Inclusion Tool Kit

For After School Programs

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Special Needs Inclusion Project

SF DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN YOUTH
& THEIR FAMILIES

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Introduction

The Inclusion Tool Kit contains the information and practical strategies you need to create a nurturing and welcoming environment for all children in your after school program. If you provide a service or program, we hope the Tool Kit will help you provide programs in which **all** children can participate and belong. And if you are a family member we hope this Tool Kit will provide you with resources to work with community program providers to include your child.

The Inclusion Tool Kit is organized around inclusion standards which were developed by the Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP) Interagency Council. The Council was comprised of Jewish Vocational Services, KIDS Project, Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE), Hearing and Speech Center of Northern California, Support for Families of Children with Disabilities, Operation Access, Wu Yee Children's Services, Children's Council, and Child Care Law Center. The SNIP Council worked with DCYF to develop minimum standards for the after school programs they fund.

DCYF has established standards for all of the programs they fund. The DCYF Minimum Compliance Standards establish a baseline for quality and serve as the foundation for monitoring and evaluating programs funded by DCYF. The Inclusion Standards are a subset of the Minimum Compliance Standards and provide a set of criteria for effective inclusion with indicators agencies can use to ensure they are on the right track. Additionally, standards help providers communicate their values and hold themselves accountable for their programs. Youth and families can use standards as a reference when observing a program for the first time or to help them understand what to expect from a program as time goes on. The SNIP High Quality Standards are intended to educate the community as a whole about high-quality inclusion programming and how it can be achieved.

DCYF Minimum Standards for Inclusion

1. Participation in Inclusion Training

Program Representative participates in an inclusion training provided by DCYF and/or its community partners on an annual basis.

2. Practice of Inclusion

Program has a process for determining reasonable accommodations needed by children and youth with disabilities to participate in its activities.

> Indicator 2.1 Program has a documented process for receiving and assessing requests for reasonable accommodations.
>
> Indicator 2.2 Staff is aware of the legal requirements for providing reasonable accommodations.
> - An explanation of the legal requirements for reasonable accommodation is included in new staff orientation.
> - Annual staff development activities include training about reasonable accommodation.

Special Needs Inclusion Project High Quality Standards

HQ1: Philosophy

Agency has a formal inclusion statement - philosophy, vision, mission, values, and goals – which reflects a commitment to inclusion.

Indicator 1.1: Agency's inclusion statement is evident in written materials, such as annual reports, brochures and registration materials.

HQ2: Inclusion Strategies and Resources

Program has strategies and resources to ensure effective inclusion for children/youth with special needs in its activities.

Indicator 2.1: Staff and volunteers are trained and knowledgeable of inclusive practices.
Examples:
- Staff participates in professional development focused on including children/youth with disabilities.
- Staff and volunteers show evidence of certification or significant experience working with individuals who have special needs.
- In-house staff development activities and volunteer training curriculum includes knowledge and skills related to inclusive practices.
- The agency hires an inclusion facilitator to coach, guide and support staff.

Indicator 2.2: Staff identifies (formally or informally) strengths and interests of children and youth with disabilities and creates a plan for including them in program activities.
Examples:
- Staff has a process to identify children's strengths and needs.
- Staff develops a written plan for including children and youth with disabilities in the program activities.

Indicator 2.3: Staff creates activities and/or curriculum to include children/youth with special needs in program activities.
Examples:
- Program has a curriculum binder where staff can find examples of modified activities and tips for including children/youth with special needs
- Staff and participants attend workshops to learn how to create inclusive activities.

HQ3: Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation

Program activities are planned, regularly monitored and evaluated using indicators of best practices for inclusion.

Indicator 3.1: The program's evaluation addresses inclusive practices.
Examples:

- Program solicits feedback from families/youth to shape and strengthen its inclusion efforts.
- Staff completes a formal self-evaluation or survey of their program's progress toward including children/youth with disabilities.
- Staff hold an interim and annual meeting to review inclusive practices
- Program evaluation results are used to plan and modify program activities to further the inclusion of children/youth with special needs.

Indicator 3.2: Staff reviews progress of individual children with disabilities enrolled in their program.
 Examples:

- The child/youth's written inclusion plan includes a process for monitoring progress toward meeting his/her goals.
- Staff meet regularly to discuss the progress of children/youth with special needs and the extent to which they are effectively participating in the program

HQ4: Outreach

Program descriptions and outreach efforts encourage children/youth with special needs to participate in program activities.

Indicator 4.1: Program's written materials encourage children/youth with special needs to enroll.
Examples:

- Outreach material, including flyers, brochures, reports, and websites state that children and youth with disabilities are welcome and are encouraged to apply.
- The agency publicizes its programs to agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities and their families such as: Special Needs Inclusion Project; Support for Families of Children with Disabilities; Community Alliance for Special Education; San Francisco Unified School District; Golden Gate Regional Center; Jewish Vocational Services; Hearing & Speech Center of Northern California; High Risk Infant Interagency Council; Improving Transition Outcomes Project; Childcare Planning and Advisory Council, BRIDGES Employment Program, Independent Living Resource Center, Janet Pomeroy Center; United Cerebral Palsy.

Indicator 4.2: Program actively recruits children/youth with disabilities and their families.
Examples:

- Parents of children with disabilities and youth with disabilities participate in an advisory capacity and assist staff in developing programs and policies.
- Children and youth with disabilities recruit other children and youth for the program.

About The Special Needs Inclusion Project

Our Vision

Children and youth with disabilities are safe and healthy, have a sense of belonging, and have a full range of opportunities to participate meaningfully in the community and reach their full potential.

Who We Are

The Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP) provides agencies in San Francisco with free training, on-site technical assistance, and information, to successfully include children and youth with disabilities into their agency's programs. In addition, SNIP strives to build a sustainable foundation of collaboration and problem solving that will enable San Francisco to better serve all children and youth. The SNIP Interagency Council developed a Strategic Plan that:

- Coordinates citywide inclusion strategies and activities to maximize resources and minimize duplication.
- Makes inclusion and referral resources easily available to families and agencies
- Identifies and prioritizes inclusion issues, needs, and concerns of DCYF agencies, and children and youth with disabilities and their families.

Acknowledgements

The materials in this tool kit are drawn from many sources, which are referenced as they appear. Much of the material was drawn from *A Community for All Children, A Guide to Inclusion for Out of School Time,* Kimberly Miller, Stuart J. Schleien, PhD, CTRS in collaboration with the North Carolina School Age Solutions Committee. *A Community for All Children* is available at www.unc.edu/depts/recreate/crds/**community**for**all**.pdf . We are also grateful to Kids Included Together for their support and generosity in guiding our work. SNIP thanks those who have so generously given permission for use of their materials for the benefit of children and youth with disabilities in San Francisco.

We are also extremely grateful to the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families for their vision, leadership and funding that makes the Special Needs Inclusion Project possible.

Welcoming All Kids

Inclusion is essentially welcoming everyone into your world, no matter their background, their ethnicity, the language they speak, how they look or how they see, hear or walk.

In this Section…..

Inclusion is…

Creating a Welcoming Environment

People First Language

Inclusion Is....

An attitude and approach that seeks to ensure that every person, regardless of ability or background, can meaningfully participate in all aspects of life.

Inclusion Means:

- Offering the same opportunities for people with and without disabilities
- Welcoming everyone
- Building community
- Emphasizing cooperation
- Seeking to understand and accommodate differences
- Having facilities and areas that are accessible and easy to use by everyone.
- Providing a safe and socially comfortable environment for all
- Teaching respect, understanding and dignity to people of all abilities
- Embracing changes that facilitate full participation
- Actively reaching out to people who are traditionally excluded or marginalized
- Fostering a sense of belonging to community as a respected and valued peer
- Honoring the intrinsic value of each person's life

From: www.IncludingAllKids.org

Inclusion means creating programs and services where all children feel welcomed and valued. In particular, inclusion means that children and youth with disabilities or special health care needs are actively participating in recreational, social, educational, and developmental opportunities along with their peers without disabilities. **Inclusion is an approach, not a program.**

Who Benefits from Inclusion?

We all benefit from inclusion. True inclusion allows children and youth with disabilities to develop a sense of belonging through building relationships outside of their family, developing knowledge of support systems, and having regular access to their community. Inclusion benefits people without disabilities by creating an atmosphere that values diversity and the wellbeing of all children and youth. It fosters the development of social skills for children with and without disabilities through interaction, collaboration, and peer learning. Inclusion also enhances self-esteem, and promotes acceptance, understanding, and friendship. Communities in which all children and youth are included are healthier, more balanced, and beneficial for all members.

Create a Welcoming Environment

Take a look at your program from the first contact people have with you through everyday activities. You can create an inclusive environment by:

- Keeping in mind that children and youth come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and ability levels.
- Focusing on similarities and not differences. Ask yourself the questions, "What is more important - the fact that Anisha looks different than some other children in my program

because she uses a wheelchair, or that Anisha likes the same kind of games, crafts, or activities that other children in my program enjoy?"

- Focusing on strengths and not limitations. Anisha may not be able to run like some children can, but she sure has a great basketball shot.
- Forgetting about stereotypes and labels. Enjoy a person for who he/she is, not what category he/she "fits" into.
- Talking to people that you might have considered "different" in the past. You will probably find out that they are not so different from you after all.
- Recognizing the value in all people.

Beyond Political Correctness

We are all made up of many characteristics. Few of us want to be identified by only one of our many characteristics. For example, you wouldn't want to be identified solely on the basis of your ability to play softball ("Softball Playing Kisha") or your love of pizza ("Pizza Eating Janice"). These characteristics are only one part of your whole self. This is true of individuals with disabilities as well. When speaking or writing, remember that children or adults with disabilities are like everyone else -- except for the fact that they have a disability.

Sometimes how you say something communicates more than what you say. Using stereotypes to describe people is disrespectful. This is why we need to use "person first" language. And this is why "person first" language is about much more than being "politically correct."

Here are a few helpful hints about respectful communication:

- **Speak of the person first**, then the child's disability (e.g., a child with Down syndrome, instead of the Down syndrome child).
- **Emphasize abilities, not limitations** (e.g., Cody is a wonderful artist, instead of Cody uses crutches).
- **Do not label people** as part of a disability group (e.g., Dorlissa who likes dancing, instead of Dorlissa, the blind teenager).
- **Remember that a person is not a condition** (e.g., identify Shelby as Shelby, the 8-year-old, instead of Shelby, the epileptic).
- **Don't give excessive praise or attention** to a person with a disability; don't patronize them (e.g., Would you want to be praised for something that you do every day, like go to work?).
- **Avoid treating people with disabilities as if they want to be the recipients of charity or pity.** They want to participate equally with the rest of the community (e.g., ask Jasper if he wants to play, instead of saying how sad it is that Jasper needs help with lots of things).
- **Let the person do or speak for herself** as much as possible (e.g., if one child asks why another uses a wheelchair, let her answer for herself, instead of answering for her).
- **Don't assume** that an individual with a disability needs help. Offer assistance, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help (e.g., ask an individual with a disability if he would like you to hold the door open for him, instead of assuming that he needs you to do it for him).

- **Be respectful of personal space and assistive devices.** Assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids and assistance dogs are part of a person's personal space and should not be interfered with unless assistance is requested.
- **Remember that a person who has a disability isn't necessarily chronically sick or unhealthy** (e.g., a person with mental retardation is not sick or unhealthy, she may experience difficulty in learning at times).
- **Make certain that activities are accessible**, both architecturally and programmatically, to all participants (e.g., programs, as well as buildings, need to be welcoming and accommodating).
- **Remember that a disability is a functional limitation** that interferes with a person's ability to walk, hear, talk, learn, etc. A handicap is a situation or a barrier imposed by society, the environment, or oneself (e.g., an inaccessible facility is a handicap to the individual with a disability to participate in an activity at that facility).
- **Relax!** Don't be embarrassed if you use common expressions such as "see ya later" or "gotta run," to an individual who has a visual impairment or uses a wheelchair, respectively.

*(*from *A Community for All Children)*

DCYF Minimum Inclusion Standards for Early Childhood and Out of School Time Programs

DCYF Minimum Standard: Practice of Inclusion

(For Early Childhood and Out of School Time Programs)

Program has a process for determining reasonable accommodations needed by children and youth with disabilities to participate in its activities.

- Program has a documented process for receiving and assessing requests for reasonable accommodations.
  - ✓ Staff is aware of the legal requirements for providing reasonable accommodations.
  - ✓ An explanation of the legal requirements for reasonable accommodation is included in new staff orientation.
  - ✓ Annual staff development activities include training about reasonable accommodation.

In this Section.....

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Determining Accommodations

Other Important Laws

Maintaining Confidentiality

Questions and Answers about the ADA for Child Care Providers

Question and Answers about the ADA for After School Program Providers

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a comprehensive federal civil rights law that protects individuals with mental and physical disabilities from discrimination. The ADA prohibits discrimination in employment, state and local governments, public accommodations, public transportation and telecommunications. Prohibited actions under the ADA include: denial of participation, limits upon participation, segregation, retaliation or coercion (including interference, intimidation, or threats), charging parents of children with disabilities higher fees for complying with the law, and unnecessary inquiries about disability.

The ADA also requires that programs ensure their facilities are physically accessible. The ADA requires that private programs located in structures built or renovated before January 26, 1992 undertake "readily achievable" architectural modifications. "Readily achievable" means that the modifications must be easily accomplishable and be able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense. The budget and size of the program are taken into account when assessing an acceptable level of difficulty and/or expense. Some examples of potentially "readily achievable" modifications include placing grab bars in restrooms, widening doorways, rearranging furniture, providing a raised toilet seat, and installing permanent or temporary ramps.

The Disabled Access Tax Credit is available for those who incur expenses in order to comply with the ADA. The Mayor's Office on Disability (MOD) has established the "Reasonable Accommodation Fund" for non-profit agencies contracting with the city and county of San Francisco. The fund may pay from 75%-90% of the cost of accommodation on a one-time basis provided the agency commits to including a line item in their budget for the next fiscal year that is equal to or greater than the cost of accommodations for the year funded by MOD. For more information email MOD@sfgov.org. It is always a good idea to make modifications/accommodations a line item in your budget when requesting funding for your program.

At the end of this section is "Questions and Answers about ADA" developed by the Child Care Law Center which provide in-depth information about what is required by ADA.

When do you have to provide accommodations?

