

A PARENTAL GUIDE
TO UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION
IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM
BEXLEY CITY SCHOOLS
BEXLEY, OHIO

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education,
University of Dayton, in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

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May 1996

Approved by:

Official Advisor

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer would like to thank Dr. Calvin Dill from the University of Dayton for his guidance and encouragement during the writing of this thesis.

I would also like to thank the Bexley Public School's personnel for their cooperation and sharing of resources.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family and friends. Especially to my husband, Brian, who was with me every step of the way with help, support, and love.

To my dear friend, Janet Reiter, for her faith in me and her valuable assistance.

To my father, Edward Talmon, who always encouraged me to work hard and to follow my dreams.

VITA

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Westlake, Ohio

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ABSTRACT

BLANCHARD, LINNEA T.

A PARENTAL GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM - BEXLEY CITY SCHOOLS, BEXLEY, OHIO

Faculty Advisor: Calvin F. Dill, Ph. D.

PROBLEM: The intent of this study was to develop a handbook for use by parents of primary students to aid them in understanding inclusion in the elementary classroom.

PROCEDURE: An extensive review of the literature from 1979 to 1995 was completed. Consultations with the Director of Special Education and primary classroom teachers were conducted. This combination of readings and suggestions from classroom teachers as well as the researcher's own classroom experience resulted in the development of the handbook.

FINDINGS: The handbook contains the following seven sections. Section 1 - Overview on Inclusion, Section 2 - The Law, Section 3 - Commonly Used Terms, Section 4 - Answers to Frequently Asked Questions, Section 5 - Bibliography for Families, Section 6 - Agencies, Section 7 - District Resources and Personnel.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Across the United States, there is more and more of a demand for inclusion. The term, inclusion, defines a philosophy which encourages the education of children with disabilities in local schools with other normally-abled children. Despite this increasing demand for inclusionary programs, there is still much confusion surrounding this concept. This handbook may be used to help eliminate much of the confusion. It can also be a valuable tool in helping parents and teachers become partners in the implementation of inclusive programs. Clear communication of information and a better understanding will help foster a successful program.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Introduction

“We are for difference: for respecting difference, for allowing difference, for encouraging difference, until difference no longer makes a difference.”

Johnetta B. Cole
President of Spellman College
1990

This statement addresses the importance of valuing diversity in every way. It does not identify a specific group of people for whom we should allow diversity, but instead says that all groups of people should be welcomed.

This belief is taking hold in our public schools. Everywhere we turn, we see school mission statements committed to serving all students. Included in the growing diversity in our schools are students with disabilities. These children are now being welcomed by more and more school communities. However, while the school philosophy may respect and allow diversity, methods for encouraging and understanding the integration of students with disabilities can be difficult to find (Beninghof, 1993).

Need for the Study

Across the United States, there is more and more of a demand for inclusion: the term defining a philosophy which encourages the education of children with disabilities in local schools with other, normally-abled children (Vaughn & Rothlein, 1994).

Students with learning, behavioral, or physical disabilities are no longer excluded from general education classrooms, but are included for at least part of the day. Through this type of inclusion, generally referred to as "mainstreaming", children with special

needs receive all or part of their education from general education teachers in regular classrooms with peers.

Although mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion are occurring more and more frequently in our schools, there is still much confusion surrounding these concepts and terms. Anne M. Beninghof (1993), in her book, Ideas for Inclusion, refers to the "jargon jungle", perhaps one of the most frustrating trends, the proliferation of jargon used to describe the inclusion of special needs students into the general classroom.

It is because of this regularly occurring confusion over this term and concept that the author felt a handbook was appropriate. This handbook may be used as a guide to help eliminate this confusion and untangle the "jargon jungle".

Problem Statement

The purpose of this project is to design a handbook to clarify some of the confusion regarding inclusive education in the researcher's school district. Inclusion is an elusive term. Part of the confusion arises from the varying assumptions that people associate with inclusive education. They think it is a "program" or a research devised strategy (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 1995). There is no single definition of inclusion. It is more a philosophy, a way of life, and, therefore, is open to a variety of interpretations.

Definition of Terms

Collaborative Model - Special education and general education staff work together and problem solve to meet the student's needs (Dover, 1994).

