



# FACT SHEET

## ...about Inclusion

### **What is inclusion and why is it important?**

Inclusion is the act of making sure that no one sits on the sidelines and the belief that ALL can participate and ALL can belong. The National Inclusion Project works every day to make this a reality for children with disabilities. When children with disabilities are included, they make friends, build their self-esteem, and increase their social skills. Inclusion gives children of all abilities the chance to play, laugh and learn TOGETHER.

### **Who is being excluded and why?**

Children with disabilities (more than 3 million school age in the US) and their families often find their recreational choices significantly limited and are frequently directed toward programs that are segregated (i.e. "special" programs). The American Camping Association identifies only 11% of their members as having programs inclusive of children with disabilities. Many of the programs that do not offer an inclusive environment feel they have to be an "expert" to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

### **How does an organization promote inclusion?**

When making the intentional move to include children with and without disabilities in a program, the entire staff must have the mindset that ALL children can participate, ALL children can make friends and ALL children can succeed. With this mindset, they will feel more empowered to positively support children's connections. The National Inclusion Project offers training, inclusive activities, funding and consulting to equip organizations with all the tools they need to promote inclusion successfully.

## ...about the National Inclusion Project

### **What are the mission and goals of the National Inclusion Project?**

The National Inclusion Project serves to bridge the gap that exists between young people with disabilities and the world around them. Through training, consulting and funding, the Project enables community, recreational and cultural programs across the country to include children with and without disabilities in their activities. The Project develops strong and sustainable partnerships with community organizations so that they can create inclusive opportunities for children in ALL states.

### **Who does the National Inclusion Project serve?**

The Project currently works with more than 115 community organizations in 35 states. Yearly, over 15,000 children participate. The Project's inclusive practices have been successfully implemented with children from ages 3 to 17 by YMCA summer camps, children's museums, community centers, Girl Scouts, parks & recreation departments, preschools, etc.



# FACT SHEET

## ...about *LET'S ALL PLAY*

### **What is *Let's ALL Play*?**

The National Inclusion Project's *Let's ALL Play* program provides the framework to enable recreational programs to create an inclusive experience for children in their communities. It is a comprehensive, tested, and successful program empowering organizations to move toward full inclusion through staff training, support and consulting by the National Inclusion Project.

### **How can *Let's ALL Play* make a difference?**

*Let's ALL Play* enables recreational programs to include children of ALL abilities in their activities. Program staff are trained as to the purpose, critical elements, and effective approaches and problem solving in creating a truly inclusive environment. Organizations that implement *Let's ALL Play* provide a place for children with disabilities to be integral members of a community, feel a connection to their peers and to receive the support to succeed.

### **How effective are *Let's ALL Play* Programs?**

Among programs implementing *Let's ALL Play*, parents reported that 89% of children with disabilities participated in most or all activities offered, 83% of children with disabilities made new friends, and counselors reported that 82-85% of children with disabilities showed improvement in social skills, motor development and self-esteem.

### **How can an organization become a *Let's ALL Play* inclusive program?**

To assist organizations on their path towards full inclusion, the National Inclusion Project offers on-site *Let's ALL Play* trainings, consultations, webinars, partnering opportunities and annually conducts the *Power of Play* Inclusion Conference. The National Inclusion Project will meet organizations where they are in the transition to full inclusion and create a plan to meet their specific needs.

## WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

If your organization is interested in becoming inclusive, enhancing their inclusive offerings or if you are interested in helping to make the Project's vision a reality, contact the National Inclusion Project today.

# NO CHILD SHOULD SIT ON THE SIDELINES!