

Why Provide Inclusive Environments?

Social ...

Children with disabilities need to be around their typically developing peers in order to learn skills that will help them get along in the world. Children without disabilities can learn a lot about themselves by being around children who have disabilities. They may, for example, increase their acceptance of others who are different from themselves.

Educational ...

When compared to special schools or classrooms, inclusive educational programs offer broader options for children in play, for use and variety of materials, for interactions with other children, and of exploration of the environment.

Legal ...

People with disabilities have a right to living and educational opportunities within the mainstream, that is, in normal everyday settings with typically developing peers. Federal laws have guaranteed that public services that have always been offered to persons without disabilities must now be available to persons who have disabilities. Such services include child care for children.

Information in this brochure comes from the participant handbook of Inclusive Child Care ... a Training Series for Early Childhood Professionals (Patricia W. Wesley & Brenda C. Dennis, Partnerships for Inclusion, 2000)



United Way Partners Inclusion Program

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United Way Partners Inclusion Program

*Supporting inclusive
child care opportunities
in Catawba County*

A collaboration between
Catawba County United Way,
Catawba County Partnership
for Children, and The
Children's Resource Center

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What is Inclusion?

Inclusion means serving children with disabilities together with other children who are developing in a typical way.

Inclusion is a Win-Win ...

Both the children with special needs and the typically developing children win when exposed to inclusive environments.

For children with special needs:

- A more complex environment stimulates developmental progress.
- Being with children who are typically developing encourages use of social skills and language.
- An inclusive setting is more like the real world. Children with disabilities grow up included, not excluded.
- The community may be more accepting of a child with disabilities if she or he is in a "normal" setting.

For typically developing children:

- Opportunities are available in an inclusive setting to learn about differences in human growth and development.
- Children without special needs may become more accepting of children who are different as they work and play with a wider range of children.
- They may become more accepting of their own limitations.
- Children with special needs are models for trying hard and coping in spite of adversity.

Our Purpose ...

The primary goal of the **United Way Partners Inclusion Program** is to assist families of young children with special needs in locating high-quality child care arrangements and to support their participation in these child care programs.

The **United Way Partners Inclusion Program** provides stipends for families and incentives for child care centers to help promote inclusive and high quality child care placements for young children who have identified special needs. We believe that high-quality, inclusive early childhood experiences are beneficial for **all** children in preparing for success in school and beyond.

Families who have a child with identified special needs are able to apply for a stipend (depending on the family's child care needs) to help offset the cost of child care for that child.

Child care centers and **family child care homes** holding 4- or 5-star rated licenses are also able to apply to receive a stipend to help offset the cost of additional staff, equipment, or materials needed to appropriately serve children with special needs. School-based classrooms are not eligible for the provider stipend.



How to Participate ...

If you have a child who has been diagnosed with a special need and you would like for your child to participate in an inclusive child care environment,

OR

If you are with a 4-star or 5-star child care center or family child care home that is interested in including children with special needs in your program, you may qualify for this program,

Call Marie Come (828-695-6517) to get a United Way Partners Inclusion Program application and/or to have any of your questions answered.

The United Way Partners Inclusion Program is a collaboration between the Catawba County Partnership for Children, The Children's Resource Center, and Catawba County United Way.