

PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY INCLUSION

INCLUSION MEANS

Inclusion means that individuals are given opportunities to learn from their peers in all aspects of community life and does not require an individual to learn in isolated groups;

Inclusion means providing

necessary services and supports within the community without jeopardizing an individual's safety and well-being;

Inclusion means supporting programs and schools in meeting the person's individual needs;



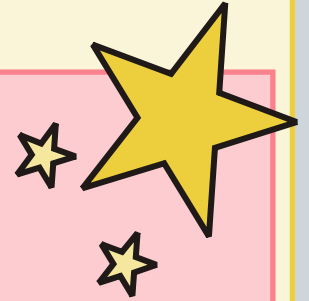
Inclusion means supporting the needs, wants, and choices of the individual and their family;

Inclusion means supporting individuals access to age appropriate opportunities in school, work, recreation, and life.

Inclusion means promoting opportunities for social relationships between non disabled and disabled individuals;

Inclusion means providing an appropriate person centered plan that facilitates opportunities for participation in community life.

Inclusion means an individual is not required to be "ready" or "earn" their way into life opportunities.



“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”
Eleanor Roosevelt

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Inclusion enables every person to participate and belong in all settings in their communities.

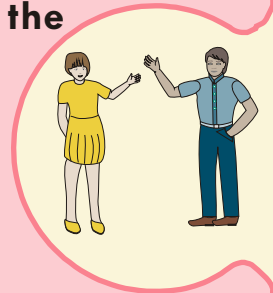
Social Inclusion means people working together to create welcoming communities that include everyone. A community learns as people are present. It cannot learn if people are absent. For people with disabilities, inclusion means realizing dreams and the desire to be with people and participate.

Community means neighborhoods, personal friends, and being a member of a group of people with common interests. A commitment to inclusion ensures that supports are provided so people can participate and be part of a community. With effective individualized planning, community development happens in natural ways when a person is included.

Inclusion begins in childhood and with the family.

Being part of the community...

1. Is having meaningful relationships with community members.



2. Means contributing to the community.

3. Being supported by services and agencies that increase community participation.

VOLUNTEERING

COMMUNITY SERVICE CREATING INCLUSION

Youth with disabilities are frequently overlooked as people who could provide community and neighborhood service. Nearly 4 million Americans have developmental disabilities that impact their ability to participate in everyday community activities. For youth with developmental disabilities, that often translates into fewer opportunities to build



skills and self-confidence that all young people need to succeed as adults. Youth with developmental disabilities can be empowered to become active participants in community programs. It takes making a few adaptations and some simple changes in our attitude to make community service opportunities available.

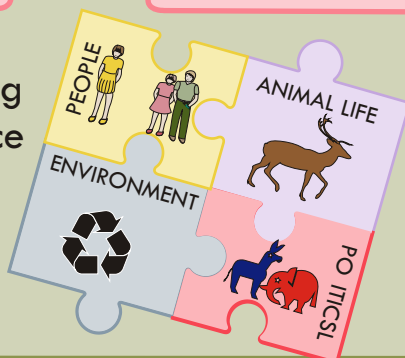
WHAT CAN YOUTH GET OUT OF VOLUNTEERING?

Being of service as a volunteer can bring job skills, communication skills, experience, contacts, and increased self-confidence. All these can help in the search for later employment and greater independence in the community.

Youth also gain the self esteem of thinking well of themselves for making a difference. Being a respected member of a volunteer team can also build work habits from being on time to completing an agreed upon task. Volunteers learn from the organization how to carry out community activities and how to get things done.

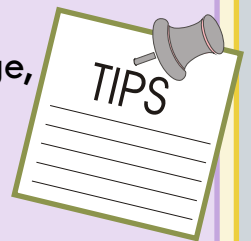
Being of service to others promotes a sense of community responsibility. It is about “giving back” and becoming recognized as valued members of the community.

Families modeling community service are the best teacher.



TIPS FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH WHO HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:

- Use People First language, i.e., "person with a disability," rather than "disabled person."
- Ensure the space is accessible for all youth.
- Don't assume that every youth will need accommodations. Ask.
- Work with each youth and their family to set achievable goals.
- Modify activities so all youth can participate fully and equally.
- Pair youth with disabilities with their non-disabled peers.
- Offer materials in multiple formats and for a variety of reading levels.
- Bring in volunteer mentors with disabilities to model self-confidence and success.
- Work with all youth in developing activities that include everyone.



Reference: National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth

YOUTH PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

FACTS

1) Millions of Young People Volunteer

15.5 million youth between 12 and 18 contributed more than 1.3 billion hours of service during 2004.

2) Volunteering Helps Young People Succeed

Youth who volunteer are less likely to engage in risky behavior, are more likely to feel connected to their communities, and tend to do better in school.

3) Altruism Is the Driving Motivator

Youth who volunteer do so out of altruism, strongly agreeing with statements such as "I would like to help make the world a better place," and "It's important to do things for others."

4) Adult Role Models Are Crucial

A youth who has a parent who volunteers is three times more likely to volunteer on a regular basis.

Corporation for National and Community Service, with the U.S. Census Bureau and Independent Sector, found the following facts about young volunteers.

GOOD TIPS

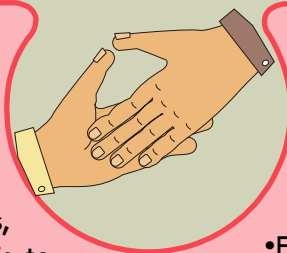
Joining a youth organization can provide a circle of friends as well as service opportunities. Look into groups at the Y, your place of worship, Girl or Boy Scouts, Camp Fire, etc. The most important thing is to figure out what interests your transition age youth. Then you can focus your search on those organizations meeting their interests. There are so many ways to make a difference--take your time to find the one that is right for your son or daughter.

