

# Inclusive Education- Beginning with the IEP

Jessica Kuss, M. Ed.



# National Down Syndrome Society

## Mission & Vision

- The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) is the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome.
- NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations and become valued members of welcoming communities.



# National Down Syndrome Society

## Programming

- NDSS supports and advocates for the Down syndrome community by focusing on three key areas of programming:
  - Resources & Support
  - Policy & Advocacy
  - Community Engagement
- Within these focus areas NDSS engages in various activities, events and programs. Among these are the National Advocacy & Public Policy Center; resources to support individuals with Down syndrome, their families and caregivers through the lifespan; education and employment; as well as community events like the National Buddy Walk<sup>®</sup> Program and New York City Buddy Walk<sup>®</sup>, the annual NDSS Gala & Auction, Racing for 3.21 for World Down Syndrome Day, Run for 3.21 and various Team NDSS charity racing events across the country.

# National Down Syndrome Society

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My Story



# Inclusive Education- Beginning with the IEP

## Objectives:

- Understanding of
  - “why” inclusive education
  - how federal law supports inclusive education
  - the NDSS Education Program
  - how to support families within your local group and community

## Agenda:

- Research on inclusion
- Overview of NDSS Education Program
- Implementation and resources
- Questions

# Inclusive Education- Beginning with the IEP

## History of Inclusive Education:

- In 1975, Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142)
- Reauthorized as The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990), Most recently IDEA (2004, PL 108-446)
- *The primary federal law protecting the educational rights of students with disabilities. Although the terms “inclusion” and “inclusive education” are not written in the law, the concept of a “free and appropriate public education” (FAPE) in the “least restrictive environment” (LRE) provides the legal basis for creating education based on the principles of inclusion.*

# Inclusive Education- Beginning with the IEP

## What we know based on research:

- Typically developing children have shown only positive developmental and attitudinal outcomes from inclusive experiences.
- There is no evidence that children with certain disabilities or levels of impairment are poor candidates for inclusive environments.
- Education is a key indicator of success in the workforce for people with and without disabilities.
- Inclusion is directly correlated to graduation rates and overall quality of life post graduation.



# Inclusive Education- Beginning with the IEP

## What does the research say?

- “[students] made more progress in reading and math when they were included in general education classrooms” (Waldron and McLeskey 1998)
- “increases in standard scores were related to increased time spent in general education classrooms” (Corise, Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, 2013)
- “researchers have noted students with disabilities can more easily access the curriculum in inclusive classrooms when inclusive practices and strategies are implemented” (Rose & Meyer, 2006)
- “[A Child] should not have to earn his way into an integrated school setting by first functioning successfully in a segregated setting. Inclusion is a right, not a privilege for a select few. Success in special schools and special classes does not lead to successful functioning in an integrated society, which is clearly one of the goals for IDEA.” *Oberti v. Board of Education* 995 F.2d 1204 (3rd Cir. 1993) Opinion of the Court: BECKER, Circuit Judge

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## Post-Secondary Research:

- Education is a key indicator of success in the workforce for people with and without disabilities. In the fall of 2018, 36% of students with disabilities were not included in the general education classroom for at least 80% of the day. (*National Center for Education Statistics, 2020*) This exclusion translates into around only two thirds of students with disabilities graduating from high school. (*Wong, A. 2016*)
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, people with disabilities ages 25 and over with less than a high school diploma are less than 20% as likely to hold a job than someone in that same category without a disability. (*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015*)
- Inclusion in the classroom yields significant benefits to both students with disabilities and their peers. Students with disabilities who are fully included are roughly five times more likely to graduate on time as compared to those in excluded settings. (*Hehir, T., Grindal, T., Freeman, B., Lamoreau, R., Borquaye, Y., & Burke, S. 2016*)

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## NDSS Education Program

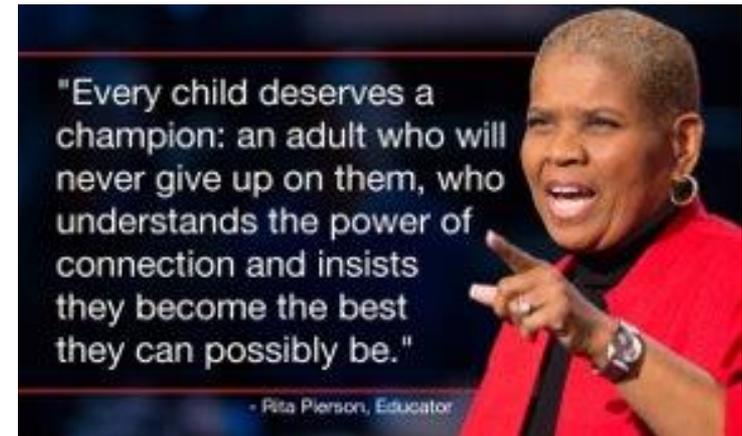
- Continuum of supports for students with Down syndrome:
  - Legislative and regulatory efforts at the federal and state levels
  - Local programming and directory of local service providers
  - Online resource library made up of our own materials as well as those of our partner organizations and coalitions



# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

## Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

- Parents/guardians are essential team members- YOU know your child best
  - Parent input/concerns
  - Vision statement
- Goals
  - Give access to general ed curriculum
  - Adaptable across subjects
  - What skills does the student need to access?



# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

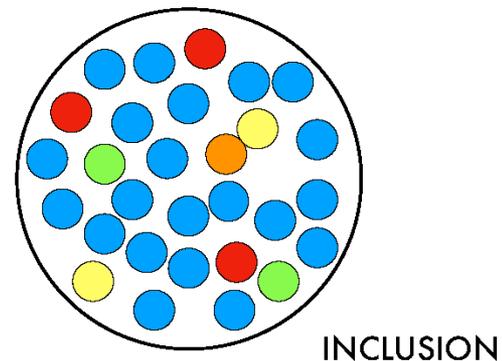
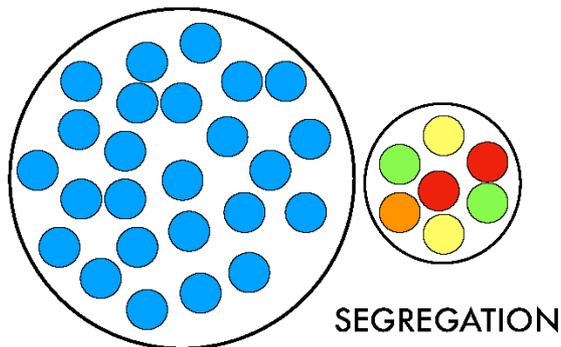
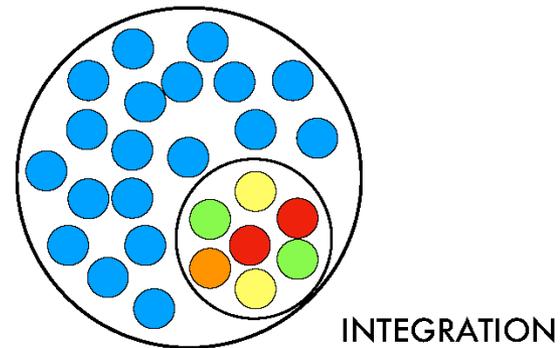
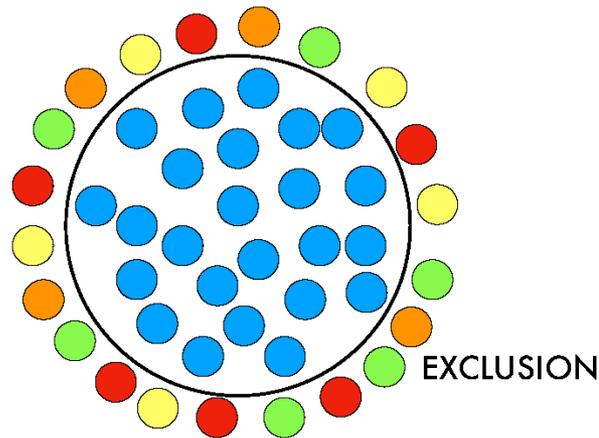
## Inclusion vs. Mainstreaming/Integration

- **Mainstreaming/Integration:** students from a separate special education classroom visit the general education classroom for specific, usually non-academic, subjects.
- **Inclusion:** an educational process by which all students, including those with disabilities, are educated together for the majority of the school day in a general education classroom with necessary supports.



# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

## Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)



# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

## LRE and IDEA

- To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities...are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling or other removal from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achievement satisfactorily. IDEA Sec. 612 (a) (5)
- A child with a disability cannot be removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum 34 CFR Sec. 300.116(e)
- Under IDEA, the purpose of special education is “to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child meet educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children” IDEA 2004 Sec. 300.39(b)(3)

# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

## Misconceptions

**Special education is a *service* not a *place*.**

- Common myths about inclusion:
  - “he/she will needs specially designed instruction”
  - “the level/intensity of services needed would be too difficult to do in the general education setting”
  - “he/she is not on grade level”
  - “he/she would just do better in a smaller setting”



# Inclusive Education: Beginning with the IEP

## Accommodations vs. Modifications

### What is the difference between an accommodation and a modification?

**MODIFICATIONS**

DIRECTLY ALTERS THE MATERIAL/CURRICULUM

**MODIFICATION EXAMPLES:**

REMOVING A DIFFICULT QUESTION ON TEST  
(ALTERED THE TEST MATERIAL)