Full Inclusion Model - The student is placed in a regular classroom 100% of the day. The special education staff provide consultative support for the teacher (Dover, 1994).

Home Class Model - The student participates in regular classroom opening and closing activities (Dover, 1994).

Mainstreaming Model - The student takes part in activities in the regular class as long as he or she demonstrates an acceptable level of performance or behavior (Dover, 1994).

Nonacademic Model - The student participates in regular class activities in the areas of art, music, and physical education (Dover, 1994).

Self-Contained Model - The student stays in a special education classroom or resource room for 100% of the school day (Dover, 1994).

Social Mainstreaming Model - The student is included during regular classroom instruction to provide him or her with appropriate exposure to non-disabled peers. The student is not required to complete instructional assignments (Dover, 1994).

Supported Instructional Model - Special education staff provides support services within the regular classroom instruction (Dover, 1994).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH

Research articles on inclusion have been written fairly recently. Most of what has been written has been completed in the last few years. Since the research encompasses many areas, the writer has grouped the research under the following headings:

- History
- Understanding Inclusion.
- Implementing Inclusion Programs

History

The researcher felt that some knowledge of the history of “disability awareness” might be helpful in understanding the concept of inclusive education.

During the Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's, attention was given to the rights of **all** citizens to receive a quality education. Prior to this time, people with disabilities were often mistreated and excluded from society (Beninghof, 1993). For example, the United States Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown v. State Board of Education* (1954) that segregated education is inherently unequal, and that such segregated education denies citizens their constitutional right to equal opportunity. This ruling helped to empower the parents of children with disabilities to advocate for equal educational services for their children.

Following this ruling, according to Beninghof (1993), parents and professionals began to band together in organizations in an attempt to influence the legal and educational systems to provide services to children with disabilities. Much of the early effort focused on obtaining basic educational services for these children. It was not until

the 1970's that the direction shifted to obtaining integrated educational services. In 1975 Federal legislators enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law, 94-142). This law safeguards the rights of children with disabilities to receive free and appropriate education in the "least restrictive environment".

In an article written by Terry Simon entitled Disability Awareness, (Creative Classroom, 1994), is discussed a program created in the 60's by Sandy Gordon called "Friends Who Care". A disability awareness program for elementary students distributed by the National Easter Seal Society. The goal of the program was to encourage non-disabled children to accept their peers with disabilities as people first. Having a disability is not the same as handicapped. People with disabilities become handicapped when society, because of insensitivity and lack of awareness, imposes limitations on equal access and acceptance.

In 1990, equal rights for all Americans with disabilities received its strongest support when Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA, which went into effect in 1992, states that people with disabilities are entitled to equal rights in employment, public accommodations, and state and local services, including education. Today, more than ever before, America's 43 million adults and children with disabilities are taking their places in the mainstream of American life alongside non-disabled colleagues and classmates (Simon, 1994).

In Creative Classroom (1994, pp. 37), according to recent figures available from the United States Department of Education, 1.6 million students with disabilities attended school in regular classrooms during the 1989-90 school year, an increase of 6.1 percent over the 1985-86 school year.

These numbers will continue to increase as the nation's schools work toward implementing IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. IDEA authorizes and expands the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. EHA mandated a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. IDEA requires that "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who

are not disabled”. IDEA also requires a “continuum of placement options” for students with disabilities.

Understanding Inclusion

Two options receiving wide attention are mainstreaming and inclusive education. Mainstreaming brings students with disabilities into their neighborhood schools through special education classes and, for some children, part-time attendance in regular classrooms. Educational goals and objectives are usually tailored to each child’s learning style and abilities. Inclusive schooling (or inclusive education) brings children with disabilities into the regular classroom for the full school day. The focus of inclusive schooling is on meeting the educational and social needs of all students in attendance through curriculum planning, instructional strategies, and activities in which all children participate and learn together, often by working cooperatively.

According to the Edward Smith School Handbook (1991), inclusive education is a fundamental belief that considers each person an important, accepted member of the school and the community. Inclusive educators work to create a sense of oneness and belonging within the group; they celebrate diversity within it. The hope is that inclusion will become a system-wide foundation that will guide future decisions. The school and classroom fosters climate of acceptance focusing on the student’s abilities and possibilities, not on disabilities and limitations.