You will need to provide accommodations in at least two situations:

1. For public events and meetings that are sponsored by your program, ensure that you provide members of the public an opportunity and a way to request accommodations. For example, you can add a simple statement to a brochure or flyer: "This meeting will be held in a fully accessible location. Should you require other accommodations, please contact (name, phone number/email) by (date.)"   This goes a long way in communicating to the public that you are striving to be inclusive. It also gives you advance notice of a need for an accommodation – giving you time to have it in place for the event.
2. When a youth or child enrolls in your program and informs you he will need accommodations, you will need to respond to the request. For example, a child enrolls in your program and his parents inform you he has asthma. You will want to make sure appropriate staff are aware of

the child's medical condition, and know the steps to take should he have an asthma attack during the program, i.e. where the inhaler is located and when medical professionals should be called. Having a place on your registration form where parents have the opportunity to request reasonable accommodations can help you address the child's needs as a part of the enrollment process and prepare your staff to work with the child.

Preparing for the Inclusion Process

1. Have all program marketing materials use inclusive and welcoming language.
2. Make all registration forms include language like this for every registrant: "Do you need a reasonable accommodation to enjoy this program?" Have a YES and a NO that can be circled by the registrant.
3. Identify the person(s) responsible for reviewing registrations and looking for those that indicate "YES." Make that person responsible for getting copies of those registrations to the appropriate staff who can then begin the assessment to determine the reasonable accommodations that may be needed by the child or youth. Don't let this review interfere with the registration process.
4. Identify the person(s) responsible for conducting the assessment. This should be a trained staff. If you don't have one on staff borrow one from another community resource.
5. Give the person responsible for the assessment the authority to convene a team to conduct the assessment. The staff assessing a request for an accommodation by a child who wants to play soccer will undoubtedly want the soccer or sports manager involved, or perhaps the community center director, or perhaps a teacher or therapist who is familiar with the child. And don't forget the family…parents should be invited to work on the team too.
6. Give the person conducting the assessment enough resources to make an accommodation. That might mean hiring a sign language interpreter, or an extra staff member to support the included child, or a trainer to advise other staff on behavior plans for the child or other matters regarding the child's inclusion.

How to Determine Reasonable Accommodations

1. Determine if the individual with a disability meets the essential eligibility requirements of your program with or without an accommodation.
   a. Essential eligibility requirements are those that you apply to **every** applicant such as program capacity, fees, age, residency, skill requirements, and rules of conduct or safety requirements.
2. Identify the accommodation needs by:
   a. Involving the child, youth and family in every step of the process. See the sample interview on page 18.
   b. Employing confidentiality principles while exploring ways to provide accommodations.
   c. Consulting with educational or other professionals if needed.

    d.   Using program descriptions and program analysis to determine essential functions of the program. For example, an outdoor program provides participants with recreational experiences such as hiking, rock climbing and canoeing; an after school program includes homework time, art, music and sports. Staff will need to identify the skills associated with each activity offered in the program.

    e.   Identifying the child's strengths, "functional limitations" and potential accommodations. For example, a child who uses a wheelchair may have little or no use of his legs and is unable to walk; another child with very low vision has a functional limitation related to seeing and reading. For each of these children, the program staff will think about how the child could participate in their activities and begin to determine which activities would require modifications.

3.   Select and provide the accommodation that is most appropriate for the child/youth and program. Examples of accommodations include:

    a.   Modifying rules, policies or practices - allowing a child to wear headphones to screen out noise even though there is a rule against the use of headphones in the after school program.

    b.   Removing architectural barriers - re-arranging the room so a child using a wheel chair can move about easily.

    c.   Removing communication barriers - providing sign language interpreters or written materials in large print or Braille.

    d.   Adapting activities - using volunteer "buddies" to assist others with homework, lowering the basket for basketball, choosing games that emphasize cooperation rather than competition.

    e.   Adapting equipment, such as sports equipment – using balls with bells in them.

    f.   Training for staff and volunteers on topics such as principles of ADA, appropriate language, program planning strategies, awareness of attitudinal barriers and use of adaptive equipment.

4.   Establish an evaluation system that includes frequent observations by the manager of the inclusion placement and frequent reports by staff regarding the placement. It is through this method of formative evaluation that the setting can be shaped on an almost daily basis to provide the best support for the child.

Check results by:

    o   Monitoring the accommodation to see if it enables the child/youth to successfully participate in the program;

    o   Periodically evaluating the accommodations to ensure effectiveness.

Provide follow-up if needed by:

    o   Modifying the accommodation or

    o   Repeating the steps if appropriate

5.   Establish a system that includes an end-of-the-program summative evaluation. This allows all to learn from the experience and helps everyone identify issues that may arise in the future.

From *Recreation Inclusion is Here…Are you Ready for It?* John McGovern, President, National Therapeutic Recreation Society, Summer 2001.

Decide as an agency what inclusion in your program will look like and how you plan to implement the inclusion process.

> Will decision making responsibilities be centralized or decentralized, and who will be responsible for decisions about accommodations?

> How will staff be trained?

> Will you use existing staff to support inclusion, employ inclusion facilitators, use volunteers or staff paid for by outside agencies?

> How will you budget for accommodations?

As you are thinking about your inclusion model keep in mind these important points about inclusive environments.

- An inclusive environment does not presume a child/youth requires an accommodation, but creates conditions that are open and allow for effective communication about needs.
- An inclusive environment creates conditions that give the child's family the confidence that the request for accommodations will be considered respectfully.
- An inclusive environment engages in conversations with children, youth and their families to determine appropriate and effective accommodations.
- An inclusive environment provides accommodations with the goal of truly enabling children and youth to fully participate and benefit from program activities.

Sample Accommodation Language for Registration Forms

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
Name (Last) _____ (M.I.) _____ (First)
_____
Address City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Date of Birth / / Age _____ Male _____ Female _____
School Child Attends _____ Track Color _____
Grade _____
Hair Color _____ Race/Ethnicity _____ Eye Color _____
Weight_____
Does child ride the bus? _ Yes Bus #_____ _ No Swimming Ability (please circle one) Beginner Intermediate
Advanced
Physician's Name Phone _____ Hospital Preference _____
Allergies (please list)
_____
Medications (please list)
_____

Access For All – Services are provided to people of all abilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please inform staff at registration at least five business days prior to the start date of the program/class. Each request will be assessed in compliance with the ADA. A supplemental information packet must be filled out and returned to the Inclusion Office (334-2262 x255).
Does this person require assistance/special accommodation to participate? _Yes _No

Special Needs

Does this participant have special needs (developmental, physical, emotional) that require accommodations? ❑ No ❑ Yes - please fill out the Inclusion, Accommodation & Special Needs Request Form

Has participant had an Accommodation Plan in the past?

❑ No - does not require one

❑ No - I would like one done

❑ Yes - I want to continue using the service

Medication: Will this participant require medication during the program?

❑ No

❑ Yes - Please fill out the Written Medication Consent Form

Engaging with Families to Develop Partnerships

It's important to use language that focuses on the child's strengths and skills, rather than on the child's needs. Think about ways you can ask questions that will encourage a relationship where families feel comfortable sharing personal or sensitive information with you.

Value and appreciate the information that families share with you - let them know how useful it is for you

Ask parents' permission to share information, e.g.: "Can I ask you about what happens at home?" "Can I contact your child's teacher?"

Invite families to visit the program as part of the intake process. This might give them more information about how their child can best participate.

Encourage families to be a part of the program's community. Let them know that you value family participation at your program and welcome them to participate as much as they would like to, e.g.: regular communication, volunteering during program hours, providing extra support people - or other ways that you can suggest.

Discuss families preferred methods of communication:
- Notes? Phone calls? Emails? Communication book?
- How often will you communicate? (every day, once a week should be enough, only when needed, as often as necessary)
- Times you can be reached?
- Phone numbers, pagers, email addresses etc.

Guidelines for Talking with Families

It is useful to have a guideline to follow for talking with parents to learn more about the child or youth who is applying for your program. The sample is <u>not</u> a questionnaire to be filled out, but simply a guide for promoting conversations between parents and program staff to promote sharing information and developing a solid relationship from the very beginning. It is important to remember that it is not always necessary to have information about a child's specific disability or diagnosis, but you will need to have a way to ask if the child needs modifications or adaptations to participate in your program.

1. **Describe Your Program.**   It is important to give families an accurate picture of what your program looks like, so they can make an informed decision about enrolling their child in the program. As you discuss the program, families have the opportunity to recognize components of the program where their child may be successful, or where accommodations or adaptations may be needed.

- Daily and weekly schedule
- Staff training and experience
- Age range and grade levels of participants
- Staff/participant ratio

- Level and type of supervision of children
- Activities, including field trips
- How children move from one activity to another
- How staff motivate and encourage children
- How staff manage behavior
- Staff goals and expectations for children

2. Learn about the child/youth. It may be helpful for you and your staff to know information about the child's skills in the following areas:

- communication
- self help (including snack and using the restroom)
- learning
- behavior and motivation
- medical needs
- social skills
- mobility
- fine motor skills

Here are some questions you might use; depending upon the child's age and ability levels, some questions will be more appropriate than others.

- What does (name) like to do?
- What is (name) good at?
- What motivates (name)?
- How does (name) tell you what he wants?
- How does (name) let you know he ....
  - ….doesn't like something?
  - … needs to use the restroom?
  - … is hungry or thirsty?
  - … is tired?
  - … is upset?
- What do you do at these times?
- How can we help (name) at these times?
- How does your child interact with other children.....
  - … at home?
  - … at school?
  - … in the neighborhood?
- Are there any allergies or medical needs we should be aware of?
- Can you suggest any supports that you use at home, or are used at school that it would be good for us to use too? (e.g.: visuals, schedules, behavior plans etc)
- How do you help (name) to learn new skills?
- How do you let (name) know he is doing a good job?
- What are your goals/expectations for (name) while they are attending this program?
- What do you hope (name) achieves by attending this program?

- Is there information you would like our staff to know before (name) attends this program?
- Do you have any concerns about (name) attending this program?
- Are there modifications or accommodations that you can suggest which may encourage (name's) participation in the program?

3. Decide on Next Steps
- Generate a plan for following up, with a clear list of actions steps
- Allocate who is responsible for what, and when it will be done by
- Confirm the best ways and frequency of communication, i.e. email, notes, communication book, etc.
- Schedule a time to develop the inclusion plan (sample page 23)

Interview Example

The following is an example of an intake conversation with a parent (Lee), of a child "Anisha" and the Intake coordinator, Summer, at after school program. Anisha is an 8 year old girl with down syndrome.

SUMMER: "Hi Lee, thanks for coming in today to meet with me about how we can prepare for Anisha to start at Afterschool. Let me start by telling you a bit about our program……(*tells Lee all about their program*). "

SUMMER: "Lee, I haven't been able to meet Anisha yet, can you tell me a little bit about her?"

LEE: "Oh, she is such a sweetie! She's really very kind and gets really worried about other kids when they get upset"

SUMMER: "What sort of things does Anisha like to do?"

LEE: Anything crafty, she really loves beading, painting and coloring in, she's not very good at drawing or staying in the lines, but she will spend hours drawing or doing other craft activities. She's also a real girly girl, and likes to dress up, wear makeup and dance, she loves music!"

SUMMER: "What would you say are Anisha's strengths?"

LEE: "Doing puzzles, concentrating on craft activities, looking after other kids"

SUMMER: ".......and what things doesn't Anisha like?"

LEE: "Oh she definitely doesn't like washing her hands, or getting water on her clothes. She also doesn't like it when things change, for example, if she needs to pack up an activity to move onto something else, or do something that is new"

SUMMER: "Oh, ok, that's good to know. What do you usually do when that happens?"

LEE: "Things like washing her hands, she knows she has to do, she just doesn't like to do it. Usually if you just tell her "it's time to wash your hands" and hold her hand she will probably do it, but she might not be happy about it. Sometimes we count, or sing a short song to her while she's washing her hands"

SUMMER: ".......and when her clothes are wet?"

LEE: "She'll try and take them off -- Usually, it's just easier to change her into dry clothes."

SUMMER: "Is that what you'd like us to do if it happens here?"

LEE: "I'm not sure."

SUMMER: "Ok, what do they do during the school day if it happens?"

LEE: "I don't know."

SUMMER: "Maybe you can check with the school and let us know? Then we can decide what our plan will be if it ever happens here."

LEE: "ok"

SUMMER: "And what about when there's something new? What do you do to help Anisha?"

LEE: "We try and tell her beforehand if something new or different is happening. At school, I saw that they let her watch new activities for a before she needs to join in."

SUMMER: "That will be a really useful strategy for the staff here to use too - thanks for that! Can I ask you a little bit about Anisha's communication? How does she let you know when she needs something?"

LEE: "Anisha will go and get it herself if she knows where it is. I have to hide the cookies at home, because she will just go and eat the whole pack. If she can't get it or its out of her reach, she will ask me for it, like say 'time for Nemo?' She might ask you over and over again, even if you've said no."

SUMMER: "Sounds like she's pretty good at getting her message across. How do you know if Anisha likes something?"

LEE: "She'll smile, ask for it again, laugh, jump up and down"

SUMMER: "And how does she let you know if she doesn't like something?"

LEE: "She'll say 'no more swings', or just walk away from it"

SUMMER: "And what about if she really doesn't like something? Or gets upset?"

LEE: "She will cry and maybe scream. Sometimes she might throw a hissy fit"

SUMMER: "When you say 'throw a hissy fit', what does that look like?"

LEE: "Anisha might throw herself on the floor, scream, and not want to do anything! Sometimes she might kick or pinch you if you try and get her to do something"

SUMMER: "How do you usually respond when that happens?"

LEE: "We just tell her what to do, and show her a picture if we've got one. Sometimes we just ignore it and wait till she's calmed down before we ask her to do something again."

SUMMER: "…and is that a useful strategy?"

LEE: "Usually"

SUMMER: "Great, thanks for that information. It's really useful for us to know those strategies you use at home, in case we come across similar situations here. You mentioned that you used pictures at home, can you tell me more about them?"

LEE: "Oh, we have pictures of what Anisha is going to do each day stuck on the fridge. We also have a calendar where we write important events, like swimming or when school starts, so she knows when that will happen. She's pretty good at looking at the calendar herself to find out when something will happen, but if she's really excited, or worried about it she might keep asking you."

