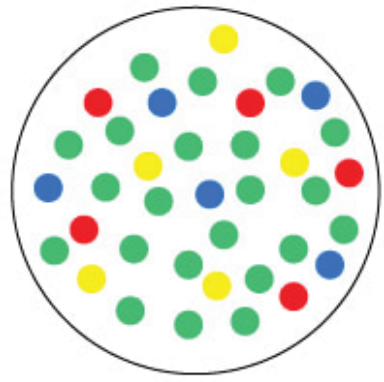


What is inclusion?

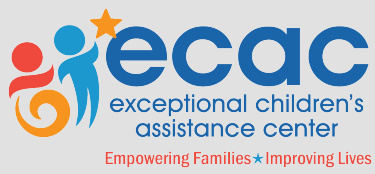
Inclusion is an attitude and value system that encourages students to receive an appropriate and quality education in the company of their peers. Inclusive education is when all students, regardless of any challenges they may have, are placed in age-appropriate general education classes to receive high quality instruction, interventions, and supports that enable them to achieve success.

Elements of inclusion include...

- All students are equal members of the school community
- A collaborative culture within the school
- Early and ongoing involvement of parents and guardians in their child's education
- An understanding and commitment of inclusion at all levels of the school community
- A range of classroom teaching styles and strategies
- Creative supports for teachers and students
- A focus on the outcomes of all students
- Intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities
- Use of evidence based services and supports
- Support for individualized learning as needed
- Continual effort to foster a sense of belonging for all students



Inclusion



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Benefits of Inclusion

- Inclusive classrooms have the same or better academic results for children with special needs.
- Typically developing children develop more empathy in inclusive classrooms.
- Teachers and parents of children both with and without disabilities who have participated in an inclusive class would recommend inclusion to others.
- Children with disabilities (across severity of disability) experience positive growth in social skills, adaptive behaviors, literacy and language skills, and cognition.
- Typically developing children in high quality inclusive classrooms have similar or better academic performance as those in segregated classrooms.

Fostering an inclusive classroom

- Be sure that the classroom is physically accessible to all students. Remove any barriers that might prevent a child getting from one place to another.
- Position students with disabilities in the midst of their peers.
- Encourage children without disabilities to interact with children who do.
- Promote authentic friendships—children without physical impairments sometimes take on a “parent” role in interactions with their peers with disabilities.
- Provide children who struggle with communication with alternate ways to express themselves. This may involve pointing or using pictures.
- Pair children with and without disabilities to work and play together.
- Use a variety of methods of instruction.
- Provide a visual classroom schedule
- Communicate frequently with parents
- When necessary, assist children with self-help skills, but expect them to help themselves whenever possible.
- Have high expectations of all children, regardless of ability levels
- Seek out resources for learning more about teaching all types of learners.
- Treat all children in your classroom with love and respect.

