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Inclusive education – practical strategies

NECIC 2018

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Inclusion is a right

- Think about Convention on the Rights of the Child
- What are some of the rights of the child?
- Inclusion **SHOULD NOT** be optional – all individuals need to be valued for what they contribute – which does not need to be the same for everyone.



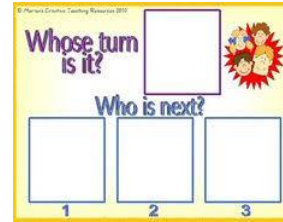
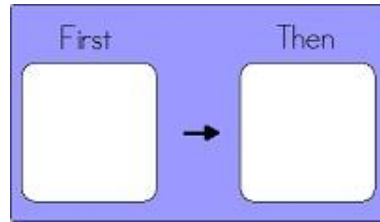
How can ALL children be included in early childhood centres?

- Encourage children to embrace difference – do not pretend we are all ‘the same’.
- Help children see that different does not mean less.
- Build a culture of inclusion – think about books you read, songs you sing, language you use, experiences you plan for, how you challenge children’s biased statements.



Using visual supports

- Particularly for children on the autism spectrum, or other children requiring additional reinforcement –



How to encourage participation

- Sensory toys can be really beneficial for children who find it difficult to participate in a group activity such as story time, or mealtime.
- Only allow the child to hold the toy of choice when they are sitting as part of the group



How can teachers set up supports for inclusion

- Space / location

“We had to get a lot of equipment in place before D (child with cerebral palsy) could attend school, so I kept asking the principal to chase it up. We visited D at preschool and talked with his teachers there to help us” (Kindergarten teacher)



- Was the teacher worried?

“There were a lot of things I was unsure about. I wanted to know everything I could to help us prepare. I read over all the information D’s family had already given to the school. This included reports from D’s physiotherapist, occupational therapist, dietician, vision support and a summary of his medical history. I started making lists and asking a lot of questions” (Kindergarten teacher)



- Class buddies

“Something particularly special was the impact D (child with a disability) had on his peers. Seeing other children work with D throughout the year was a real treat. Peer support in the classroom was strong. D gives a positive vibe that anything is possible” (Kindergarten teacher)



A support teacher's views

- A support teacher shares his views of how children from his support class are included within the school.

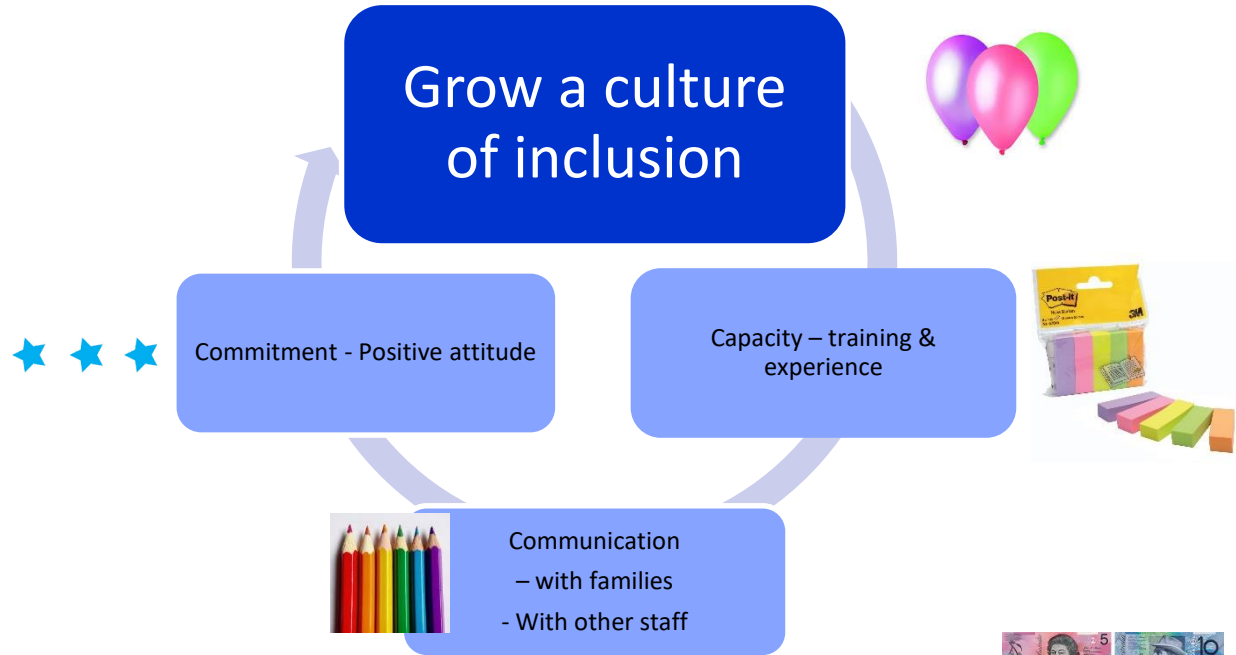


Getting involved

- Try to get involved in different things in the school – eg. Sports, fundraising events, etc.
- Try to support the school as well – so you are not just at the school when things are not going well – eg. Helping out with reading for other children, etc.
- Is there a way you can shadow another child with a disability in another close school and the other parent can shadow your child?



Key ingredients for successful inclusion



= Good investment for the future!