The Master Teacher (1994) also emphasizes the notion that an inclusive program is rooted in a philosophy. Inclusion truly begins with the decision to educate as many students as possible within their neighborhood schools and the regular classroom. It is important to remember that inclusion is not one model. Each child’s needs may dictate a different model and a child could be involved with a combination of models throughout the day. For some students, the “Full Inclusion Model”, where the student is placed in the regular classroom all day may be the best placement. For other students, the “Supported

Instruction Model”, which offers special education staff support services within the regular classroom, may be more appropriate.

Inclusive education has been a movement designed to reconstruct classes so that all children representing the range of diversity present in our communities are welcome and provided with an appropriate, meaningful education (Intervention, 1995). Inclusive education is an approach that has the potential to positively influence education for many students. It seeks to build on the diversity of students’ characteristics as a strength rather than a liability.

Implementing an Inclusive Program

Inclusion, like any other school change program, is implemented most effectively when there is careful planning. This planning should include the special education director, school district central administrator, building principal, parents, and teachers.

Special Education Director - has an active role as “cheerleader” in implementing new programs. The director may also help to provide resources to support individual schools as they engage in staff development and other aspects of planning and implementing inclusion.

Central Administrator - needs to follow the director’s “cheerleader” role and be involved with all areas of planning. Administrators must show their consensus in order to lead others to consensus.

Building Principal - has day-to-day responsibility for administration of all programs in the building. The principal must be a positive communicator to staff, parents and students. The principal should “carry the banner” to other administrative levels on behalf of teachers and students involved in inclusive activities.

Parents - have key roles in planning for inclusive programs. They need to work cooperatively with the teachers and be positive with their communication in the community.

Teachers - work with the above team in all areas of planning. They have roles in helping all learners learn about each other, recognizing and respecting differences, while learning.

In a study conducted by Williams, Fox, Thousand, and Fox, 1990, the following were identified as necessary supports for inclusion schooling:

- ongoing administrative support and leadership to promote a vision and practice of inclusive education;
- a culture and climate of caring and community;
- shared decision making and collaboration among regular and special educators, students, families, and other school personnel;
- time for collaboration; and
- ongoing inservice training and technical assistance to develop educators' competence in heterogeneous educational practices (Creating an Inclusive Classroom, 1995).

It is important to remember that the above list contains some of the qualities that characterize successful inclusive programs. The reason the word "some" is being stressed is there is no one checklist that can be completed to ensure that inclusion is being accomplished. It is difficult to set a specific standard for inclusion. Inclusion begins with the decision to educate as many students as possible within their neighborhood schools and the regular classroom while providing appropriate special education support services (The Inclusion Facilitator, Wendy Dover, 1994).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Population and Setting: This study was conducted in the Bexley Public Schools located in Bexley, Ohio, Franklin County. The school district consists of approximately two thousand students in grades K-12. There are three elementary schools in the district that include grades K-6, with approximately four hundred students enrolled in each building. Two of the elementary schools have special education units from Franklin County programs. All three of the schools have special education teachers. The district also employs a full-time Director of Special Education.