TOO DIFFICULT FOR THE STUDENT → MODIFICATIONS ALLOW FOR REMOVAL OF THE QUESTION FROM EXAM

OPEN NOTES TESTING  
(MORE MATERIAL PROVIDED)

MODIFYING GRADES AS PER THE I.E.P  
(CRITERION ALTERED)

VS.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

AFFECT THE WAY A STUDENT ACCESSES THE CURRICULUM

**ACCOMMODATION EXAMPLES:**

EXTENDED TIME (LONGER ACCESS)

UNDERLINED NOTES (FOCUSED ACCESS)

PREFERENTIAL SEATING (CLOSER ACCESS)

BOOK READ ALOUD (VERBAL ACCESS)

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## Inclusion Best Practices

- Peer Tutoring and Cooperative Learning
- Focus on Small Group Activities
- Independent Practice (allows for individualized attention)
- Tiered Lessons
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Differentiated Instruction



Equality



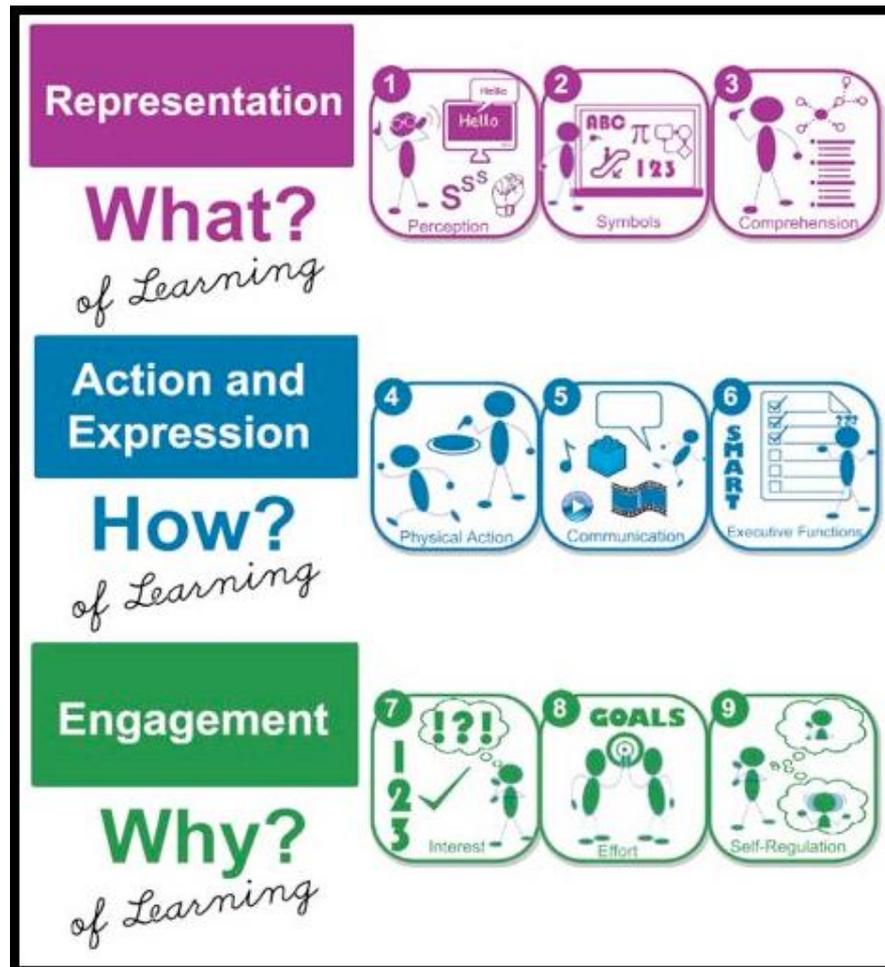
Equity



Accessibility

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## Universal Design for Learning



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## Resources

- **General**
  - Inclusive Schooling- <https://www.inclusiveschooling.com/books/>
  - Paula Kluth- <https://www.paulakluth.com/books-and-products/>
  - Universal Design for Learning: <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>
- **Legal**
  - Wrights Law- <https://www.wrightslaw.com/>
  - Disability Rights Legal Center- <https://thedrlc.org/contact/>

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## Resources

- **Dr. Julie Causton**
  - The Paraprofessional’s Handbook for Effective Support in Inclusive Classrooms
  - The Educator’s Handbook for Inclusive School Practices
  - The Speech-Language Pathologist’s Handbook for Inclusive School Practices
  - The Principal’s Handbook for Leading Inclusive Schools
  - The Occupational Therapist’s Handbook for Inclusive School Practices
- **Dr. Paula Kluth**
  - Universal Design Daily
  - From Text Maps to Memory Caps
  - From Tutor Scripts to Talking Sticks
  - Don't We Already Do Inclusion
  - You're Going to Love this Kid!

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## QUESTIONS





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