SUMMER: "Do you think having a similar schedule of what was going to happen would be helpful for Anisha to have here?"

LEE: "Probably. We also have some pictures of special instructions or rules, like 'wash hands after using the toilet'."

SUMMER: "Great, they might be useful for us to use here as well. How does Anisha let you know she needs to use the restroom?"

LEE: "She will go on her own…"

SUMMER: "…..and do you help her in anyway?"

LEE: "No, sometimes we have to remind her to wash her hands though."

SUMMER: "Are there any other strategies or supports you use that it might be good for us to know about or use?"

LEE: "Not at the moment."

SUMMER: "Is there anything you would like our staff to know about Anisha before she starts? "

LEE: "No, not really."

SUMMER: "That's ok, if you think of anything, it would be great if you could let us know. It would also be good for us to have ongoing communication while Anisha is at the program, so we can keep you up to date about what's happening here, and you can keep in touch with us. What's the best way to contact you?"

LEE: "Usually by email, I check it pretty regularly. At school I get a quick email from the teacher about once a week, just to give me an update on what's happening. That's been really useful for me to know what's going on."

SUMMER: "Would you like us to set up something similar here? I could talk to the teacher about it"

LEE: "Yes, that would be good."

SUMMER: "Ok, let me just confirm what we're going to do next. I'm going to talk to the after school teacher about emailing you regularly, and find out if we have access to picture supports. You said you'd find out what they do at school when Anisha's clothes get wet, and let us know if you think of any other strategies or supports that we can use?"

LEE: " Right, I will call you on Tuesday. Thanks!"

Sample Inclusion Plan

Child Information:

This section includes child demographic information and descriptions

Goals for (child's name) participation in the after school program (ASP):

This section includes participation goals identified by parents, teachers, and program staff

Likes and Dislikes:

This section includes a list of child's likes and dislikes

(child's name) likes:		(child's name) dislikes

(Child's name) Strengths:

This section describes a child's strengths, interests, gifts, and talents.

Intake Assessment / Child Observation Findings

This section includes information collected during the intake discussion(s) and child observation(s) that will "paint a picture" of who this child is and provide staff deeper understanding of the child's strengths, needs and strategies for supporting the child in the afterschool program.

Always try to write information in a way that highlights a child's strengths

Try to write 'what you saw' without bias or judgment, e.g.: "J was observed to stand up during group time and walk around the room", instead of "J couldn't concentrate at math time and got distracted"

	Information from discussion & observation	Suggestions for ASP
Classroom / home setup	The physical environment, structure, routines, schedule, rules etc	
Supporting positive behavior	Incentives, things that motivate the child, appropriate rules and expectations, behavior plans, responses to behavior, visual supports, reward systems, child's likes, dislikes, fears and triggers.	
Learning style	How do they learn new skills, do they have a preferred learning modality, do they need repetition, what are their learning strengths	
Social skills	Making friends and keeping friends, taking turns, joining in activities, waiting, appropriate conversations, sharing and negotiating, etc.	

Communication	Receptive and expressive language skills, preferred mode of communication, auxiliary aides and tools used to ensure effective communication	
Self Help	Going to the bathroom, eating, dressing etc.	
Transitions	Changing from the school day to the afterschool program, moving from one activity to another	
Safety	Medical needs, sensory or physical differences or behavior that may pose a safety concern	
Other	medical, mobility, etc.	

Accommodations Strategies

This section restates all identified accommodation or support needs of the child (Areas of Concern) and identifies possible accommodation that will meet these needs.

Areas of Concerns:	Accommodations Required

Plan for supporting (child's name)

This section documents the agreements between the program and family. It restates how the program will support the child, what reasonable accommodations will be provided, and who will be responsible for providing or funding the accommodations. This section also details how the accommodations and child's participation will be monitored and modified. If a team is formed to support the child this is a good place to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the key players.

Summary:

This section is a narrative that describes the most important parts of the inclusion plan - the highlights you can share with other staff who are working with the child.

More Important Laws

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states that "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 706(8) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...."

The Unruh Civil Rights Act is a California State law that provides protection from discrimination to a variety of protected classes (race, color, religion, disability, etc) by all business establishments in California. Both federal and state laws must be complied with – whichever is more restrictive.

IDEA is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, an entitlement law that provides early intervention and special education services to children who qualify for them. The IDEA guarantees children with disabilities, birth through 21, the same access to education as children without disabilities, including:

> A FREE AND APPROPRIATE EDUCATION (FAPE) FOR ALL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES. An appropriate education is one that is designed to meet the needs of the child and is designed to assist them in learning the same curriculum as other students his age

> TO BE EDUCATED IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE). The least restrictive environment means that all students are to be educated in the general education environment, unless their needs are so significant they need more specialized instruction.

> AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) PREPARED BY A TEAM WHICH INCLUDES THE PARENTS. The IEP contains the educational goals developed for the child as well as the related services and accommodations that the school has agreed to provide. The IEP may include participation in extra-curricular and after school activities as a requirement for meeting specific goals for the student's educational development.

> FAIR ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES TO BE USED TO DETERMINE STUDENT'S ABILITIES AND EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS. The school district has procedures it follows to ensure each student receives a full assessment to determine the child's strengths and needs, and to make recommendations for strategies to ensure the students can benefit from his education.

> DUE PROCESS AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES TO ENSURE STUDENT'S RIGHTS ARE MET. Numerous rules and regulations are in place to make sure student's rights are protected and parents are involved in the special education decision-making process. The California Department of Education has a summary of procedural safeguards at: http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/pssummary.asp

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEGAL SERVICES
of California

LEGAL UPDATE

March 20, 2009

To: Superintendents, Member School Districts (K-12)

From: Carl D. Corbin, Schools Legal Counsel CᘯC

Subject: Districts Have Duty to Ensure Students with Disabilities in an After-School Program Have Equal Access
Memo No. 09-2009

Our office is regularly asked questions about the responsibility of a school district to provide accommodations/services, such as a 1:1 aide, to a student with a disability in an after-school program (such as child care, homework club, sports, etc.). Districts must address the following three questions in order to determine a district's responsibility to provide accommodations/services in an after-school program or activity:

1. Does the student's IEP team believe the student requires an after-school program to receive a FAPE?

The district must determine whether the student is eligible during the regular school day for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"). If the student is eligible, then the district will have a duty to develop an Individualized Education Program ("IEP"). The IEP team under the IDEA must provide the student an offer of a Free Appropriate Public Education ("FAPE") based on the student's educational needs. One of the questions the IEP team may consider is whether or not the student requires an after-school program in order to address the student's educational needs and receive a FAPE. While not absolutely impossible, it would be an unusual situation for an IEP team to determine a student requires an after-school program in order to receive a FAPE. However, if the IEP team did determine the student required an after-school program in order to receive a FAPE, then the IEP team must ensure the

appropriate supports and services (which could include a 1:1 aide) are in place in the after-school program to allow the student to receive meaningful educational benefit.

2. If the student has an IEP or a Section 504 disability, then what organization is responsible for the after-school program?

A student may qualify for accommodations and modifications (such as a 1:1 aide) in an after-school program under either the IDEA or under Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"). Even if, as discussed above, the student's IEP team determined the student does not require an after-school program in order to receive a FAPE, the student is still potentially eligible for accommodations in the after-school program under Section 504. Also, a student who does not qualify for an IEP under the IDEA may qualify for accommodations under Section 504 insofar as the student has a mental or physical disability that substantially limits a major life activity. In this case, the entity conducting the after-school program (if it receives federal education funds) will be responsible to "provide nonacademic and extracurricular services in such manner as to afford [students with disabilities] an equal opportunity for participation in such activities."[1]

If the district operates the after-school program then the district will be responsible for analyzing the student's needs for accommodations (such as 1:1 aide) under Section 504 (described below). The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights ("OCR") has held that if there is a lack of substantial relationship between the district and the after-school program, then the district will not be responsible for addressing the student's potential Section 504 needs.[2] OCR has determined a "lack substantial relationship" between the district and after-school program when 1) there is minimal or lack of financial support provided by the district to the organization and 2) there is an absence of relationship between the organization's programs and activities and the district's organization and activities. For example, in the *Vicksburg* case, OCR found that the school district was not responsible for providing accommodations (a 1:1 aide) to a student with autism that was attending an after-school YMCA program located at the school district because the district did not financially support the YMCA and did not control or supervise the YMCA program. Rather OCR found that the district merely granted permission for the YMCA to use the district's facilities in a similar manner as the district allowed the Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Club and other organizations to use the district's facilities.

3. If the student has an IEP or a Section 504 disability and the district is responsible for the after-school program, would providing the student with a disability with reasonable modifications to allow the student equal access to the program create an undue administrative or financial burden or fundamentally alter the nature of the program?

OCR has consistently found that a district must modify its practices, policies and procedures by providing accommodations (such as a 1:1 aide) for a student with a disability to allow the student equal access to a program, unless the district affirmatively determines the accommodations

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[1] 34 C.F.R. 104.37(a)(1).
[2] *Vicksburg Warren School District* (OCR July 27, 2006) 06-06-1135, 46 IDELR 200, 106 LRP 56727.

would either fundamentally alter the nature of the program or would impose an undue administrative or financial hardship on the district.[3]

A. Fundamentally Alter the Nature of the Program

In the *Hayward* case, the district alleged the student posed a direct threat to the health and safety of others in the after-school childcare program such that it would fundamentally alter the nature of the program. OCR found it would be permissible to exclude a student from a program, but the determination must be based on an individualized assessment that takes into account factors such as: nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices or procedures will mitigate the risk. However, in this case OCR found the district impermissibly dismissed the student from the program, based on the student's behavioral problems, without discussing whether he could be successful with accommodations such as a 1:1 aide. Therefore, "blanket" policies, which prohibit the use of 1:1 aides or state if any student exhibits certain behaviors then the student can be excluded, should not be used by districts, but rather these decisions should be based on an individualized case-by-case basis.

B. Undue Administrative or Financial Hardship

OCR has established a fairly high standard for a district to demonstrate providing the accommodation would result in an undue financial hardship.[4] In the *Hermitage* case, a district refused to provide a sign language interpreter for a child (with a hearing disability) for an extracurricular play open to the general public. The district denied the request based on the fact that the cost of a sign language interpreter would exceed the proceeds from the drama club play. The district had offered to provide the student with a copy of the script of the play and allow the student to sit close to the stage as an alternative accommodation instead of providing a sign language interpreter.[5] OCR found that the district determination of whether the accommodation (providing a sign language interpreter in this case) would result in an undue financial hardship must be based on the overall district budget rather than basing the decision only on the ticket sales associated with the play. Therefore, districts need to be able to demonstrate the accommodation will impose an undue financial hardship based on the total district budget rather than just the budget associated with the specific activity in which accommodations are being sought.

Please contact any of our attorneys for additional assistance regarding this or any other legal issue.

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[3] *Hayward Unified School District* (OCR May 16, 2008) 09-08-1024, 50 IDELR 289, 108 LRP 53164.
[4] *Hermitage R-IV School District* (OCR Feb. 11, 2008) 07-06-1227, 108 LRP 53412.
[5] OCR found that providing a script of the play was 1) effective and timely; 2) an accurate translation; 3) but since the student's reading level was at the 1.7 grade level – the alternative accommodation was not appropriate.

Maintaining Confidentiality

ADA and IDEA have strict requirements for maintaining confidentiality: information is only to be shared with those who absolute need it, and then only with written consent of the parents. Records pertaining to a child's disability, medication information and the reasonable accommodations made for the child or youth must be maintained separately from other records.

To ensure confidentiality is maintained:

- Be sure everyone working in your program, including volunteers, knows that information about individual children is never shared – even after hours;
- Prepare to respond to questioning about particular students with statements such as: "We maintain strict confidentiality in our programs and cannot share information about specific students."
- Ask parents of children with disabilities how they would like their child introduced and what information, if any, they would like to have communicated about their child.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is the federal law that governs educational records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. If you are requesting information from the schools about a particular youth, there are specific rules the school must follow in order to provide you with information. Generally speaking, parents must give their permission in order for school records to be released.

According to FERPA, a school must:
- Have a parent's consent prior to the disclosure of education records;
- Ensure that the consent is signed and dated and states the purpose of the disclosure.

A school MAY disclose education records without consent when:
- The disclosure is to school officials who have been determined to have legitimate educational interests as set forth in the school district's annual notification of rights to parents;
- The student is seeking or intending to enroll in another school;
- The disclosure is to state or local educational authorities auditing or evaluating Federal or State supported education programs or enforcing Federal laws which relate to those programs;
- The disclosure is pursuant to a lawfully issued court order or subpoena; and
- The information disclosed has been appropriately designated as directory information by the school.

For a full explanation of the Family Information and Privacy Act see the FERPA website:
http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

Out of School Programs and the Americans with Disabilities Act

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Out of school programs serve a diverse population of students in a variety of settings. Many programs operate on tight budgets and aim to serve all those who need out of school care. When a person with disability wishes to attend a program, what responsibilities does the provider have? This memo discusses the federal law that protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination.

1. What is the Americans with Disabilities Act?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law which was passed in 1990. Among other things the ADA prohibits discrimination by both public entities such as school districts and places of public accommodation, including after school programs and family child care homes.[1] The ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which took effect January 1, 2009, strengthens protections for people with disabilities.[2] It reinforces the focus of the ADA on whether covered entities compiled with the statute and not on simply whether a person has a disability. States may provide greater protection for people with disabilities than what is guaranteed by the ADA.[3] In California, the Unruh Civil Rights Act prohibits all business establishments, including after school providers, from discriminating on the basis of disability.[4]

2. Who is protected by the ADA?
Three groups receive protection under the ADA. They are:
- People with a **physical or mental impairment** which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Corrective measures such as medication or glasses are taken into account when determining whether a person has a substantial limitation;
- People with a **history of** physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- People who are **regarded as** having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.[5]

3. What constitutes a physical or mental impairment?
The term is defined in the federal code of regulations and includes many conditions and diseases.
Physical impairment includes:
- Physiological disorders or conditions;
- Cosmetic disfigurement; OR
- Anatomical loss affecting one or more bodily systems.
Mental impairment includes:
- Any mental or psychological disorder such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

The Federal Code of Regulations also contains a long list of contagious and non-contagious diseases and conditions including orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, specific learning disabilities, HIV disease (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic), tuberculosis,

drug addiction, and alcoholism.[6] Note, that an impairment that is "episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active."[7] In the past, the mitigating effects of medications, equipment and other auxiliary aids were factored into the determination of whether or not someone qualified as having a disability. The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 changes that. With the exception of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses, efforts made by a person to lessen the severity of their disability should not be taken into account when determining whether a person has a disability.[8] In other words, in determining whether someone is protected by the ADA, what matters is whether a person has a physical or mental impairment and not what that person does to mitigate the effects of that disability. **4. What is a major life activity?**

A major life activity is defined as —functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.[4]

5. Do out of school providers have to comply with the requirements of the ADA?

YES. The ADA applies to out of school providers. Programs run by school districts or schools are public entities regulated by Title II, while for-profit or non-profit private programs are places of public accommodations regulated by Title III. Religious entities, however, are exempt from the ADA.[5]

6. What is a public entity?

A public entity is (1) any state or local government; (2) any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or States or local government.[6] Out of school providers that are run by a school district or a local educational agency are most likely considered a public entity and are governed by Title II of the ADA.

