

Inclusion

The term inclusion captures, in one word, an all-embracing societal ideology. Regarding individuals with disabilities and special education, inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms.

Benefits of Inclusive Education

The benefits of inclusive education are numerous for both students with and without disabilities.

Benefits for students with disabilities

1. Friendships
2. Increased social initiations, relationships and networks
3. Peer role models for academic, social and behaviour skills
4. Increased achievement of IEP goals
5. Greater access to general curriculum
6. Enhanced skill acquisition and generalization
7. Increased inclusion in future environments
8. Greater opportunities for interactions
9. Higher expectations
10. Increased school staff collaboration
11. Increased parent participation
12. Families are more integrated into community

Benefits of Inclusion for Students Without Disabilities

1. Meaningful friendships
2. Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences
3. Increased understanding and acceptance of diversity
4. Respect for all people
5. Prepares all students for adult life in an inclusive society
6. Opportunities to master activities by practicing and teaching others
7. Greater academic outcomes
8. All students' needs are better met; greater resources for everyone

When everyone is included, they learn acceptance of other people, and that each person has unique abilities. Children learn from each other. With inclusion in place, children with special needs are provided equal opportunity to participate in the same types of programs and activities as children without special needs.

This can trickle down to their families as well, teaching parents and families to be more accepting of differences. Since parents are a child's first teacher and know their child best, it is important to have good communication with families, creating consistency between home and school.

It is important to help children learn independence, and give them just enough help to be successful without helping them too much and provide opportunities for children to have sustained social interactions and participate fully in school.

When *all* people are included in *all* aspects of society, we are more likely to see the person rather than focus on their disability.

Resources:

Understanding Inclusion

What is inclusive education?

<https://www.allfie.org.uk/definitions/what-is-inclusive-education/>

12 Things you need to know about inclusion in schools

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/education/12-things-you-need-know-about-inclusion-schools>