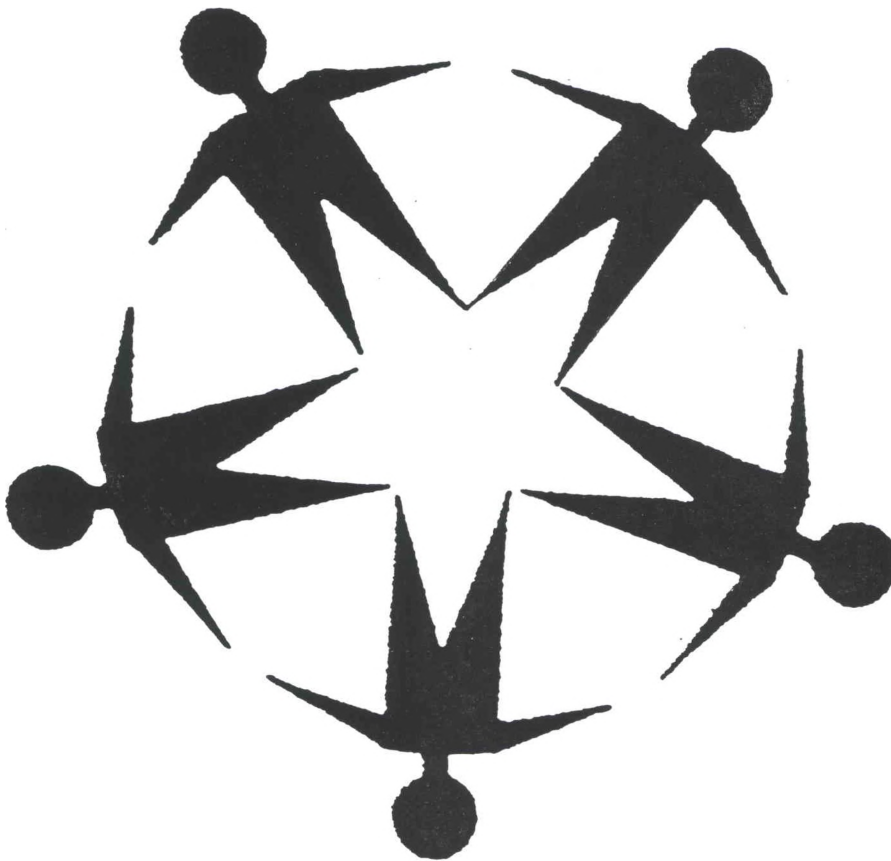
Design

The design of this research project is action research.

Instrumentation

An extensive review of the literature from 1979 to 1994 on understanding and implementing inclusion in the elementary classroom was conducted. This review included, a computer search of related journals, books, pamphlets, and consultations with the district's Director of Special Education and other school personnel at the above mentioned school. The researcher's own experience as a second grade teacher was also instrumental in producing the handbook.

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BEXLEY CITY SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER IV

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OVERVIEW ON INCLUSION

“We are for difference: for respecting difference, for allowing difference, for encouraging difference, until difference no longer makes a difference.”

Johnetta B. Cole
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1990

This statement addresses the importance of valuing diversity in every way. It does not identify a specific group of people for whom we should allow diversity, but instead says that all groups of people should be welcomed.

This belief is becoming more of a reality in our public schools, including our district. Everywhere we turn, we see school mission statements committed to serving all students. Included in the growing diversity in our schools are students with disabilities.

Although mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion are occurring more and more frequently in our schools, there remains much confusion surrounding these concepts and terms. One of the most frustrating trends is the proliferation of jargon used to describe the inclusion of special needs students into the general classroom.

This handbook is designed to help clarify inclusive education in Bexley City Schools elementary classrooms. It is important to remember when reading this handbook that there is no single definition of inclusion. It is more a philosophy, a way of life, and therefore, is open to a variety of interpretations.

THE LAW

Ohio House Bill 300.550 (b)(2)

Each public agency shall ensure that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Ohio House Bill 300.552 (a)

Each public agency shall ensure that the educational placement of each child with a disability----

- Is determined at least annually;
- Is based on his or her IEP; and
- Is as close as possible to the child's home.

History Summary

In 1975, Federal legislators enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law, 94 - 142). This law safeguards the rights of children with disabilities to receive free and appropriate education in the "least restrictive environment".

In 1990, equal rights for all Americans with disabilities received its strongest support when Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA, which went into effect in 1992, states that people with disabilities are entitled to equal rights in employment, public accommodation, and state and local services, including education.

COMMONLY USED TERMS FOR ADDRESSING INCLUSION

Collaborative Model - Special education and general education staff work together and problem solve to meet the student's needs.

Full Inclusion Model - The student is placed in a regular classroom 100 percent of the day. The special education staff provide consultative support for the teacher.

Home Class Model - The student participates in regular classroom opening and closing activities for the day.

Mainstreaming Model - The student takes part in activities in the regular class as long as he or she demonstrates an acceptable level of performance or behavior. He/she is placed with age appropriate and grade appropriate peers in the hallways, cafeterias, homerooms and special areas (art, music, and physical education) .

