic/content of training with classroom goals as identified in the classroom plan
- Topic/content of training is not currently available through York Region capacity building workshops or other no-cost community workshops
- The early childhood education (ECE) team to discuss with their Early Interventionist how topic/content of training will be applied to classroom strategies

3. Will the short-term funding period of 12 weeks be sufficient to allow for classroom educators to support the child with special needs?

With the new R.I.S.E. program, the focus is on building the capacity of staff so that they have the skills and knowledge to support inclusive environments with less reliance on additional staff in the long term.

- There is a **ONE-TIME** extension of 12 weeks with decreased hours that programs can apply for, provided the program has demonstrated progress on the classroom plan that has been implemented. This request for an extension of classroom assistant support will need to be discussed and endorsed by your Early Interventionist. The goal of the classroom is to transition from the continued need for classroom assistant funding as staff build their knowledge and skills to support everyone in the classroom.
- Exceptions to these short-term funding periods will be made available to classrooms supporting complex, medically fragile children who meet the following criteria:
 - Complex medical needs with significant functional limitation; and
 - **Three of more of the following:**
 - Receiving nursing support through the Local Health Integration Network
 - Patient of complex needs/palliative teams through a hospital, such as North York, Mount Sinai, Sick Kids
 - Chronically poor health involving frequent medical and/or nursing care
 - Eligible to receive at least two therapy services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to help children with feeding and swallowing
 - Significant reliance on caregivers (24/7 supervision, even during sleeping)
 - Have additional sensory impairments, such as vision or hearing, medical technology use, such as ventilator, oxygen or cough assist, technology dependence on activities for daily living and communication

4. Can classrooms apply for a classroom assistant after the additional 12-week period has passed?

The same classroom will not be able to apply again for the same type of support for a period of six months. This is in line with the goal that a classroom assistant is a short-term support to help implement strategies with the early learning and child care staff in the classroom while building their knowledge and skills to support everyone in the classroom. If there has been significant change to the classroom's child/staff composition that significantly impacts the functioning of the classroom, this can be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the Early Interventionist (EI) to determine what additional supports may be appropriate.

5. Can a classroom assistant be utilized to support the transition of a child with special needs from one classroom to another if the child is moving classrooms?

Classroom plans identify goals and strategies that include how the classroom is going to utilize the support provided. If it is determined that the classroom assistant should support the transition of children between classrooms for a short-term period (one-to-two weeks), this needs to be identified in the next steps section of the classroom consultation note. It is important to remember that the funding is for the classroom and not attached to a child.

6. Who do I contact for R.I.S.E. support and questions?

Early learning and child care programs can send an e-mail to RISE@york.ca and the R.I.S.E. team will be able to assist.