

Inclusion in Respite

Value of Respite and Inclusion

Respite allows parents who have a child who has an intellectual disability to have a break from their caregiving routine. The child enjoys participating in activities in the community while the parents can devote quality time to other family members or relax and unwind.

Respite helps to strengthen families. It benefits parents by giving them a break; it benefits other children by letting them share their parents' attention; and it frees family time for essential parts of living: running errands, completing work around the house and socializing with friends. For parents, this means rest and relaxation so they can return to their caregiving role with renewed energy.

Without some form of recreational opportunity, inclusion is harder to achieve. Inclusion happens when we are all actively taking part in an activity. This is when everyone feels important, has equal opportunity, and is valued for their contribution.

The times that inclusion occurs most naturally is when everyone gathers together to do something they are all interested in.

Benefits of Inclusion in Respite Activities

- Increase of self-esteem.
- Develop and maintain friendships with others in their neighbourhood.
- Develop and enhance skills.
- Increase in acceptance by peers.
- Introduction of new options and opportunities for recreation.
- Greater recognition of capabilities, skills and successes.
- Increase in opportunities for peer mentoring.
- Greater, more valued role as a member of the community.

Tips to Promote Inclusion in Respite Activities

- Believe that your son or daughter can and should participate in programs and activities in the community.
- Choose a respite program that offers participation in community activities.

Community Living

M I S S I S S A U G A

- Hire a contract worker who appreciates the value of inclusion and is committed to supporting your son or daughter to participate in community activities.
- Plan for your son or daughter to spend the time with the contract worker participating in activities in the community. For example, register them for a weekly cooking or fitness class, or a baseball league. Participating in the same activity each week will enable your son or daughter to get to know others who are participating and develop friendships.
- Promote independence as much as possible. Offer your son or daughter opportunities to try new things and encourage him or her to make choices.
- Know your son or daughter's rights. They are the same as any other person's!
- Find inclusive places in your community – try using www.cultureonthemap.ca