Nonacademic Model - The student participates in regular class activities in the areas of art, music, and physical education .

Self-Contained Model - The student stays in a special education classroom or resource room for 100 percent of the school day.

Social Mainstreaming Model - The student is included during regular classroom instruction to provide him or her with appropriate exposure to non-disabled peers. The student is not required to complete instructional assignments.

Supported Instructional Model - Special education staff provides support services within the regular classroom instruction.

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Franklin County Multihandicapped Units?

Program Description

The primary goal of the multihandicapped units is to teach skills that foster independent living. Children receive small group and one-on-one instruction based on their needs. At the primary level, instruction focuses on communication, daily living skills, adaptive behavior and modified academic instruction. Students in these units may participate in a variety of activities with non-handicapped students. Students could be mainstreamed into regular classrooms for music, physical education and other subjects and activities as appropriate. Franklin County staff members assist students and teachers in the mainstreaming effort.

Program Structure

All of the Franklin County Department of Education's multihandicapped units meet the following guidelines:

- A maximum of eight (8) students is enrolled in each class.
- An educational aide assists students in each classroom.
- Each student's program is designed to meet his/her individual needs.
- The school year calendar is that of the school district where the program is housed. School calendars are sent to parents at the beginning of each school year.
- In any class, the age range between students cannot exceed sixty (60) months.

Placement Procedures

Any student enrolled in a low-incidence handicap class must meet state eligibility requirements. Requirements for the multihandicapped units include that students must demonstrate moderate, severe or profound developmental, behavioral, communication and educational delays.

Any suburban school district in Franklin County can refer a student for placement in the multihandicapped units.

Support Services

The Franklin County Department of Education provides a variety of support services to students in its low-incidence handicap classes. For the multihandicapped units, the following services are available:

- occupational therapy
- physical therapy
- speech-language therapy
- adapted physical education
- work study/vocational job training
- transition services

Brochures with detailed eligibility information on these services are available from the department.

Where are Franklin County multihandicapped units located in Bexley?

Two units are currently located at Maryland Avenue Elementary School.

What is The Franklin County Board of Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities school program?

The FCBNR/DD school program provides services for over 300 students who have multiple handicaps, ranging in age from five through twenty-one. The Board provides these services in collaboration with all of the Franklin County School Districts, meeting chartering standards of the Ohio Department of Education.

The objective of the school services is to provide students with skills which will help them to be more independent and more involved members of their community. Skills in academics, communication, self-care, socialization, house-keeping, vocational and leisure areas are taught on an individualized basis to best meet student needs.

Instruction is organized into four major areas - Domestic, Community, Vocational and Recreation/Leisure - and focus is placed on instruction taking place in community setting, which students and their families routinely utilize.

Collaborative efforts with the school districts also include transitional counseling services for students approaching adulthood, summer programming, vocational services, shared staff development programs and services provided for students in regular school district facilities.

Special services are provided throughout all levels of programming. Therapists, nurses, special area staff and specialists provide support in staff meeting the individual needs of students, many of whom have physical, behavioral and/or speech handicaps.

Revenue for the operation of programs is similar to all school districts and is generated from Local, State and Federal sources.

Where is FCBMR/DD located?

Programs are located at Northeast School in Gahanna, West Central School in Columbus, Gahanna Middle School and Heinzerling Foundation. The students

who will be attending Montrose Elementary during the school year range in age from five to ten years of age.

When does program start?

FCBMR/DD units will follow the Bexley School year calendar.

How is program focused?

The focus of this collaboration is on the individual students involved. *It is a person by person process, not an all encompassing program.* The focus will be placed on one student at a time with emphasis on securing mutual agreement for the benefit of *all* the students involved.

Why agreement exist?

The Board of Education of the Bexley City School District and the Franklin County Board of MR/DD entered into a collaborative agreement beginning August 1995 through June 1998.

Services to be provided by Bexley City Schools:

1. Two classrooms for housing two FCBMR/DD multihandicapped classes in Montrose Elementary School.
2. The opportunity for FCBMR/DD students to be involved with Bexley City School students in activities and instruction.
3. Use of facilities in the building (gym, library, etc.)

