Students with Disabilities in the School Setting
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Benefits, Barriers, and Becoming a teacher in an Inclusive Classroom

- Inclusion is most commonly defined as serving students with a full range of abilities and disabilities in the general education classroom with appropriate in-class support.
- Some challenges that students with disabilities have to overcome in classrooms that are not integrated include a devaluation of personal care and social connection, lack of a relationship with other students, ability to make language gains, improve in social skills and cognition, and engage in routines.
- Having inclusive classrooms not only creates a community where learners of all abilities can learn together but it makes students with disabilities more accepted among their peers.
- All students benefit from inclusion in the classroom in ways such as developing more meaningful friendships, students will have a greater appreciation and knowledge of diversity and respect for people that are different, and students are more prepared for adult life in an inclusive society.
- In an integrated classroom, all students would benefit academically.

Autism and the General Education Classroom

A child with autism can be incorporated into the general education classroom with a schedule, having class-wide peer tutoring, and integration and interaction of the child.
- A schedule in the classroom makes the child with autism feel more comfortable and able to participate in the classroom. They are less likely to act out, injure him/herself, or distract others in the classroom.
- Class-wide peer tutoring is when the class is divided into pairs and work together on an assignment. The results of this are increased reading rates for not only the students with autism, but also the other children in the classroom.
- Integration and interaction of the child with autism in the classroom are important. Children can be taught to interact with other students in their classroom. This decreases their chances of being bullied later in life and increases acceptance of diversity.

Benefits of Inclusion

- Ninety percent of students with mild disabilities are currently served in regular classrooms.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) was implemented in July 2005 to provide guidelines and protections for children to assure their right to a free and appropriate public education so children with disabilities should not be denied the opportunities offered to regular education students.
- The cost to educate a student with disabilities is estimated to be 1.9 times the expense of a typical student.
- In an inclusion classroom, the teacher is more prone to use different teaching strategies to accommodate all learning styles positively influencing the academics of all students.
- For the students with disabilities, they are able to observe appropriate behavior from other students as well as feel included causing a sense of membership that will increase their self-esteem.
- Inclusion will also encourage general education students to appreciate diversity and realize that friendships are acceptable between people with disabilities and those who don’t have disabilities.

Providing for Children Who are Hearing Impaired

- The use of sign language by hearing impaired/deaf students has been frowned upon by those outside of the deaf community since the sixties.
- Students are being included in a regular classroom, but still 19% are in resource rooms and 28% are in separate classrooms.
- Co-enrollment is becoming more popular. Half the class is hearing students, the other hearing impaired/deaf students. This allows both groups to develop social skills and social awareness.
- The rapid rate of classroom discussion can hinder the students. The might not always be able to follow what is going, which is why resource rooms are still in use.
- There are numerous ways that researchers have tested how hearing impaired/deaf students are learning in a regular classroom environment and if they would benefit from being in a separate resource room.