7. What is a public accommodation?

The ADA provides a list of specific places that are considered public accommodations including —a nursery, elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or postgraduate private school, or other place of education and —day care center(s). These private entities are considered places of public accommodation because they hold themselves out to the public as a business.[7] An out of school provider, whether operating out of a center or a family child care home, is a place of public accommodation.

8. Why does it matter whether I am categorized as a public entity or a public accommodation? The ADA is divided into three different sections, known as —titles. As mentioned in question 6, public entities are covered by Title II and public accommodations are covered by Title III[8]. Although there are many similarities between Title II and Title III, there are places where they differ and those distinctions can be important for providers and parents. Therefore, we highlight differences between Title II and Title III.

9. My program operates as license-exempt. Am I still required to comply with the requirements of the ADA?

Yes. State law determines what programs are required to be licensed and what programs can operate as license-exempt. The ADA is a federal law and is not affected by state licensing law. Therefore, license-exempt programs are required to comply with the ADA if they are either public entities or public accommodations.

10. My program is run by a religious entity do I still have to comply with the ADA?
No. Title III of the ADA contains an exemption for religious organizations or entities controlled by religious organizations.[9] Merely operating in a religious building does not meet the ADA exemption. It is also important to note that California has a law, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which is more expansive then the ADA and covers all business establishments. The Unruh Act contains no exemption for religious entities. An out of school provider that is run as a business establishment would be required to follow the Unruh Act, which requires the same individualized assessment and reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities

11. What does the ADA require of out of school providers?
Both Title II and Title III of the ADA prohibit providers from discriminating against persons simply because they have disabilities. Instead, providers have to make a case-by-case assessment of what the person with the disability requires to be fully integrated into the program. Once they know what is needed, they must assess whether reasonable accommodations can be made.[10]

12. What types of accommodations does the ADA require?
The ADA sets out four primary types of accommodations:
- Admissions policies that do not screen out or tend to screen out persons with disabilities[11];
- Changes in policies, practices, or procedures[12];
- Provision of auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective communication[13]; and
- Removal of physical barriers in existing program facilities.[14]

13. How does a program determine reasonableness?
In practical terms, what is reasonable will vary. Generally, the three most important variables are the person with disabilities' needs, the accommodations requested, and the resources available to the program. Because some after school programs may have fewer resources and a smaller staff than others, they may be required to do less. The accommodations, however, must be based on individualized assessments of the child's needs and the program's ability to make the necessary modifications. The ADA requires out of school programs to make accommodations in the areas described in Question 12 unless:

- In cases of changes in policies, practices or procedures under both Title II and Title III, the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or services offered.[15]

- In the case of auxiliary aids and services under both Title II and Title III, the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or pose an undue burden (i.e., pose a significant difficulty or expense)[16];
- In the case of the removal of physical barriers under Title II, the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or be an undue financial and administrative burden. The ADA allows programs to provide services to individuals with disabilities through alternative methods if physical barriers are not removed[17];
- In the case of the removal of physical barriers under Title III, the accommodation is not readily achievable. The ADA allows programs to provide services to individuals with disabilities through alternative methods if physical barriers are not removed[18].

Out of school providers should begin the process of identifying reasonable accommodations by talking with the parent(s) or legal guardian about the child's needs and the accommodations sought. With the parent's permission, the provider could also speak to the child's school teacher. If the child has an individualized education plan (IEP) in place, the provider can also use that as a guide for determining reasonable accommodations, although differences between the school setting and the out of school setting mean that this is only one tool and not the definitive answer to what is reasonable. Both the parents and the provider should aim to reach an informal resolution whenever possible. If informal resolution is not possible, a court would decide what is reasonable.

14. Who within a particular program determines what is reasonable?

It depends on the particular program. In a private out of school program governed by Title III, the center director or family child care provider would most likely make this determination. For a program that is run in conjunction with a school or on a school site, the answer is more complicated. A private program that is simply renting space from a school will likely have autonomy to determine what is reasonable with regard to admissions policies, program modifications and auxiliary aids and services, but will have to consult with the school or school district about facility modifications. If the program is run by the school, then the person in charge of that school (usually a principal or superintendent) would make the reasonableness determination for the program. It is important to note, however, that a parent or guardian can always disagree with a programs' assessment of what is reasonable. Ultimately, a court of law would make a final determination about what is reasonable in a particular situation.

15. Are there situations in which care can be refused?

Yes, but these situations will be very limited. They include situations when:

- A child poses a direct threat to him or herself or the other children in the program. A direct threat means a substantial risk of harm which must be documented by objective professional evidence.[19]
- The accommodations requested are unreasonable and the parent(s) and provider(s) are unable to work out a compromise.

16. Do programs have to comply with any other laws related to children with disabilities?
Yes. There are other laws, both state and federal, that protect people with disabilities from discrimination. The law most relevant to out of school providers is the California Unruh Civil Rights Act, which prohibits all business establishments, including out of school providers, from discriminating on the basis of disability. The Unruh Civil Rights Act goes further than the ADA in its protections for children with disabilities.[20]

17. Can I be sued by other parents for accepting a child with disabilities into my program?
Not successfully. In fact, the law is to the contrary. Anyone who interferes with a program's rightful compliance with the law (for example, enrolling a child with disabilities) can be sued for violating the ADA[21]. A high quality program should provide opportunities for parent education about the benefits of typically developing children and those with disabilities interacting in out of school care.

18. What do I do when another parent makes inquiries about a child with disabilities?
Information about a child's disability is confidential and should not be shared with others unless you have consent from the parents of the child with the disability. If you have a respectful relationship with the parents, you may be able to have a conversation with them about how they would like to see you handle inquiries about their child's disability from other parents and the children. Some parents will prefer that information about their child's disability remain confidential while others may welcome the opportunity to share with other families the nature of their child's disability. When a family is open about a child's disability, not only does the child benefit, but there are also many benefits and advantages for the staff and children in the programs. Once again, one of the best ways to respond to families is outside of the context of a particular child and in the general context of information about what quality care is all about. High quality programs will provide opportunities for parent education, which in turn should include discussions of the benefits to all children of inclusive out of school care.

19. Does caring for children with disabilities affect my staff to child ratios? Is there a limit on the number of children with special needs I can care for?
There is no particular number of children you may care for when you accept a child with special needs, as each child with special needs is different, and there are no special ratios. The provider must evaluate his/her own program, keeping in mind the special needs of each child before determining how many children with special needs their program can accommodate.

20. My out of school program has high child to staff ratios and I don't think my program is appropriate for a child with disabilities. Can I refuse to take a child on that basis?
No. This approach assumes that all children with special needs require a lower than usual child to staff ratio. Regardless of ratios, a program must make an individualized assessment of the child. The program can factor in the number of staff and the ratios when determining what is reasonable. It is important to remember that a parent may prefer your program for their child.

21. Can I charge more for a child with special needs because they require more individualized attention? If I cannot, how will I survive financially?

Programs may not charge the parents of children with disabilities more for providing reasonable accommodations. Programs are free to raise their fees to all families, use tax credits or deductions available from the IRS if they are for-profit programs which pay taxes, or seek resources from outside their programs. When an accommodation is above and beyond a reasonable accommodation, an additional fee may be imposed, but a legal consultation should be made beforehand with someone knowledgeable about ADA's requirements. This will both ensure that the accommodation is in fact —above and beyond‖ a reasonable accommodation and that there is sufficient documentation of agreement on this point. Programs may charge parents for the cost of providing additional, non-child care services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy and the like (if they are not already paid for by the local school district). Keep in mind that in many instances, the reasonable accommodations which are necessary are not very costly and/or in the case of improving ratios, could benefit all the children in care.

22. I understand that programs may not discriminate, but additionally I want to be clear that my program welcomes children with disabilities. How do I say that in my brochure?

Your materials may include language that states that your program is —fully accessible or that your teachers —have experience in caring for children with disabilities. This goes beyond what is required by law, but is helpful to make your facility visible as one that promotes inclusion.

23. When I care for a child with a disability who receives a subsidy, may I receive any additional money?

Yes, there are special needs rates and additional funding that may be obtained when caring for children with exceptional needs and severely handicapped children. However, the additional money cannot be charged to the parents, but must be billed to the funding entity. The definition of —children with disabilities‖ is interpreted differently from county to county. You should check with your local alternative payment program to determine the applicable practice in your county.

24. How can I care for children with disabilities if I am not trained or if I work on my own?

Many of the accommodations that children need are not complicated and can be easily implemented. If a provider works on his or her own, the necessary accommodations can often be made without additional staffing. In other instances, where training is helpful or necessary, it may be available from the parent or guardian, health professionals, disability organizations, local resource and referral agencies, or community colleges. The important thing is to identify community resources that can assist with inclusion.

25. May my program automatically decline to serve a child with a disability and simply refer them to another program or provider who I think is better able to serve them?

No. A parent may prefer your care and if it is possible for you to make the reasonable accommodations necessary to serve that child, he or she may not be turned away and referred to

another program. If a program can document that it undertook an individualized assessment of the situation and found that accommodating the child would not be reasonable, the program may then offer suggestions for other potential alternatives.

26. Shouldn't providers get to choose who they enroll since it is their business?
By deciding to become professional caregivers, providers become responsible for complying with many types of laws—tax laws, licensing laws—as well as civil rights laws, which in the case of ADA and the Unruh Civil Rights Law, protects people with disabilities from discrimination. It is worth remembering that any of us could become a person with a disability at any time, and we too may benefit from the protections of the ADA and the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

27. If a parent of a child with a disability has conflicts with the provider or if the parent fails to comply with rules applied to all families, can the family be terminated from the program?
Yes, if it can be documented that the reasons for termination have to do with failure to comply with rules or standards that are: uniformly applied to all families, not relevant to any potential required accommodations, and are not used as an excuse for discrimination. For example, a recent case found that a mother's belligerence and total lack of cooperation, coupled with her failure to comply with rules imposed on everyone which had nothing to do with her child's disability, permitted a program to terminate her child[22].

28. What can individuals do if they feel they have been discriminated against?
If the out of school program is a place of public accommodation, file a complaint with the Department of Justice, the federal agency that enforces the ADA. Individuals who feel they have been discriminated against may file a complaint with the Dept. of Justice in Washington, D.C. alleging a potential Americans with Disabilities Act violation. Written complaints should include the full name, address and telephone number of the person filing the complaint, the name of the person discriminated against, the name of the program which engaged in the discrimination, a description of the discrimination, the date or dates on which it occurred, the name(s) of those individuals discriminating, any other information that you believe is necessary to support your complaint, and copies of any relevant documents (originals should be kept in a safe place). This should be sent to: U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Civil Rights Division Disability Rights – NYAVE Washington, DC 20530 8

There is no deadline for filing a complaint under Title III but it is recommended that complaints be filed promptly once you decide to file. Typically, the older a case becomes, the more difficult it is to come up with reliable proof and witnesses. Additionally, there is an increased chance your case may be dismissed for failure to pursue it. The Department of Justice (DOJ) will investigate your complaint. DOJ attempts to resolve most complaints through informal or formal settlement agreements, but is authorized to file lawsuits. If the Attorney General brings a lawsuit, she may seek monetary damages as well as civil penalties ($50,000 for the first violation; $100,000 for any subsequent violation). More information is available at: http://www.ada.gov/t3compfm.htm.

If the out of school provider is a public entity, file a Title II complaint form with the appropriate federal agency. Individuals who feel they have been discriminated against may file a complaint with (1) any federal agency that provides funding to the public entity that is the subject of the complaint; (2) a federal agency designated in the title II regulation to investigate title II complaints; or (3) the Dept. of Justice in Washington, D.C. The complaint must be in writing and should include at minimum the full name, address and telephone number of the person filing the complaint, a description of the public entity's alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the federal agency of the nature and date of the alleged violation, and the signature of the complainant. If the complaint is filed on behalf of a class of people or by third parties it should describe or identify (by name, if possible) the alleged victims of the discrimination. You can also include any other information that you believe is necessary to support your complaint, and copies of any relevant documents (originals should be kept in a safe place). Unlike Title III violations which have no statute of limitations, Title II violations must be filed within 6 months of the alleged discrimination. The Federal agency processing the complaint can resolve complaints through informal means or through a detailed letter containing the findings and the remedies, if any.[23] The ADA does not require a person to file a complaint under Title II or Title III before filing a lawsuit for discrimination.[24]

ENDNOTES: These endnotes are legal citations for the information above. If you are having trouble understanding these citations, please speak with a reference librarian in your local law library. To look up the laws that apply to you, visit your local law library. Do not hesitate to look up the law and know your rights.

[1] 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (2006).
[2] 28 C.F.R. § 36.104 (2008).
[3] 28 CFR § 35.104(1)(i)(ii)(2008).
[4] 28 CFR § 35.104(2) (2008).
[5] Note, however, if a religious entity is receiving any federal funds, it is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended at 29 U.S.C. § 794.
[6] 28 C.F.R. § 35.104 (2008).
[7] 42 U.S.C. § 12181(J) and (K)(2006).
[8] 42 U.S.C. § 12131 et seq. (2006); 42 U.S.C. § 12181 et seq. (2006).
[9] 42 U.S.C. § 12187 (2005).
[10] 42 U.S.C. § 12182 (2006); 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7) (2008).
[11] 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(i) (2006); 28 C.F.R. § 36. 302 (2006).
[12] 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii) (2006); 28 C.F. R. § 36.302 (2006).
[13] 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iii) (2006); 28 C.F. R. § 36.303 (2006).
[14] 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv) (2006); 28 C.F. R. § 36.304 (2006).