Services to be provided by FCBMR/DD

1. Adapted Physical Education services for eligible students enrolled with Bexley City Schools.
2. Vocational services for eligible students enrolled with Bexley City Schools including: job development, job coaching and work adjustment counseling.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FAMILIES

Section A: Books available from the Bexley Public Schools Resource Center - Special Needs Parent Teacher Organization

Section B: Books to Prepare Children for Inclusion - Grades K-3.

Section C: General Inclusion Issues.

SECTION A

306.874

Wol

Get out of my life, but first could you drive me and Cheryl to the mall?: a parent's guide
The Noonday Press, 1991

Grade Level: Parents-Profes Paperback, 204 pages

Describes psychological rules that dictate teenage behavior, including differences of boys and girls

362.1'9

Ste

The sound of a miracle: a child's triumph over autism

Avon Books, 1991

Grade Level: Profess- Paperback, 241 pages

Tribute to a mother's courage, a child's intelligence and to a new treatment for autism - auditory training.

362.82

Pow

Brothers & sisters - a special part of exceptional families

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1993

Grade Level: Profess- Paperback, 291 pages.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

370.15'2

Mar

How your child is smart: a life-changing approach to learning

Conari Press, 1992

Grade Level: Profess- Paperback, 188 pages

Includes index.

371.3'95

Cre

Creativity and collaborative learning: practical guide to empowering students and teachers

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1994

Grade Level: Profess- Paperback, 420 pages

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Kit

371.5

You

You can handle them all: quick-action card deck

The Master Teacher, 1992

Grade Level: Profess-Paren Box of reference cards

A quick reference guide for handling over 117 different misbehaviors at school and at home.

371.9

Fis

The survival guide for kids with LD*: *learning differences

Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 1990

Grade Level:3-12+ Paperback, 97 pages

A handbook for kids with learning disabilities; different types of disorders, programs at school, coping with negative feelings and making friends.

371.9

Rea

Read it again

GoodYear Books, 1994

Grade Level:Parents-Profes Paperback, 124 pages

Activities and lessons for 14 books about exceptional children.

371.9'04

Coo

Cooperative learning and strategies for inclusion: celebrating diversity in the classroom

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1993

Grade Level:Profess- Paperback, 188 pages

Includes bibliographical references and index.

419

Bor

Signing

Crown Trade Paperbacks/Gallaudet College, 1984

Grade Level:4-12+ Paperback, 202 pages

Quick reference dictionary to sign language, more than 1,000 black and white illustrations; includes bibliography.

423.04

Dic

A dictionary of American idioms: third edition, completely revised and updated

Barron's, 1995

Grade Level:4-12 Paperback, 455 pages

Over 8,000 idiomatic words, expressions, regionalisms, and informal English expressions are defined and cross-referenced for easy access.

616.65

Hal

Answers to distraction

Pantheon Books, 1994

Grade Level: Profess- 344 pages

The authors of "Driven to Distraction" respond to the most frequently asked questions about Attention Deficit Disorder.

616.85

Hal

Driven to distraction

Pantheon Books/Random House, 1994

Grade Level: Parents-Profes 319 pages

Appendices, index; an enlightening exploration of a condition only recently identified, the book is for everyone intrigued by the workings of the human mind.

618.92

Phe

All about attention deficit disorder: a comprehensive guide

Child Management Inc., 1993

Grade Level: Profess-Paren Paperback, 172 pages

Definition, diagnosis, treatment and ADD in adults.

618.92

Sil

The misunderstood child

TAB Books, 1991

Grade Level: Parents-Profes Paperback, 332 pages

Includes bibliographical references and index; well-organized, concise, valuable guide for parents, educators and physicians.

649.15

Blo

Help me to help my child: a sourcebook for parents of learning disabled children

Little, Brown and Company, 1990

Grade Level: Parents-Profes Paperback, 324 pages

Information-packed guide designed to empower parents of children with learning disabilities.

TR-C

813

Pea

The Pearl

Penguin/Hugh Bridge Audio, 1994

Grade Level: 9-12 2 audiocassettes, 3 hours running time

First published in 1947, John Steinbeck's parable is a literary jewel that grows more beautiful with time.

