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Watch Out!

There is nothing wrong with starting with one age group or a select group of children. It is not necessary to change all of your extended year programming during your first summer; in fact, it is probably not a good idea. Because it is important to establish a successful inclusive summer program, your energy needs to be directed to the many administrative details which allow that success. Trying to do too much at once opens the door to failure.



Telephone the directors of the programs you have selected and ask for a meeting to discuss their programs and how you might join forces to service more children in the community. Your conversation might go something like this:

"Mr. Perkins? My name is Maria Vega. I am the Director of Special Education for the city schools. I'd like to set a time with you to talk about your summer camp program. You might not be aware of this, but we have run a program for our children with disabilities for the past eight summers. We would like to consider collaborating with area summer programs to help them include some of our students this summer. I'd like to have the chance to learn more about your program and to speak with you about our plans."



Watch Out!

It is important for you or a staff person who has authority in your department to make the call and meet the directors. They will be much more open to collaborating with people they view as equal in stature to their position. This is not a job for one of your teachers.



At your meeting come prepared to learn more about the program and to outline what you have in mind.

You want to know:

- have they ever enrolled children with disabilities? what was the experience like for them, positive and negative? (Listen carefully for reasons why it might not have worked well for them so that you can address those issues.)
- would they be open to enrolling children with disabilities as part of a collaborative effort with the local schools? would they hold open certain slots for the school system to fill (guaranteed) ?
- would they be open to an orientation training provided by your staff in order to include children with disabilities?
- would they be open to school system paid staff joining their staff in the summer program?



Another idea

Explore the specific needs of your program. Determine

Sample Schedule for Latency Age Child at Camp

5 days/week for 4 weeks

Time	Activity	Potential IEP Objectives
8:30	Children arrive by camp bus (utilize this if at all possible; maybe a counselor's day starts at the first bus stop) and join a community meeting which sets out the order of the day Toileting/changing for those with severe disabilities	Gross motor ADL
9:00	Join with their age appropriate group (not developmentally appropriate) for a sports activity	Gross motor, social/communication skills, attending
(9:45)	Children with severe disabilities scheduled for toileting/changing	ADL
10:00	Snack with age appropriate group (brought from home just like the other campers)	ADL, eating, social/communication skills, hygiene, choice-making, sitting or positioning, fine motor
10:30	Arts and crafts with age appropriate group	Attending, fine motor, choice-making, communication skills
Noon	Lunch - usually brown bag from home	ADL, eating, social/communication skills, hygiene, choice-making, sitting or positioning, fine motor
12:30	Rest time with age appropriate group; toileting/changing for children with severe/disabilities	ADL, positioning
1:00	Special camp activity with all campers	Social/communication skills, leisure
2:00	Free swim with campers	Gross motor, social, leisure
3:30	Closing activities: taking down the flag, etc. Toileting/changing for children with severe disabilities	Attending, positioning, social, ADL



Another Idea

Work with the PTA to set-up a series of summer field trips open to all students in the building. Use these weekly outings as part of your inclusive programming.

How to Set Up and Run Inclusive Extended Year Programming

Children like to spend their summers in a variety of ways: camps, sports programs, vacations, summer school, working, or just "hanging around." Children with disabilities are no different, but they need access to typical childhood activities. Summer activities help them maintain the skills they've acquired during the school year. There's a way to provide summer programming outside the classroom or clinical setting: a decentralized, community-based, inclusive program. The main objective is to use natural settings with age-appropriate peers to implement IEP goals and objectives.

What is an inclusive extended year program?

An inclusive extended year program is community-based. This model of summer programming uses such places as summer camps, bowling alleys, the local park, job sites, and stores as its settings. Educational and therapeutic goals and objectives are implemented there as part of everyday activities. Community-based summer programming sets up natural connections between the students and the world around them.

Why begin an inclusive extended year program?

- it recognizes that students with disabilities are first and foremost children, and that as children, they need the same chance to participate in typical childhood summer activities as any other child.
- it helps students become physically healthier. For some students it may be their first opportunity to continually exercise their bodies, building up stamina and control.
- it helps students refine their repertoire of social skills through exposure to different environments and expectations.
- it involves the school system in a network of agencies and organizations whose pooled talent and resources can provide wide-ranging opportunities for students with disabilities.
- it puts the Special Education Director in the leadership position of helping communities recognize their shared responsibilities for people with disabilities.

This handbook will guide you in establishing an inclusive extended year program. It will help you:

- collaborate with existing typical summer activity programs which, with your guidance and support, will accept children with disabilities, and
- collaborate to develop programs when typical summer activity programs don't exist (which often occurs, for instance, with adolescents).