Special Needs Inclusion Project High Quality Standards

High Quality Standard 1: Philosophy

The agency has a formal statement - philosophy, mission, values and goals - which reflects a commitment to inclusion.

Indicator 1.1: Agency's inclusion statement is evident in written materials, such as annual reports, brochures and registration materials.

In this Section.....

How to Make Inclusion an Integral Part of Your Vision

Planning for Inclusive Environment

Sample Mission Statements

Sample Inclusion Policy

Samples Policy, Mission and Vision Statement

Sample Inclusion Statements

Let Inclusion Show

"For inclusive out-of-school time programming to be successful, everyone involved must adopt a new way of thinking about youth with disabilities and how they are served. Everyone from the top of the agency down must begin to recognize the importance of making programs inclusive of all children. One of the crucial elements of such a "systems change" is the development of a mission statement that is reflective of your agency's desire to provide programming for children of all ability levels. This mission statement should be clearly stated so that staff, as well as customers, understand the basic purposes that guide the organization. A commitment to serve all youth, regardless of ability, should be communicated clearly, sincerely, and repeatedly."

From *A Community for All*

Creating an Inclusive Environment

As you are planning to make your program more inclusive, you may want to consider the following elements of your program:

Philosophy/Mission
If your agency has a mission statement or a philosophy statement, review it through the lens of inclusion. Adopting a philosophy statement does several things:
- It educates your governing board,
- It makes staff start thinking about resource allocation,
- It sends a welcoming message to your citizens with disabilities, and
- It make citizens without disabilities aware of inclusion as an important public policy in your community

Policy
A policy is a course of action, guiding principles or procedures considered to be expedient, prudent or advantageous. A policy mandates standards for acceptable conduct. Guidelines suggest principles for conduct which are recommended but not mandatory.

Anatomy of a Policy
- Statement of need or rationale
- Statement of purpose
- General principles
- Definitions
- Procedure
- Statement of relationship to existing policies

Inclusion Policy
- Addresses ADA Compliance
- Supports Agencies Inclusion Philosophy

Sample Mission Statements

Boys and Girls Clubs of Washington, DC
The mission of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington is to help boys and girls of all backgrounds, especially those who need us most, build confidence, develop character and acquire the skills needed to become productive, civic-minded, responsible adults.

Richmond District Neighborhood Center, San Francisco
RDNC's mission is to nurture a diverse urban community by developing and providing high quality youth, adult and family programs that address critical community needs and foster respect for all people and our environment.

The YMCA of San Francisco
The YMCA of San Francisco builds strong kids, strong families and strong communities by enriching the lives of all people in spirit, mind and body.

The Visitacion Valley Community Beacon Center
The Visitacion Valley Community Beacon Center aims to serve the youth, families and residents of Visitacion Valley, to help youth transition into healthy adulthood; to foster the family unit and to empower all community members to contribute positively and participate fully in their community.

Sample Inclusion Policy

City of Milpitas Parks and Recreation Department
The City of Milpitas Parks and Recreation Services Department ("PRSD") proposes the following inclusion policy:

The City welcomes and encourages the participation of children and adults with disabilities in all of its programs. The PRSD makes every reasonable effort to ensure that programs, activities, and services, when viewed in their entirety, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be attempted for all programs and the City will make every effort to ensure that its services, programs and activities, when viewed in their entirety, are readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities.

(see http://www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov/citydept/Planning/recreation/youth_program/inclusion_policy.pdf for the entire policy and procedures document)

Sample Policy, Mission and Vision Statement

Zoological Society of San Diego
Policy Statement: The Zoological Society of San Diego is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California Access laws. The letter and spirit of the law will guide the design of facilities, programs, activities, and events to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, they are usable by ALL guests. We will strive to employ the concept of universal design to promote inclusion and eliminate segregation where possible.

Mission Statement: The Access Advisory Group (AAG) is committed to ensuring the ZSSD implements its accessibility policy and accomplishes its goal o f compliance with the spirit and letter of the law.

Vision: The ZSSD will adopt accessibility as a value and it will become instinctive to the entire organization. It will be sustained by Society policies, practices, and procedures.

Sample Inclusion Statements

1. The Adapted Recreation Division offers recreation programs and services which promote individual choices, develop leisure skills and enhance socialization. Individuals with disabilities can choose to take part in an adapted program which is designed specifically for people with disabilities or utilize inclusion services in which accommodations may be provided so that an individual with a disability can participate in any of Community Education and Recreation programs that are not specifically designed for people with disabilities.

2. Everyone is welcome to enroll in all of the classes offered in the Rec & Ed catalog. If you need to have special accommodations made to allow you to participate, we will be happy to work with you. We also offer classes that are specifically designed for adults & teens with mental or physical challenges. They are co-sponsored with the City of Ann Arbor Department of Parks and Recreation.

High Quality Standard 2: Inclusion Strategies and Resources

Program has strategies and resources to ensure effective inclusion for children/youth with special needs in its activities.

Indicator 2.1: Staff and volunteers are trained and knowledgeable of inclusive practices.
Examples:

- Staff participates in professional development focused on including children/youth with disabilities.
- Staff and volunteers show evidence of certification or significant experience working with individuals who have special needs.
- In-house staff development activities and volunteer training curriculum includes knowledge and skills related to inclusive practices.
- The agency hires an inclusion facilitator to coach, guide and support staff.

Indicator 2.2: Staff identify (formally or informally) strengths and interests of children and youth with disabilities and creates a plan for including them in program activities.
Examples:

- Staff has a process to identify children's strengths and needs.
- Staff develops a written plan for including children and youth with disabilities in the program activities.

Indicator 2.3: Staff creates activities and/or curriculum to include children/youth with special needs in program activities.
Examples:

- Program has a curriculum binder where staff can find examples of modified activities and tips for including children/youth with special needs
- Staff and participants attend workshops to learn how to create inclusive activities.

In this Section…..

Understanding Student's Strengths and Needs

Strengths and Strategies Profile

Adapting and Modifying Activities

Strategies for Promoting Cooperative Interactions

Curriculum Adaptation Flow Chart

Making Relationships a Priority

Understanding Students' Strengths and Needs

The following article from Paula Kluth provides information on a way to assess a student's strengths and needs, and discovering strategies for making modifications or accommodations for program activities.

Strengths & Strategies
Assessing and Sharing What Matters
© 2005 Paula Kluth

I once met with a team of middle-school teachers who worked with a student named Jim. While Jim did not have an identified disability, it was clear from conversations between his teachers that some of them struggled to connect with him. Two of the teachers complained about Jim's constant activity. One sighed, "He never sits down, he is a jackhammer- he bounces around constantly". Another remarked, "He gets up in the middle of my lessons to sharpen his pencils and he twists around in his seat so much that it distracts the other students".

While most of the teachers nodded in agreement with these assessments, two of the educators at the table seemed confused by this information. The physical education teacher claimed that she didn't have "any problems" with Jim and that, in fact, he was one of her strongest students. She saw him as an active and athletic student, a leader, and as an asset to her class. He participated fully in all activities and seemed to try hard to acquire new skills. The science teacher also described Jim as an active learner and called him "cooperative and inquisitive". Some saw Jim's energy and activity as an asset while others saw it as a problem.

Perhaps a conversation between members of the aforementioned team could help all teachers see and inspire the strengths in Jim. Teachers who had success with Jim might be able to share useful strategies with those who were struggling. The physical education teacher, for instance, might share her ideas on how Jim learns best. The science teacher might tell or show others about some of Jim's best assignments or class contributions. Teachers might even agree to co-teach a few lessons together or to observe each other's classes.

Jim's story illustrates the power of perception in teaching. In this case, Jim's teachers could have reframed and solved their problem simply by sharing their impressions of him and by listening to and learning from the ways in which other colleagues had labeled and understood him. Jim's teacher might also have learned a lot about their biases by examining how their perceptions influenced their language and how their language may have impacted their practices.

This experience was similar to one I had on my first day of teaching. That first morning of my career, I was told I would be working with a student named Jay. Then I was given dozens of files to review. I marveled at the stacks of reports, evaluations, observations, clinical assessments, work samples, and standardized test results. I couldn't believe a child so small could have so many "credentials". As I reviewed the files I moved from feeling stunned to overwhelmed to terrified. Jay's paperwork was filled with information about his inability to be a student or a learner. The documents detailed his challenging behaviors, skill deficits, and communication problems. I was devastated to read so much about this individual yet find so little about his abilities, gifts, and strengths.

As these stories illustrate, if every meeting begins with a description of a student's struggles and if every report written fails to include student strengths and gifts, it becomes hard to plan for and support that learner. Certainly, the way that we talk, think, and write about our students impacts our practice. In addition, our perceptions of learners and the ways in which we communicate about them, can serve to strengthen or damage our relationships with families.

A parent of a fifth-grade student once told me that she was in the education system for six years before any teacher said anything kind or positive about her daughter. When the teacher off-handedly shared that Rachel, her daughter, had "a beautiful smile and great energy" the mother burst into tears, startling the teacher. After learning of the reason for the mother's reaction, the teacher made it a point to keep sharing information about Rachel's abilities, gifts, skills, and accomplishments throughout the school year.

For all these reasons, I began using a simple document titled "Strengths and Strategies" when I plan with teachers, families, and students. This document can help educators focus on the abilities and strengths of learners instead of only on their difficulties and areas of need.

What Are "Strength & Strategies" Pages?

"Strength & Strategies" pages are simply lists that provide positive and useful information about a single learner. One list contains a student's strengths, interests, gifts, and talents. The other list answers the question, "What works for this student?"; this list should contain strategies for motivating, supporting, encouraging, helping, teaching, and connecting with the learner.

When Do I Use "Strengths & Strategies" Pages?

"Strengths & Strategies" pages can be used anytime for any purpose. I often use them to begin IEP meetings. They can also be used as an attachment to a positive behavior plan or as a communication tool for teams who are transitioning a student from teacher to teacher or school to school.

Why Use "Strengths & Strategies" Pages?

While this tool is not complex and does not necessarily provide a team with new information, it can help teachers organize the information they have and understand it in a new way. The focus on positive language and abilities can prompt educators to think and talk about students in more proactive way. It can also help teachers make changes in their planning and in their daily practice. Specifically, educators may be able to use these forms to:

• plan curriculum and instruction;

• create curricular adaptations;

• develop student goals and objectives;

• design supports for challenging situations;

• work more collaboratively with and elicit concrete ideas from families; and

• collaborate and communicate with each other.

A completed Strengths and Strategies Worksheet in PDF format is attached and may be used as a model.

Used by permission from Paula Kluth, pkluth@paulakluth.com.

Strengths & Strategies Profile

Kluth, P. & Dimon-Borowski, M. (2003)
This form can be used as an attachment to a positive behavior plan or as a communication tool for teams who are transitioning a student from teacher to teacher or school to school. A student's team (e.g., teachers, family, therapists) should work together to fill in this form. Ideally, each list should contain NO LESS than fifty items.

Mischa's Strengths, Gifts, Interests, & Talents

• Can count to one hundred • Is very neat and tidy • Can pour her own juice or milk • Keeps her desk area very tidy • Likes to have her back rubbed • Can solve simple addition problems • Knows how to add with a calculator • Likes to have jobs/responsibilities • Fascinated by watches- esp. those with big faces • Can get started on her morning routine without assistance • Enjoys doing class jobs (e.g., watering plants) • Loving • Likes to look at animal magazines • Knows left from right • Knows how to use her CD player • Loves the "Dixie Chicks" • Can read her "All About Me" book independently • Likes to be a leader • Energetic • She is a strong decoder • Loves Pokemon • Is self-confident • Loves to sing familiar songs • Loves to count things; very interested in putting numbers in order • Can get started on her morning classroom routine without assistance	• Can talk like Donald Duck • Athletic • Likes to show family photos to friends • Improving in comprehension • Can read simple books to her little sister • She can stay "on the job" for 10 minutes at a time • Can put her shoes on without support • Likes to run around the playground, likes to be chased • Likes to organize things by color or size • Plays with Mega-bots and creates neat stories with the characters • Knows how to play 4 computer games on her own • Is knowledgeable about birds, especially hummingbirds • Loves to sing folk songs- especially "Peter, Paul, & Mary" • Exceptional memory- knows all of the birthdays of friends and staff members • Is cooperative • Is a peacemaker • Cares about others • Loves movies about animals • Shares her things • Good natured • Can prepare her own snack • Very polite • Loving • Seeks out affection

What Works for Mischa?: Effective Strategies

• genuine and gentle encouragement • telling her when she is doing something right • a calm and gentle approach • whispering instead of using a firm voice • giving her lots of choices • pre-teaching difficult lesson content • asking her opinion • giving her responsibilities • letting her use a pencil grip • humor • letting her work with friends	• letting her "read" more than one book at a time, she spreads them out and reviews 2 at once • allowing her to occasionally do her math problems on the chalk board (this is very motivating) • letting her send e-mail to friends (helps her work on her writing skills) • ask her to help with organizing things in the classroom (e.g., straighten library books) • give her opportunities to share her "All About Me" book with friends

• letting her call her mother if she seems stressed out • letting her use her red pens • letting her sit on the floor when she asks to • showing her instead of telling her • let her take the spot at the end of the line • explaining EVERYTHING in detail • she sometimes responds better to written "speech" • using visual information (charts) • giving her time to work on her own (don't over support) • telling her something about yourself (she likes to hear about her teachers' children and dogs) • asking her to "read" to other students – even if it is just showing them a picture book • giving her previews- if you are taking a field trip to a museum, tell her about it • encouraging her to "do her positive self-talk" if she seems frustrated by a task • letting her review her "recess choice" book before going on the playground • having her start the day by looking at her favorite farm magazine • sometimes likes to know exactly where her work space is (you can tape it off to show her) • helping her to change topics by bringing up special interests • may need to take little "safe spot" or relaxation breaks • use Sponge Bob to interest her in activities- for instance, let her write stories about him	• she may need to circle the table before he takes a seat- allow her to do this • using photographs to interact with her • letting her help to teach a part of a lesson (she likes to help the teacher) • giving her something squishy to play with during whole-class work (koosh ball) • giving her time to respond (several seconds) to verbal questions or commands • giving her breaks to move around the room • letting her choose where she wants to sit (floor, desk, back couch) • letting her choose one item on a test or worksheet to omit (calms her down) • giving her headphones for music during independent work • singing Beatles songs during times of stress • loves the smell of lavender • can work for long periods of time when she is allowed to hum and rock in her chair a bit • if she seems confused, write the steps or directions on a chalkboard (use pictures too) • hum to her when she is stressed and let her hum also

Adapting and Modifying Activities

Activities can be structured in three ways: Competitive, Individualistic, or Cooperative. Each is legitimate and has strengths in particular situations. In inclusive out-of-school time settings, cooperative activities tend to work best. Success in cooperative activities is determined by the group's ability to include all group members in the completion of the activity.