SECTION B

About Handicaps: An Open Family Book for Parents and Children Together by Sara Bonnet Stein (Walker & Co., 1984) is an excellent introduction to the topic of individuals who are exceptional. This book provides a realistic representation of how young children feel when they encounter persons with physical disabilities.

Alex is My Friend by Marisabina Russo (Greenwillow Books, 1992) is the story of the friendship between two young boys. One has a disability that prevents him from developing normally.

Arnie and the New Kid by Nancy Carlson (Puffin Books, 1990) a story of a new boy at school who does not have many friends because he is in a wheelchair.

He's My Brother by Joe Lasker (Albert Whitman, 1974) The story of a boy with learning disabilities whose older brother describes his problems and abilities, both at home and at school.

Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Krauts (Simon & Schuster Books, 1971) Leo, a tiger cub, is late in doing all the things the other young animals can do. Seasons pass and Leo finally blooms!

Lisa and Her Soundless World by Edna S. Levine (Human Sciences Press, 1974) The story of an eight year old deaf girl. It addresses her diagnosis and how she learns to communicate.

Mandy by Barbara D. Booth (Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard Books, 1991) Mandy, a hearing impaired girl and her grandmother enjoy doing many things together.

My Sister is Different by Betty Ren Wright (Raintree Publishers, 1981) A young brother struggles with the feelings he has about his mentally retarded sister.

Our Brother Has Down's Syndrome by Shelly Cairo, Jasmine Cairo, and Tara Cairo (Annick Press Ltd., 1991) Two sisters discuss their relationship with their younger brother who has Down's Syndrome.

Someone Special, Just Like You by Tricia Brown (Henry Holt & Co., 1984) This book contains wonderful photographs of children with disabilities doing the things all children like to do.

Shelley the Hyperactive Turtle by Deborah M. Moss (Woodbine House, 1989) Shelly always feels jumpy and wiggly inside. He tries to behave but usually gets in trouble at school and at home.

SECTION C

General

Rosenberg, M. B. (1983). *My friend Leslie: The story of a handicapped child*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. (Grades K-3)

Thompson, M. (1992). *My brother, Matthew*. Rockville, MD: Woodbine House. (grades 1-5)

Ward, B. R. (1989). *Overcoming disability*. New York: Franklin Watts. (grades 1-5)

Mental Retardation

Amenta, C. A., III (1992). *Russell is extra special: A book about autism for children*. Pasadena, CA: Magination. Grades K-3)

Bergman, T. (1989). *We love, we laugh, we cry*. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Children's Books. (Grades 1-6)

Berkus, C. W. (1992). *Charlsie's chuckle*. Rockville, MD: Woodbine House. (Grades K-6)

Kroll, V. L. (1992). *My sister, then and now*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda. (Grades 1-3)

Litchfield, A. B. (1992). *Making room for Uncle Joe*. Chicago: Whitman. (Grades 2-5)

O'Shaugnessey, E. (1992). *Somebody called me a retard today...and my heart felt sad*. New York: Walker. (Grades 1-3)

Rabe, B. (1992). *Where's Chimpy?* Chicago: Whitman. (Grades Pre-2)

Learning Disabilities

Dunn, K. B. and Dunn, A. B. (1993). *Trouble with school*. Rockville, MD: Woodbine House. (Grades 1-5 and parents)

Fassler, J. (1969). *One little girl*. New York: Human Sciences Press. (Grades 1-3)

Gehret, J. (1990). *The don't give up kid*. Fairport, NY: Verbal Images Press. (grades 1-3)

Visual Impairments

Bergman, T. (1989). *Seeing in our special ways*. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Children's Books. (Grades 2-5)

Chapman, E. (1982). *Suzy*. Illustrated by Margery Gill. The Bodley Head. (Grades K-2)

Davidson, M. (1971). *Helen Keller*. New York: Hastings House. (Grades 2-4)

Litchfield, A. B. (1992). *A cane in her hand*. Chicago: Whitman. (Grades 1-3)

MacLachlan, P. (1979). *Through grandpa's eyes*. New York: Harper & Row. (Grades 2-4)

Yolen, J. (1977). *The seeing stick*. New York: Crowell. (Grades K+)

Hearing Impairments

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The term “inclusion” has become part of the vocabulary of educators in recent years. The term represents a nationwide effort to educate as many students as possible in the regular school setting.

