

Underlying all these factors is the lack of a cohesive policy for people with disabilities in our country.

These have to be addressed by the people involved in this process of Inclusion whose traditional roles have to now undergo a change.

Child: From a secured and protected environment moves to an expressive, adaptive and move open environment. Interaction with number of peers increases.

Learns to adapt better to changes within his/her life therefore can meet more challenges



Regular Classroom Teacher: Interacts with a more heterogeneous group. Becomes more aware of individual difference in all children and learn to cope with teaching challenges. Becomes an integral part of a teamwork effort. Increases her personal knowledge about different disabilities.



Parents: Rather than being submissive individuals who have faced the professionals "Know All" attitude.

They become more vocal and are able to express their and their children's needs. They are empowered to talk about their rights.



Key people involved in Inclusion

- The student with disability
- Parents
- Regular Class Teacher
- Peers
- Family
- Social Worker
- Special Educator/Therapist
- School Management

How can we contribute?

- Use words with dignity
- Demystify the language used making it user friendly
- Try not to label children
- Focus on the child not the disability
- Avoid images that focus on pity
- If in doubt, ask
- Do mixed ability or multi level teaching
- Modify or simplify the curriculum
- Be collaborative not authoritarian or hierarchical
- Handle personal needs with sensitivity
- Include people with disabilities in our schools, workplaces and lives

Address:

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BARRIERS TO LEARNING IN EDUCATION



Barriers to Learning in Education.

Barriers to learning need not be only intellectual or curricular. There could be policy barriers, physical barriers, and attitudinal barriers. Factors of class, caste, disability that may impede learning are also important. The National Resource Centre for Inclusion- India, an Indo-Canadian project a partnership initiative between the Spastics Society of India and the Roeher Institute in Canada, believes in the inclusion of ALL children and has been addressing these barriers through their centres and training programmes as well as lobbying for a policy change. Though we are aiming to change policy and practice on a macro level, the micro initiatives are extremely important to demonstrate the 'workability' of children being included within existing resources. Substantial research has indicated that it is emotionally, socially and cognitively harmful to remove children from their peer groups and keep them segregated in a special environment. Hence our centres have been "desegregated" and made more inclusive through the admission of able-bodied, socially deprived students at the pre-primary level.

We are concerned with minimising barriers to learning from whatever source



this may happen. The problems of dropouts, and gender are also addressed under the banner of "Education for All". This is only possible through the inclusion of all children in their neighbourhood schools. The NRCI-I inclusive nurseries now have 1000 children from the slums of our city, street children with a special focus on the girl child and child with disability.

What is inclusion?

Inclusion is a process, a journey we all need to undertake together if we want all citizens of our country to get equal opportunities. It is a matter of social justice and human rights where all of us are stakeholders. An inclusive environment is one where everyone is valued. Inclusion or inclusive education is not another name for special needs education. Special education confers a label that can lead to lowered expectations. Inclusion on the other hand, involves the identification and minimising of barriers to learning and participation and the maximising of resources to support the same. Barriers may be found in all aspects of the system—within schools, communities, local and national policies. Barriers can prevent access to a school or limit participation within it. At NRCI-I we want to explore what these barriers are with you.



How can we facilitate this process?

Inclusion needs preparation. It needs training of teachers in ordinary schools, educating the community, parents of normal as well as disabled children, peers and most important – educating the higher levels of people such as principals of schools, administrators, bureaucrats and policy makers.

It is important to move away from the **medical model** of disability that looks at the disabled person as a dysfunctioning individual to the **social model** which looks at factors within the environment which need to be modified so that the disabled person is included into existing systems. The needs of each child are differentiated and the curriculum and environment modified according to needs.

Key issues that need to be addressed:

- Attitudes of all stakeholders in the process of inclusion.
- Access difficulties within all mainstream schools and society at large.
- Lack of training and exposure of regular mainstream teachers to disability.
- The extensive and rigid curriculum within the educational system.
- Lack of support systems to the regular schoolteacher.
- Lack of awareness about disability leading to myths and misconceptions.