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Inclusion

All people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) benefit when fully included in the community.

Issue

People with intellectual and/or developmental (I/DD) disabilities often are not treated the same as people who do not have disabilities. They have been labeled by their disability and separated from the community. For many years they were sent to institutions. Even when people with I/DD live in the community, they are not always fully included in schools, jobs, and social life. The services they receive are often focused on weaknesses rather than strengths and their own choices. Too often, these services support people in ways that separate them from everyone else.

Position

Everyone benefits when people with I/DD are included in the community. People with disabilities should be welcomed and included so they can live, learn, work, and have fun in the community with everyone else. This includes public and private activities, programs, and places open and available to everyone else. People with disabilities should get the supports they need to participate actively in the community without having to wait.

Children should have the opportunity to:

- Live at home with their family.
- Get the supports that they need.
- Have loving relationships with adults at home and in the community.
- Enjoy friendships with other children.

- Learn in their neighborhood school in a general education classroom. This should be with children the same age with and without disabilities.
- Participate in the same activities as children without disabilities.
- Play with all children in community recreation.
- Participate fully in the religious activities and events that their families choose.

Adults should have the opportunity to:

- Have relationships they choose with people in the community, in addition to paid staff and family members.
- Live where they want with who they want.
- Get the supports that they need.
- Work at jobs in the community with people who do not have disabilities. They should make minimum wage or higher.
- Enjoy activities in their free time that they choose to participate in.
- Participate fully in the religious activities and events they choose.

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