The concept has been met with mixed emotions and view points. Some view the concept as an opportunity, some are fearful and still others view the concept with confusion and misunderstanding.

Proponents and opponents of inclusion find agreement on some issues. They agree that handicapped students need to be with non-handicapped students and that handicapped students require special services. Where they disagree is whether too much time with non-handicapped students could cause frustration for those with disabilities. They also disagree on the effectiveness of support services provided in the regular classroom.

Inclusion, as it has been attempted, seems to be fairly effective. Of course, each case will be different and specific considerations need to be made to adapt to each child’s needs. The use of site-based management teams appears to be an effective method for implementation. Teacher in-service and co-teaching also ease the task of educating diverse populations.

Inclusion, carefully planned and implemented, could benefit not only handicapped students, but non-handicapped students, regular education teachers, special education teachers and society in general. It would help us move toward becoming a more integrated society - One that celebrates the diversity of its members.

In all of my research on inclusion, the overwhelming, reoccurring message has been the need for district education and development to promote understanding prior to program implementation. The need for open communication between all involved participants is key, especially between general and special education teachers.

The Ohio Education Association Task Force on Inclusion adopted a set of thirteen recommendations for districts to follow as they place students with disabilities into the regular classroom.

- **All students receiving educational services in the regular classroom should be counted in the computation of pupil-teacher ratio.**
- **Maximum class size must be 20 students.**
- **The local district staff development committee, composed of bargaining unit members, should determine in-service needs and schedules.**
- **Support services must be provided to meet the needs of the child in the regular classroom.**
- **Information, support, and guidance relative to the changing role of the special educator must be provided.**
- **Common planning time must be scheduled for all staff providing educational services to a common population.**
- **The placement of the student in a regular classroom and the flow of supplemental services should not disrupt the overall learning environment.**
- **Nursing and/or medical procedures must be performed by school nurses.**
- **Discipline plans must be in place.**
- **Crisis intervention plans, when appropriate, must be written and shared with all necessary personnel.**
- **Classroom accommodations must meet the needs of all students.**
- **Systems must be in place to ensure maximum parental involvement.**
- **Placement decisions should be made based on the educational needs of the individual students, not on the basis of disability label, administrative convenience, or current service patterns.**

I feel that the above recommendations are very comprehensive and workable. The list takes into consideration the rights of all students in the learning environment and demonstrates consideration for general and special education staff.

I like the analogy Sapon-Shevin used in her article for Curriculum Update, October, 1994.

“Our schools need to be a continuum of supports. Everybody gets in the pool whether or not they can swim. Some kids stay in the shallow end; some have a floatation device; some have a raft.”

There is no law that can force attitude change. There are no new policies that can create new awareness or acceptance. People are often inspired to change attitudes when they are touched emotionally. Developing empathy usually does not occur through exposure to facts and information only. Acceptance and commitment often increase when those involved are open to change and are good listeners and watchers. By listening and watching, teachers and principals can form relationships with children. Through these relationships, attitudes may change and sensitivities increase.

In the words of Raynes et al (1991), “Inclusive education will be successful only if educators are willing to share responsibilities; to acknowledge and refer to the expertise of their colleagues; and to practice the philosophy that all students can benefit from educational programs.”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We need to value diversity in our communities today. We need to be flexible to allow for and respect difference. This acceptance of diversity needs to begin at an early age and be modeled and encouraged in our schools. A place where all groups of people should feel welcome. This is the philosophy and intent of inclusive educational programs. Although the philosophy behind the concept of inclusion is positive, the actual

implementation and acceptance of the program is often more difficult. As with most things in life, the better the foundation, the stronger the structure. I feel it is critical to lay a secure foundation before implementing an inclusive program in a school. This foundation needs to be constructed by all the pertinent stakeholders including administrators, parents and special and general education teachers. Visits to model programs and extensive in-service training is also crucial. Implementation of an inclusive program is a step-by-step process. The greater the effort in planning, the greater the likelihood that inclusive programs will be successful.

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