- **Competitive:** Competition in its traditional application leads to one person in a group winning, with all other group members losing.
- **Individualistic:** In individual activities each member of a group works to improve his or her own past performance.
- **Cooperative:** In order for the group to succeed, every member of the group must contribute to the best of his ability.

How the Same Activity can be Structured Competitively, Individually, or Cooperatively

Suppose there are a group of children, with and without movement disabilities, at your summer camp. Today's activity is canoe paddling. Line the canoes up at the edge of the lake.

Competitive Structure: Place each child in a canoe with a paddle. Instruct the children to paddle across the lake as fast as they can. The first one across that lake gets the camp prize for "Best Canoe Paddler."

Individualistic Structure: Place each child in a canoe with a paddle. At the beginning of the day, have the children paddle across the lake as fast as they can and record each camper's crossing time. At the end of the day, after instruction and practice, have the children paddle across that lake as fast as they can again. Instruct the children that anyone that improves their crossing time will get a "Certified Canoe Paddler" certificate.

Cooperative Structure: Place a set of buoys up marking a lane across the lake for a canoe to stay between. Allow enough room in the lane for some error. Place a team of children in a large canoe and give each child a paddle. Tell the children that they are to paddle as well as they can across the lake and that they will all get a "Certified Canoe Paddler" certificate if they work together to get the canoe across the lake and stay between the set of buoys. Paddle alongside to determine that everyone is paddling, and they are encouraging and assisting one another. To keep the canoe straight, they will have to work together. Teamwork is a must in order for the children to succeed.

Adapted from: Rynders, J.E., & Schleien, S.J. (1991). Together Successfully: Creating Recreational and Educational Programs that Integrate People with and without Disabilities. Arlington, TX: ARC-USA

Although a cooperative structure is the preferred format for fully inclusive programs, this is not to imply that competitive formats are without value. We should not assume that a child with a disability is not capable of participating in a competitive activity. If this is the child's choice and she has the basic skills necessary, the child should have every opportunity to do so. For instance, a child that uses a wheelchair due to mobility limitations might have outstanding upper body strength and coordination. If this is the case, this child could possibly do very well in the competitive canoe experience example used above.

Strategies for Promoting Cooperative Interactions

- Seat participants in small, integrated groups.
- Make sure that all participants are positioned reasonably close to other group members.
- Provide an adequate amount of space that is easily accessible so that all members of the group can work together on a project.
- Make sure that all materials for a project are easily accessible to all members of the group.
- Emphasize the importance of enjoying an activity with another person rather than the speed and/or accuracy with which it is done.
- Adapt the activities to the ages and ability levels of all participants.
- Develop directions for the task in such a way that they require an interdependent (cooperative) effort, rather than independent or competitive effort.
- Model cooperative behavior.
- Reinforce cooperative interaction and encourage it when it does not occur.

Adapted from: Rynders, J.E., & Schleien, S.J. (1991). Together Successfully: Creating Recreational and Educational Programs that Integrate People with and without Disabilities. Arlington, TX: ARC-USA.

From a Community for All Children

The reality exists that all individuals will not be able to participate fully in every activity. An alternative to excluding an individual from an activity, or completely canceling an activity, is to aim for partial participation. Partial participation is an approach that calls for adjustments to an activity and/or environment that allows for some partial degree of involvement, to one's maximum extent possible. Adjustments or adaptations of the activity could be minor or more significant, depending on the needs of the participant and should always be viewed on an individual basis.

Suppose you are leading a group of youth volunteers in the activity of painting over graffiti on a school wall. Partial participation in this activity could be accomplished by:

- Changing or adapting the materials used in the activity (e.g., placing padding around the handle of a paint roller to make the handle larger and easier to grasp for the volunteer that has difficulty holding the smaller handle).
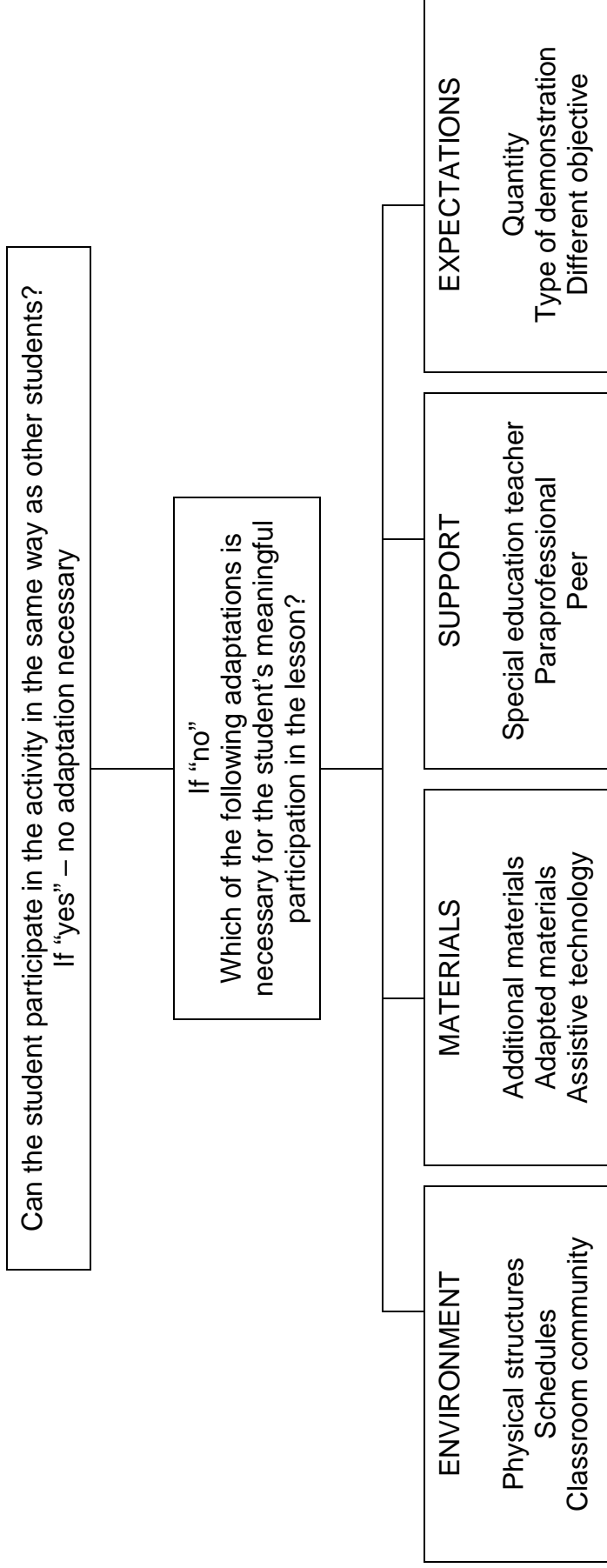
- Altering the sequence of steps used in the activity (e.g., having paint already poured into roller pans before participants begin activity).
- Adapting the rules of an activity (e.g., physically marking the area of the wall that the participant is allowed to paint for the participant that struggles to maintain focus).
- Providing personal assistance to an individual when adaptations are not feasible (e.g., allowing a friend, companion, tutor, or parent to assist the participant with holding the paint roller handle by placing their hands over the hand of the participant's on the roller handle).
- Providing alternative, yet essential, roles for individuals that may otherwise be excluded from the activity (e.g., having the individual, that is physically incapable of climbing a ladder, be responsible for assisting with the acquisition and preparation of the painting materials rather than painting a high spot on the wall).

The inclusion of an individual in a partial participation role in no way decreases the success for the individual, activity, or group. Success is a matter of perspective. As long as emphasis is placed on participants contributing to the best of their own abilities, every participant becomes a successful contributor to the out-of-school time program. Again, parents can be key in assisting in the identification of strengths and interests that will help to make partial participation a success for children with disabilities. *From A Community for All Children*

PROJECT access

Opening doors to extended learning opportunities for ALL students

Curriculum Adaptation Flowchart

Can the student participate in the activity in the same way as other students?
If "yes" – no adaptation necessary

If "no"

Which of the following adaptations is necessary for the student's meaningful participation in the lesson?

ENVIRONMENT

Physical structures
Schedules
Classroom community

MATERIALS

Additional materials
Adapted materials
Assistive technology

SUPPORT

Special education teacher
Paraprofessional
Peer

EXPECTATIONS

Quantity
Type of demonstration
Different objective

Modifying Program Activities

This section from www.communityinclusion.org – Institute Brief No. 9, Vol. 1, Recreation in the community

All recreation programs are unique. There are some basic strategies, however, that may be useful within general activities. Providers agreed that successful strategies evolve over time, through trial and error. It is important for program directors to know that they are not alone, and that using a team approach to modifying activities yields positive results. Below are some suggestions that were shared by recreation providers when reviewing common activities where accommodations have been used to promote full participation.

Field Trips

- Prepare participants with details of the trip.
- Provide written communication of events/trips in the person's native language, including Braille.
- Ensure that the activity site and transportation will be accessible.
- Review transportation and community sites.
- State rules simply and positively.

Arts and Crafts

- Use an assortment of items to modify a craft (e.g., name stamp for a signature, thick paint brushes, pre-cut shapes, pre-drawn outlines for coloring, tape to hold down paper, large beads, or stickers).
- Simplify directions by taking one step at a time.
- Pair-up participants who can assist one another.
- Be prepared to have back-up activities for those who finish more quickly or lose interest.
- Match activity roles with participants' interests and talents, especially when working in groups.

Free Time

- Make materials available to facilitate interaction and conversation among peers (e.g., games, magazines, computer software).
- Allow freedom to participate in activities without direct adult supervision.
- Provide semi-structured activities for those students who may need them.
- Respect all participants' choices.
- Remember to praise students for following the rules during free time.

Arrival/Departure Activities

- Take time to preview the schedule of activities.
- Remind participants each step that needs to be taken when arriving or leaving the program.
- Pair-up participants during transition times as well as during structured activities.
- Have impromptu games available to keep participants together during down time.

Homework Time
- Clearly state beginning and end of homework time.
- Select activities that will reflect what students are studying in school (e.g., if studying geography, a group could design a globe, paint a mural of the world, or ask students to describe the country they are from).
- Use volunteers or older students to assist as tutors.
- Check to make sure that students with more significant disabilities have homework, be prepared with project-based activities that relate to areas that students are working on in school.

Group Games
- Choose games that emphasize cooperation, not competition.
- Always have creative variations of games available to participants.
- When forming teams, rotate groups frequently so that participants have a chance to make new friends.
- Have players come up with modifications for teammates or for themselves.
- Remember, the goal is to have fun!

The Sports Page
*This section from www.communityinclusion.org – Institute Brief No. 9, Vol. 1, Recreation in the Community

One of the challenges recreation providers face is the reality of competition. Recreation staff may be concerned that an individual with disabilities is unable to compete with or against their peers. Providers worry about safety, and question their qualifications as coaches to instruct a person with a disability. Keep in mind that most people join a team or participate in sports to have fun and that most modifications for sports are simple and inexpensive. Although accommodations should be made on an individual basis, here are some basic tips to make popular sports more inclusive. These modifications are based on experience of Institute staff with sports programs and coaches, not as a result of interviews.

Basketball
- Ask participants to develop rules everyone can follow.
- Lower the hoop or replace it with a waste basket.
- Allow extra time to pass or shoot the ball.
- Rotate so that every player takes a shot.
- Have each player touch the ball before shooting.
- Assign partners for each player.

Kickball
- Use different sized balls (e.g., an earth ball).
- Allow sitting in a chair while kicking.
- Offer the choice of being a kicker or a runner.
- Allow a partner to catch or throw ball.
- Use carpet squares to mark bases.
- Use partners for running bases.

- Pass three times before tagging runner out.
- Mark outfielder positions.

Swimming
- Consider being flexible with skill levels (e.g., a person with a physical disability has difficulty floating on his own; his peers play games in deeper water. If the situation is safe, allow him to wear a floatation device).
- Use the shallow end for instruction.
- Use flotation devices with supervision.
- Modify or eliminate diving starts.
- Use songs or rhymes for stroke instruction.
- Use fins or floats for slower swimmers during games.

Volleyball
- Use different sized balls (e.g., beach ball or balloons.)
- Lower the net.
- Allow players to stand closer to the net.
- Allow some participants to toss ball rather than hit it.
- Have each player touch the ball before it goes to the other side.

Cooperative T-Ball (rules adapted from David Munsey-Kano)
- Have all players in the field except for one batter and one person "on deck."
- Allow the batter to swing until s/he gets a hit and to run down either foul line.
- Place five small cones every 10 yards along foul lines.
- Score points for each cone the batter reaches as the ball is moving.
- Have the runner take field position and rotate a new person "on deck."

Cooperative Games (rules adapted from Cooperation in Sports, Inc.)
- Always have one team playing at a time; the object is to improve past scores, not to win.
- Take the fun and challenging skills in a competitive version of a sport and try to preserve them.
- Play against a clock allowing time outs.
- Create rules that allow for a range of athletic ability on the same team.
- Stress teamwork and cooperation.

Making Relationships a Priority
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The following article offers some suggestions on how to help children and youth build friendships.

One of the biggest myths I hear in my work in inclusive education is about friendship. Teachers commonly share that they struggle to facilitate relationships during the middle and high school years because older students simply are not interested in socializing with students with disabilities. As one teacher told me, "When they are little, they are more accepting but as kids get older…they are just more into their own thing. We can't force friendship!"

It is certainly true that no teacher can create friendships between students (nor would we want to), but it is equally true that every educator can create conditions in the classroom that will give students opportunities to strengthen social relationships, learn about and from each other, and get and give support. These opportunities, in many cases, lead to the development of friendships.

