



What's New in Special Needs Resourcing

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Developmental Services Access Centre



Elmira District Community Living



Region of Waterloo
SOCIAL SERVICES

In the 2 past months, these bulletins have focused on inclusion in early learning and child care programs. The definition of inclusion, as well as fears that can be associated with inclusion were discussed.

To wrap up this topic, I would like to talk about overcoming the challenges that are associated with being inclusionary in ELCC programs.

It is no secret or news to any of you that offering a truly inclusive program can have it's challenges. There are so many things to consider along with the pre existing challenges of simply offering a quality program. Questions such as "How do I meet the varying needs of every child in my program?" and "How will I manage when one child has truly exceptional needs that I really am not familiar with?" or "Where can my program get more support?" Despite the challenges, somehow we do it!

When we face these challenges, we explore our challenges through a different

lens and ask ourselves the question "How can challenges become opportunities?"

I would like to propose that each ELCC program take the opportunity this month to take on this task.

Perhaps at a team meeting is a good time. Ask each other- "What is one challenge to inclusion that our program faces? How can we turn that into an opportunity?" Have a brainstorming session where the ideas spill forth— anything goes! Then go back and review the ideas and see which things might be "doable". I'd be interested in hearing about how you make out!

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

" We must view young people not as empty bottles to be filled, but as candles to be lit."

Robert H. Shaffer

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Perhaps I could share a story about your successes in a future edition of this bulletin!

In closing, I would like to share a touching poem written by *Marsha Forest*.

Inclusion Melody

Inclusion is simply about belonging in the deepest sense.

It is not about a program, a person, a thing.

It is not a model or even something you do.

It is a spirit, a sense of longing, an embrace.

Inclusion is in the eyes, the mouth, the ears, the face and the body of those who reject or accept.

It cannot be taken away.

I cannot be earned.

It can be learned.

It is deep as the ocean and wide as the sky.

It is felt by all in the blink of an eye.

Inclusion is far beyond the words we say.

It lies deep in our hearts.

It is part of being fully human.

Inclusion like knowledge belongs to everyone and is the private domain of no one.

It is a birthright.

You can't buy inclusion in a kit or a package.

You can't take a dose of inclusion.

You can't be a little bit included.

You are either present, absent, invisible or dead.

Finding inclusive ways is a life long journey.

Not easy, but neither is life.

It needs people to say "We don't know how to do it yet, but together with families, children and professionals we will figure it out."

It needs people to be open to asking questions and saying "I need your help".

Inclusion needs open, caring and loving people singing a song of a new tomorrow.

Welcome to the journey!

For more information on the Child Care Special Needs Resourcing Partnership or to make a referral to the Child Care Special Needs Access Point please contact:

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**Upcoming
Professional
Development Events**

**APPLICATIONS NOW BEING
ACCEPTED!!!**

for the Early Childhood Resource
Teacher Program– at Conestoga
College

School of Health & Life Sciences
and Community Services

299 Doon Valley Dr., Kitchener

See the attached flyer for details!

Current Research- Links

Inclusion Resources -Websites

Video– Including Samuel can be found at

www.includingsamuel.com

Early Childhood Resource Teacher Network of
Ontario (ECRTNO)

www.ecrtno.ca

Community Works

www.communityworks.info

Toronto Children's Service– Inclusion

www.toronto.ca/children.pdf/policy_inclusion.pdf