Good volunteer attributes include:

- Willingness to do a variety of small and large tasks.
- Completing work accurately.
- Being friendly.

Finding the right community service opportunity.

- Take a tour the organization.
- Learn about their services.



- Review their brochure and web site.
- Find out how youth volunteers can help the organization.
- Find out how volunteer efforts help the organization fulfill its mission.
- Ask about volunteer job descriptions and training.
- Be prepared for an interview.
- Have fun.

SUMMARY

Youth with disabilities who participate in community service opportunities are developing post-school employment skills in real-life settings. They can develop important skills like teamwork, time management, making decisions, and develop job skills relevant to future employment. Volunteering in the community helps youth to build their resume and provide the foundation for increased earning and self-determination

SELF-DETERMINATION

A process of people determining their own needs and interests

Believing that your child will grow up and make his own decisions about what kind of life he will have can seem pretty remote when you have a child with a disability. The process of self-determination begins when your child is very young. It starts with showing that you have confidence in his ability to make decisions for himself. Opportunities for decision making in young children builds confidence and self-advocacy and paves the way for mature decision-making as teens and young adults.

Self determination is believing people can control their own destiny. It is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves, and to take the initiative to reach these goals. It is about being in charge, but is not necessarily the same thing as self-sufficiency or independence. It means making your own choices, learning to solve problems, and taking control and responsibility for one's life. Practicing self-determination also means one experiences the consequences of making choices.

DEVELOPING SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS

The development of self-determination skills is a process that begins in childhood and continues throughout one's life. Self-determination is important for all people, but it is especially important, and often more difficult to learn, for children and young people with disabilities. Well-meaning individuals sometimes "protect" children with disabilities by making all their decisions for them. Also, sometimes people assume that people with disabilities can't do or think for themselves.

Adapted from Family Alliance Ontario, People First Ontario, and Pacer Center

Skills and knowledge to become self determined:

- Help your child set personal goals.
- Provide opportunities for your child to make decisions that impact the quality of their life.
- Encourage your child to advocate for themselves.
- Show your child how to create a plan to achieve an important goal.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND SERVICE RESOURCES

INTERNET

Reports on Community Inclusion
Center on Human Policy
Syracuse University School of
Education <http://soewb.syr.edu/thechp/randr.htm>

Institute for Community Inclusion
Children's Hospital Boston
University of Massachusetts Boston
<http://www.communityinclusion.org>

The Inclusion Network
Cincinnati, Ohio
<http://www.inclusion.org>

Where to Find More Information on Work-based Learning:

National Center on Secondary
Education and Transition (NCSET):
www.ncset.org

PACER Center:
www.pacer.org/swift

National Collaborative on
Workforce and Disability for Youth:
www.ncwd-youth.info

PUBLICATIONS

Youth With Special Needs Leaders
Handbook: Making 4-H More
Accessible. 2004. California 4-H Youth
Development Program,
www.ca4h.org/leadership/ambassador/03-04/casa-book.pdf.

Youth Volunteer Corps: Training
Manual for Working with Youth
Volunteers Who Have Disabilities.
2000. Youth Volunteer Corps, 4600
W. 51st Street, Shawnee Mission,
Kansas 66205; (913) 432-9822.

Community Dreams: Ideas for
Enriching Neighborhood and
Community Life. San Luis Obispo:
Impact Publishers, 1984.

On the Road to Community Inclusion.
The Boggs Center-UAP, P.O. Box 2688,
New Brunswick, NJ 08903, 732-235-
9300.

Building Communities from the Inside
Out: A Path Toward Finding and
Mobilizing a Community's Assets.
ACTA Publications, 4848 North Clark
Street, Chicago, IL 60640,
800-397-2282.

TIPS FROM AN INCLUSION TEACHER

Setting up a learning partnership from the first days of school is a primary goal because it becomes the foundation that enables us; schools, teachers, families and students to maximize our time together and create a safe accepting environment. Here are some of my beliefs that guide my work with all my students.

- *Inclusion is about all of us living full lives.*
- *Inclusion is about learning to live together.*
- *Inclusion treasures diversity and builds community.*
- *Inclusion is about abilities, our gifts and sharing them.*
- *Inclusion is about equality and acceptance.*

Tips for parents can build a successful relationship:

- *Provide resources to the teacher a little at a time*
- *Share their thoughts in an open friendly manner*
- *Participate in school and class activities*
- *Respect the teacher's time with other children*

PARENT COMMENTS: LEARNING AND PRACTICING SELF-DETERMINATION

- Having a vision for my child helped me focus on a bright future for her in the community.
- I listen to my child now, ask questions and let go.
- I provide guidance, not control.
- I see my son as a person first not the disability.
- I give my daughter choices rather than direct her.
- I learned to help my child do more things on his own.
- I learned new ways to communicate with my son that are not as directed.
- I don't decide everything for my child, she makes her own choices.
- I think about things from my child's perspective.
- I see strength now where I used to only see weakness.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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The Mission of the Tarjan Center is to provide leadership in education, research and innovative practices that supports the quality of life and community inclusion of all people with disabilities.

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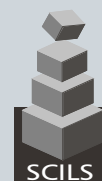
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**Dedicated tall families pursuing
community inclusion.**