Many students with disabilities—including those with significant disabilities—make friends during the secondary school years and sustain those friendships for years. We know this dream is possible. The goal, then, is to create the conditions that will make the dream a reality for a wider range of students. Five ways that schools can encourage interactions, build community, and facilitate relationships are offered here.

Make It a Priority

It almost seems to simple to be true but when students with disabilities do have a robust network of friends it is often, in part, because they are supported by teachers who value and cultivate student collaboration and interaction. In other words, schools that succeed in bringing students together understand relationships as a priority and engage in practices that are related to that priority. In these schools, for examples, social interactions are prioritized on Individual Education Plans and considered in the development of lesson plans.

Build a School Community

The development and sustenance of a school community involves strategies and practices that purposefully encourage and teach sharing, learning, interdependence, and respect. For example, teachers might encourage community through cooperative learning experiences, conflict resolution opportunities, play and games, class meetings, service learning, social-justice education, cross-age and same-age tutoring and mentoring, and school and classroom celebrations (Sapon-Shevin, 1999). Teachers can also cultivate community by working for whole-school change. For instance, by lobbying for smaller classes, challenging competitive school structures (e.g., cutting students from sports teams), and developing ways to connect students across classrooms and grade levels (e.g., in-school e-mail pals), teachers can not only strengthen the classroom community but help the school as a whole become more responsive to a wider range of learners.

Create Spaces for Sharing

Teachers who seek information about students' experiences, dreams, interests, and needs can use this information to better educate their students and to facilitate relationships between learners. Too often (especially in secondary schools), students are educated in the same classrooms day after day without developing personal relationships. When I was observing one middle school classroom, I asked a young man to tell me the name of one of his classmates. "I don't know his name" the student replied. "I've never talked to him". I later found out that these two students had been in the same classroom for over two months.

Students' voices must be central to work in the classroom and time must be carved out for communication and idea sharing. Teachers interested in incorporating students' voices might begin by increasing forums for student participation and leadership. For instance, students might be asked to lead weekly class meetings or

to mentor one another. In Kim Rombach's classroom, students have ample time and space for sharing; they are even in charge of managing conflicts. Rombach facilitates this process by providing two "talking chairs" that are available to any two students who engaged in a disagreement. Students in this classroom don't go to the teacher to have their recess scuffle assessed, instead they secure permission from the teacher to use the "talking chairs". In the chairs they discuss their issues and try to find a solution or explain their feelings (Sapon-Shevin, 1999).

Look to Peers to Teach and Support

Peer support is an essential part of inclusive schooling for students with and without disabilities. In some cases, students succeed when teachers cannot. Often times, peers will learn quite naturally how to support a friend with disabilities. They will know how to calm, how to teach, and how to encourage a classmate without any direction or interference from adults. In addition, peers are valuable resources because they tend to understand each other in ways authority figures or adults do not. Even the best teachers lack the same degree of intimacy with students that students share with each other. Students know each other's secrets and their fears. They often recognize each other's needs and gifts in ways that adults do not always recognize. This type of help and mutual support is great preparation for adult life for all participating.

In any peer support model, however, it is critical that teachers seek opportunities to give all students opportunities to both give and receive help and support. Relationships where some individuals are always helped while others are always helping are neither natural nor particularly useful in building a classroom community. It is a teacher's job, therefore, to cultivate a classroom culture that allows all students to give assistance and receive assistance.

Provide Opportunities for Social Connection beyond Classroom

In order to support the development of relationships in the classroom, teachers may need to help students find social opportunities outside of the classroom. Extracurricular activities with all of the related fun, camaraderie, and socializing can offer some of the richest opportunities for relationship building students are likely to have during their school years.

While some schools offer activities to meet the needs of all students, other schools need to develop a wider array of activities so that every student can find an extra-curricular home. Some schools, for instance, are moving beyond the traditional sports-based and arts-based extra-curricular options and offering clubs and activities related to academic content (e.g., chess club), political issues (e.g., conservation groups, Students Against Drunk Driving [SADD]), and social support (e.g., anti-drug groups).

All schools must be conscientious about offering options that will interest and engage a range of students in the school (Sapon-Shevin & Kluth, 2003). This means questioning whether or not all students can afford certain clubs or activities; whether meeting times are convenient for students who may have after-school responsibilities; and whether students can get the appropriate supports they need to participate in after-school activities. If a student with a disability, for instance, needs personal support to participate in activities, teachers must brainstorm ways to provide this. Schools may try and provide natural supports by structuring the activities in creative ways or they may ask paraprofessionals or teachers to provide this support or look to student or adult volunteers.

References

Sapon-Shevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world: A practical guide to building cooperative, inclusive classroom communities.* Boston : MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Sapon-Shevin, M. & Kluth, P. (2003). In the pool, on the stage, and at the concert. In P. Kluth, D. Straut, & D. Biklen (Eds.). *Access to academics for all students: Critical approaches to inclusive curriculum, instruction, and policy.* Erlbaum Publishing.

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High Quality Standard 3: Program Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Program activities are regularly planned, monitored and evaluated using indicators of best practices for inclusion.

Indicator 3.1: The program's evaluation measures inclusive practices.
Examples:
- Program solicits feedback from families/youth to shape and strengthen its inclusion efforts.
- Staff completes a formal self-evaluation or survey of their program's progress toward including children/youth with disabilities.
- Staff hold an interim and annual meeting to review inclusive practices
- Program evaluation results are used to plan and modify program activities to further the inclusion of children/youth with special needs.

Indicator 3.2: Staff reviews progress of individual children with disabilities enrolled in their program.
Examples:
- The child/youth's written inclusion plan includes a process for monitoring progress toward meeting his/her goals.
- Staff meet regularly to discuss the progress of children/youth with special needs and the extent to which they are effectively participating in the program

In this Section…..

Program Planning

Monitoring and Evaluating your Inclusion Program

Sample Parent Survey

Sample Organizational Review

Sample Inclusion Plan

Monitoring and Evaluating your Inclusion Program

Monitoring and Evaluation

For inclusion to be successful, it is essential that everyone takes responsibility for its success. That means that children and youth, their family members, practitioners, staff, volunteers, and general community members take an active role in advocating for inclusion and demonstrating its success.

Agencies Need to Ensure Quality

Staff has the responsibility of maintaining quality in their programs. Rynders and Schleien (1991) suggest the following as being indicators of a quality social inclusion program.

How are you measuring up?
- Mission and philosophy reflect a belief in inclusion.
- Architecture of program site is accessible according to guidelines set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Staff training emphasizes continuing education in topical areas, such as innovations and techniques in inclusion, use of on-site community inclusion consultants, etc.
- Activities are chronologically age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate.
- Programming allows for personal challenge and participant choice.
- There is an emphasis on cooperative activities instead of competitive or individual activities.
- Activities allow for modifications and adaptations (or partial participation, if needed).
- Activities are offered at convenient and appropriate times and in the least restrictive environment as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Ongoing assessment and evaluation is conducted that allows for vital feedback from all participants.

Measuring how successful your program is goes beyond adding your attendance numbers or counting the number of satisfactory answers received on your participant and parent questionnaires.

Appropriate outcomes to measure could include:
- How many times the individual is involved with others in performing an activity?
- How many times their peers actively invite them to participate in an activity?
- How much cooperative interaction is occurring?
- How many times the individual with the disability is asked by their peers to participate in play or other activities outside of your program?

Sample Parent Survey

The following survey is from Kids Included Together, Inc. in San Diego, California, and is used with permission. You may want to include a cover note thanking for taking the time to complete the questionnaire and assuring them their names will remain confidential.

Question	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
How would you describe the interaction between your child and others in the group?				
How appropriate, stimulating and well organized were the activities?				
How well do you think your child was included in the activities that took place at this program?				
How would you describe the interaction between your child and his/her group leader?				
How was the communication with the general staff at the program?				
If there was a staff person specializing in inclusion, how would you describe your communication and interaction with that person?				
How well do you think the general staff was trained to accommodate and understand your child's needs?				
How responsive was the staff to your questions/feedback?				
If your child had an inclusion aide working directly with him/her, how helpful was that person?				
How well did staff work to facilitate interaction between your child and other children in the group?				
How well do you feel staff placed your child in appropriately aged groups?				
How well do you feel the overall staff accepted your child and treated him/her with dignity?				
How well do you feel that staff kept information about your child confidential?				
How were any medical concerns handled?				
How would you describe your family's overall experience at this program?				
What is the likelihood that your child will participate again at this program?				
After your experiences at this program, how likely are you to look for another inclusive recreation program for your child?				
Comments/additional thoughts:				

Sample Organizational Review

You can use this organizational review questionnaire to help you determine how you are doing in all aspects of your inclusive organization. (From *Kids Included Together*, used with permission)

Step 1

We have evaluated admissions and operating policies to ensure they do not discriminate against children with disabilities.

No policies automatically exclude a child with a disability

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

No questions on the admission application ask if a child has a disability

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

No questions on the admission application ask if a family member has a disability

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

Policies are clear and include working with all parents to provide developmentally appropriate activities for each child.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

STEP 2

We have evaluated our staff to ensure they can care for children with disabilities

Staff treats children of all abilities with equal respect and consideration

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

The number of staff is adequate to provide quality care for all youth.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

Staff uses the following techniques to accommodate all children's individual needs:

Manage time carefully	❑ yes	❑no
Evaluate the individual needs of each child	❑ yes	❑no
Plan and schedule daily routines for all youth	❑ yes	❑no
Develop creative activities and materials		
To include all children	❑ yes	❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

Staff has learned how to care for children with disabilities.
Staff has collaborated with parents to provide the
  best possible care.   ❑ yes   ❑no
When needed, special education teachers or
Therapists have provided training/child specific consultations   ❑ yes   ❑no
Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

Staff has attended training on inclusion of children with disabilities.
                    ❑ yes   ❑no
Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

Staff is willing to learn new techniques for:

Feeding	❑ yes	❑no
Behavior support	❑ yes	❑no
Adapting learning centers	❑ yes	❑no
Assisting with self care	❑ yes	❑no
Language skill development	❑ yes	❑no
Utilizing specialized equipment	❑ yes	❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

STEP 3

We have evaluated our procedures to ensure all children can participate in activities.

When necessary, modifications are made in an environment to meet the needs of a child who is blind or has a visual impairment or who has a physical disability and uses a wheelchair or other mobility aides.
                    ❑ yes   ❑no
Ideas for improvement _____

_____

When necessary, modifications are made to meet the needs of a child who is deaf or has a hearing impairment.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

When necessary, modifications are made in materials and activities to meet the needs of a child with any type of disability.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

When necessary, modifications are made in the schedule to meet the needs of a child with a disability.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

When necessary, staff provides individual assistance to meet a child's special needs.

❑ yes   ❑no

Ideas for improvement _____

_____

_____

_____

High Quality Standard 4: Outreach

Program descriptions and outreach efforts encourage children/youth with special needs to participate in program activities.

Indicator 4.1: Program's written materials encourage children/youth with special needs to enroll.

Examples:
- Outreach material, including flyers, brochures, reports, and websites state that children and youth with disabilities are welcome and are encouraged to apply.
- The agency publicizes its programs to agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities and their families.

Indicator 4.2: Program actively recruits children/youth with disabilities and their families.

Examples:
- Parents of children with disabilities and youth with disabilities participate in an advisory capacity and assist staff in developing programs and policies.
- Children and youth with disabilities recruit other children and youth for the program.

In this section……

Outreach and Recruitment

Sending the Right Message

Agency Resource Guide

Outreach and Recruitment

The first impression you give about the inclusiveness of your program is immediately apparent in your outreach activities – not just your written materials but also in how you talk about who participates in your program.

One way to ensure you are projecting your program as welcoming is to directly express that your program welcomes all children and youth, including those with special needs.

Brochures and program descriptions that include pictures of people with and without disabilities having fun together are another way of conveying that you are inclusive. Slide presentations or videos showing diverse individuals interacting together can be helpful tools as well.

Other actions you may want to consider:

- Make a clear statement of your willingness to provide accommodations in all written materials.
- Familiarize your staff with your state relay services or your TDD/TTY number.
- Insert a non-discrimination clause in all of your written materials.
- Proactively let the public know that you will provide materials in alternate formats, such as Braille, audio-recordings and large print.
- Ensure that your website is accessible
- Identify organizations or individuals in your community with disability experience who can review materials to ensure that your language is appropriate.

Sending the Right Message: Outreach and Advertising
Running a quality program requires on-going communication with families, staff, school personnel, support staff, the general public and, most importantly, individual participants. Information on programs is provided every day over the phone, in brochures, program flyers, and daily conversations. Frequent contact with community members has far-reaching positive consequences, which include developing trust between providers and families, while providing avenues to address problems and celebrate successes. Following are suggestions to enhance communication:

With Families
- Expand your advertising efforts to include translations into languages spoken in the community.
- Make families feel comfortable to ask questions and offer suggestions (e.g., host a family night, or facilitate a parent discussion group on strategies to improve the program).
- Schedule a staff person to be available during drop-off or pick-up times to answer parents' questions.
- Encourage families to call, providing the organization's phone number on the application and permission slips.
- Ask for feedback on the program (e.g., develop and conduct satisfaction surveys, or keep a suggestion book).
- Encourage families to visit during program operation.

With Staff

- Target people with disabilities in outreach activities to let them know they are welcome.
- Review the philosophy of the program and provide opportunities for questions and training if needed.
- Provide an open environment that will encourage all staff to express concerns and/or make suggestions.
- Hold frequent staff meetings and always include time for problem-solving.
- Speak respectfully to all participants - refer to a person first by name, or use descriptions like a 'person with a disability' rather than 'the disabled person' as discussed in section 1.2 of this Tool Kit.

With Participants

- Make rules clear to all, especially rules concerning safety.
- Ask a person with a disability if modifications are needed.
- Demonstrate that each participant is valued and respected (e.g., speak directly to the person, not about him, asking for suggestions and checking for preferences).

With the General Public

- Document an inclusive philosophy in your mission statement.
- Display access symbols throughout your facility and on any written communication such as stationary and brochures.
- Have materials available in accessible formats (e.g., Braille, large print, cassette, languages spoken in your community).
- Have a TTY (a text telephone system for people with hearing impairments) or make it clear on all your announcements that you can be called through a relay operator.

An Advertising Tip:

Many providers have said that they do not often advertise that their programs are inclusive of individuals with disabilities. Your agency may serve people of all abilities and cultures, however, without clearly communicating to the public that your program welcomes people of all abilities and cultures, many people with disabilities and/or their families will assume your program is like others that have consistently turned them away.

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www.communityinclusion.org

**Agencies and Programs that Provide Services to
Children with Disabilities/Special Health Care Needs in San Francisco**

Agency Name	Ages served	Eligibility	Services
*CCS **California Children Services** 30 Van Ness, Suite 210 San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 575-5700 (415) 575-5790 FAX	Ages 0-21	Open to children under the age of 21 who have a serious medical condition that is eligible for care under CCS, and whose family income is less than $40,000/year or whose out-of-pocket medical expenses for the eligible child will exceed 20% of income. Eligible conditions include (but are not limited to): • birth defects (such as congenital heart diseases), • chronic illnesses (such as cystic fibrosis), • malignancies, and • certain serious injuries and physical disabilities Please note: Income limits do not apply to services provided by CCS Medical Therapy Unit (see below).	Services include: • Diagnostic evaluation for eligible children suspected of having one of the CCS eligible medical conditions; • Treatment services for the handicapping condition, including physician services, hospital & surgical care, physical and occupational therapy, laboratory tests, x-rays, appliances, equipment and other needed services • Medical case management, which includes referrals to specialists and centers; follow-up with others involved in care; transferring medical records, locating new facilities and services when family moves
CCS-MTU **California Children Services --** **Medical Therapy Unit** 1595 Quintara Street San Francisco, CA 94116 (415) 759-2919 (415) 759-2898 FAX	0-21	Physical and occupational therapy is provided for children with physical handicaps who have a medical need for these services. Income limits do not apply.	Physical and occupational therapy is provided in medical therapy units located in public schools for children with physical handicaps who have a medical need for these services
California Department of Rehabilitation 185 Berry Street, Lobby 7, Room 189	Working age, with some programs for high school	Individual must have a physical or mental disability that substantially impedes employment; or individual needs vocational rehabilitation	Services may include: • Evaluation • Counseling and guidance • Medical and hospital care

San Francisco, CA 94107 (415) 904-7100 (415) 597-5810 (FAX)	students	services to prepare for, enter, engage in or retain gainful employment. Recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Supplemental Security Disability Income (SSDI) are usually considered eligible, unless their disability is so severe that they cannot work.	• Job training • Maintenance payments • Transportation • Services to family members • Interpreter and reader service • Aids and devices, including assistive technology • Tools and equipment; • Recruitment and training services; • Job placement and follow-up • Occupational licenses or permits • Other services as needed
The Child Care Inclusion Challenge Project (CCICP) 445 Church Street San Francisco, CA 94131 Telephone: (415) 343-3334 Fax: (415) 392-2397 http://www.supportforfamilies.org/inclusionproject/	Children in Child Care	Broad-ranging services are available to parents and providers who are caring for children who have special needs (*within child care*). Services are free and confidential, and are available in several languages.	Services may include: • The opportunity to work one-on-one with a Community Resource Parent • The opportunity to work one-on-one with a Child Development Specialist and to undergo an individualized needs assessment • Support in finding child care that is appropriate to families' needs • Support in maintaining a positive match between families and providers • Information on other community resources that may be helpful to both families and providers • Ongoing technical assistance and support Providers have the opportunity to receive training on: CCICP Services, Defining Inclusion and Special Needs, Communicating with Parents, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Managing Challenging Behaviors, and

			other related topics.
CHDP **Child Health and Disability Prevention Program** 30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 210 San Francisco, CA 94102 (415)575-5700 (415) 575-5790 FAX	0-21	Persons under 21 years of age who are eligible for Medi-Cal	Provides early and periodic screening, diagnosis and referral for potentially handicapping conditions for children and youths. Provides funding for • Periodic preventive health assessments • Immunizations • Vision/hearing • Lead tests • Lab tests • Health education and anticipatory guidance
***GGRC** **Golden Gate Regional Center** 875 Stevenson Street - 6th Floor San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 546-9222 (415) 546-9203 FAX	Ages 0-3	• Infants and toddlers with a delay in at least one area of development • Infants and toddlers with established conditions know to cause disability/delay • Infants and toddlers who are at high risk of experiencing developmental delay	Services include but are not limited to: • Assistive technology devices and services • Audiology services • Family training, counseling and home visits • Health services necessary to enable the infant or toddler to benefit from other early intervention services • Medical services for diagnostic evaluation purposes only • Nursing services • Nutrition services • Occupational therapy • Physical therapy • Psychological services • Respite services • Service coordination services • Social work services • Special instruction services

			• Speech and language services • Transportation and related costs; • Vision services
GGRC - Golden Gate Regional Center (continued)	Ages 3-21	• Individuals with developmental disabilities (including mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and other conditions which are related to mental retardation or require treatment similar to that of mental retardation) • Individuals at high risk of giving birth to a child with a developmental disability • The disability began prior to age 18 • The disability is likely to continue indefinitely • The disability is substantially handicapping for the individual	A wide variety of services, including the above list and • In-home respite care Out-of-home respite • Residential care • Parent training and behavior modification • Adult day programs • Transportation • Adaptive equipment • Supported living services
HRIIC High Risk Infant Interagency Council 1663 Mission Street 7th Floor San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 206-7742 (415) 282-1226 FAX	0 - 5	Children with special health care needs, ages birth through five, who have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.	**Round Table:** Interagency review to coordinate referrals for children found ineligible for services from GGRC, CCS or SFUSD, Receives, reviews and coordinates referrals for children for whom there are developmental concerns and a need for appropriate services. Following an interagency review, children are appropriately linked to the agencies that can best meet their needs, as quickly as possible. Regular follow-up ensures that the connections to services are made. **Multi-Agency Team**· An opportunity for families to problem-

			solve with a team of agency representatives.· Family and team discuss coordination of services, problem-solve around particular issues and develop possible solutions to areas of concern. Family and team develop an action plan.
IHSS **In Home Supportive Services** San Francisco Department of Human Services 939 Market Street, #550 San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 243-4477 (415) 243-4407	Adult (over 18)	Residents of San Francisco who are living in their own home, who are US citizens or are otherwise eligible to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Clients must be low income and possess limited financial resources. However, elder or disabled adults who have more than the maximum amount of financial assets allowed for free IHSS services may still receive benefits for a "share of costs," based on their income and assets.	Provides IHSS home help workers to assist individuals • With household chores like cleaning, laundry, shopping, cooking, washing dishes • With non-medical personal care, like bathing, grooming, feeding, dressing or toilet assistance • Under direction of a licensed health care professional, can arrange for paramedical services or provide transportation to and from medical or other necessary appointments.
Medi-Cal 1440 Harrison Street San Francisco CA 94103 (415) 558-1955	All ages	Among those who qualify for Medi-Cal are • Children 0-21 whose families income meets federal guidelines • Children who qualify for institutional deeming* or other Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers (*Children who have been institutionally deemed who are approved for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) waiver are those who are under the age of eighteen, living at home, not currently eligible for zero-share of cost Medi-Cal and who meet the target criteria set forth in the DDS waiver)	Full Scope Medi-Cal services include • Medical office visits • Hospitalization • Dental and vision care • Prescription medicines • Mental health and substance abuse services • Medical testing

		• Individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) • Individuals who are blind or disabled	
San Francisco Department of Public Health: **San Francisco Community Behavioral Health Services** (CBHS) 1380 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 255-3400	All ages	Individuals who meet specific criterion, including Diagnostic and Statistical Manual definition for psychiatric, behavioral disorders, and certain specified behavioral patterns.	Services may include • Psychiatric in-patient and long term care services; • Psychiatric diagnosis and adjustment • 24-hour crisis counseling; • Medication; • Mental health rehabilitative services; • Youth and children services may include day treatment services.
San Francisco Department of Public Health**:** **Public Health Nursing** c/o San Francisco Department of Public Health Health Centers (415) 206-8000 at San Francisco General Hospital	All ages	Resident of San Francisco	In home services, including • Assessments • Parent education and training • Case management
*SFUSD **San Francisco Unified School District** Special Education Services 750 25th Ave San Francisco, CA (415) 379-7900 (415) 355-7741 FAX	Ages 0-3	Same eligibility as Golden Gate Regional Center.Also responsible for children with a sole low incidence disability which includes a visual, hearing or orthopedic impairment or any combination thereof.	Same as Golden Gate Regional Center for children 0-36 months
	Ages 3-21	Defined as having a disability • Autism • Deaf-blindness • Hearing Impairment • Mental Retardation • Multiple Disabilities • Orthopedic Impairment	Mandated to provide special education and related services: Related services include • Audiology • Assistive technology • Counseling Early Identification

		• Other Health Impairment • Emotional Disturbance • Specific Learning Disabilities • Speech & Language Impairment • Traumatic Brain Injury • Established Medical Disability • Needs specifically designed instruction • Needs cannot be met with modification of the regular environment	• Medical services (related to identifying needs) • Occupational therapy • Parent counseling & training • Physical therapy • Psychological services • Recreation • School health services • Social work services • Speech pathology • Transportation
Social Security Administration (800) 772-1213	All ages	Program provides benefits to persons with disabilities. For purposes of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability is defined as "a condition that prevents a person from engaging in substantial gainful activity because of a mental or physical impairment that has lasted or can last for at least 12 consecutive months."	Services include • Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides benefits (monthly payments) • Children who receive SSI are also eligible for Medi-Cal.
Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP) 1663 Mission Street San Francisco, CA 94103 Telephone: (415) 282-7494 Fax: (415) 282-1226 www.snipsf.org	0-18	Agencies funded by the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and their Families Services are free	Services may include: • On-site technical assistance and support • Information and training about disabilities, childcare inclusion, disability rights and laws, disability awareness, disability policy development and employment support. • Program assessment and identification of reasonable accommodations, program modifications, curriculum activity adaptations and additional staff training needs

			• Locate additional community resources
*Support for Families of Children with Disabilities 1663 Mission Street, 7th Floor San Francisco, CA 94110 (415) 920-5040 (415) 920-5099 FAX www.supportforfamilies.org	0-22	Open to families of children with special health care needs, and to the professionals who work with them.	Information, education and parent to parent support through the following services: Phone line and drop-in at Open Gate • Lending library • Support groups • Parent mentor program • Parent/Professional workshops • Clinics • Individualized Education Program Workshops Parent Teams/Community • Outreach • Family Links to mental health • Child Care Inclusion Challenge project • Newsletter
* Indicates key agency			

Resources and Links

Inclusion

A Community for All Children: A Guide to Inclusion for Out of School Time
> ……provides practical strategies and tips to help programs include children with disabilities in their activities.
> http://www.unc.edu/depts/recreate/crds/communityforall.pdf

Including all Kids
> Excellent resources for including children in afterschool, sports and extracurricular activities
> www.IncludingAllKids.org

Including Samuel
> Over the past four years, Daniel Habib has documented his family's efforts to include his son Samuel in all aspects of school and community. In this preview of the film, Habib honestly portrays the social, emotional and health challenges that his family constantly navigates, along with the joy that Samuel brings to his family, classmates and friends.
> http://www.includingsamuel.com/preview/

Thinking Guide to Inclusive Child Care
> Disability Rights of Wisconsin compiled this guide to offer ideas and strategies to support child care practices that consider the needs of individual children and promote an inclusive experience for the families and children. The document encourages programs to operate as "thinking organizations" by learning to ask the kinds of questions that lead to creative solutions for the education, support and inclusion of young children with a wide range of abilities.
> http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/thinking-guide-to-inclusive-child-care.pdf

Paula Kluth
> Paula Kluth is an educator who has published numerous books about inclusive schooling. Her website offers excellent tips for promoting inclusive environments and exploring positive ways of supporting students with autism and other disabilities. While her work involves collaborating with schools to create environments, lessons, and experiences that are inclusive, respectful, and accessible for all learners, her ideas are transferrable to environments, including child care and afterschool programs.
> http://www.paulakluth.com/articles/strengthstrateg.html

Information about Disabilities

Disability is Natural
> An insightful article about people first language and more.
> http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htm

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
> Information about specific disabilities plus numerous links to other resources
> http://www.nichcy.org/

Disability-Related Laws

Child Care Law Center
(415) 394-7144
> http://www.childcarelaw.org
> CCLC is a legal resource for the local, state, and national child care communities, and we serve as a legal resource for local legal services programs on child care issues in California.
>
> Articles and resources for child care centers and after school programs, including ADA Questions and Answers for Child Care Providers and ADA Questions and Answers for After School Providers.

Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE)
(415) 431-2285
> www.caseadvocacy.org
> Information, training and advocacy assistance for families and their children with disabilities

SFUSD
> www.sfusd.edu
> Numerous resources in the Special Education Department listings
>
> http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=chief_academic.special_ed.parent_guide
> Explanation of the special education process in San Francisco

Protection and Advocacy (PAI)
Toll Free 800.776.5746 / TTY 800.719.5798
> http://www.pai-ca.org/
> Publications about relevant laws free to download in multiple languages

Summary of the laws protecting persons with disabilities:
> http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/cguide.htm
>
> http://www.supportforfamilies.org/overviewlaws.html
>
> http://www.pai-ca.org/issues/disability_pubs.htm

Physical Access
> General Information on Accessibility: http://www.ncaonline.org/
>
> Playgrounds: http://www.access-board.gov/play/guide/intro.htm

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

> http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home

> http://www.nichcy.org/idea.htm

Disability Tax Credit information

> http://www.ada.gov/taxpack.htm

Accessibility

National Center on Accessibility

> http://www.ncaonline.org/index.php?q=node/658
> Article describing 5 basic principles to consider when adapting activities.

Recreation in the Community, Institute Brief 12 by Maria Paiewonsky and Susan Tufts

> http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=12&staff_id=32 provides some
> practical suggestions for ways to modify program activities.

Mission Statements and Policies

Developing a Mission Statement

> Chapter 1 of the ExCEL After School Resource Guide provides a good outline of how to develop a
> mission statement. See: http://www.healthiersf.com/ExCELAfterSchool/Resources/Technical-
> Assistance/documents/Online_SFUSD_ExCEL_Guide-1.pdf

Sample Inclusion Policy Plan

> http://www.cambridgema.gov/CityOfCambridge_Content/documents/kidsinclusion.pdf

Sample Inclusion Policy

> http://www.cambridgema.gov/CityOfCambridge_Content/documents/inclusionpolicy.pdf