



NATIONAL  
INCLUSION  
PROJECT

## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

From the creation of the *Let's ALL Play* (LAP) program model, the National Inclusion Project's focus has been to enable and expand opportunities for children with disabilities to be included. To date the Project has worked with more than 130 unique Partners across 36 states to assist in providing inclusive recreational/social experiences. Currently about 20,000 plus children per year of all abilities have the opportunity to participate in LAP-affiliated programs including day camps, residential camps, after-school programs, park and rec experiences, museums, and zoos.

Fortunately, the benefits of inclusion are being recognized by more and more organizations and it is well understood that inclusive youth experiences serve well for making friendships and connections. But we have more work to do! In a 2013 Laszlo Strategies research report, it was noted that the number one reason camp organizations are not inclusive is the lack of training. They realize the benefits inclusion provides and quoting a mom and leader for one of our Partners, "Research shows that through inclusion you develop an appreciation that everyone has unique abilities. You experience diversity. You develop sensitivity, respect, a feeling of empowerment, and the ability to make a difference."

Working closely with industry leading practitioners and educators the National Inclusion Project is well positioned to serve organizational needs for social and recreational programs seeking to be inclusive.

**130+**  
**Partners**

**36**  
**States**

**20,000+**  
**Children**  
**Benefit**  
**Annually**





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## Mission

The mission of the National Inclusion Project is to bridge the gap that exists between young people with disabilities and the world around them. The Project is proud to partner with community organizations that are seeking to programmatically open doors for ALL children to learn, live, and play together. Through training, consulting, and funding, the Project meets organizations where they are to help them implement quality inclusive programs that impact children and families in their communities.

The Project is working towards a society where conventional thinking shifts away from limitations to potential, from exclusion to inclusion, and from a longing to be included to a sense of belonging.

## Let's ALL Play

*Let's ALL Play* (LAP) is an innovative, research-validated program model that brings an inclusive recreational experience to children with and without disabilities. Through training, staffing, and scholarships, LAP gives children with disabilities the same experience as those without. Children with disabilities and their peers who are typically developing come together to participate in recreational activities such as swimming, arts and crafts, community service, physical fitness and more. The program model was developed by Project staff, Partners, and inclusive leaders in the fields of education and recreation.

## Accreditation

The development of quality standards to assist programs interested in providing meaningful inclusive options to the communities began in 2016 as a collaborative project between researchers, practitioners, and professionals. These standards will also serve as the foundation for an accreditation process offered by the National Inclusion Project. Activities in 2017 largely focused on collecting data through focus groups, surveys, and committee working sessions to assist with drafting, revising, and validating the standards. The next phase of the project to be completed in 2018 includes the completion of quality standards, initial design of the accreditation process, and pilot testing of the new LAP training resources.

## Other Programs/Awareness/Research

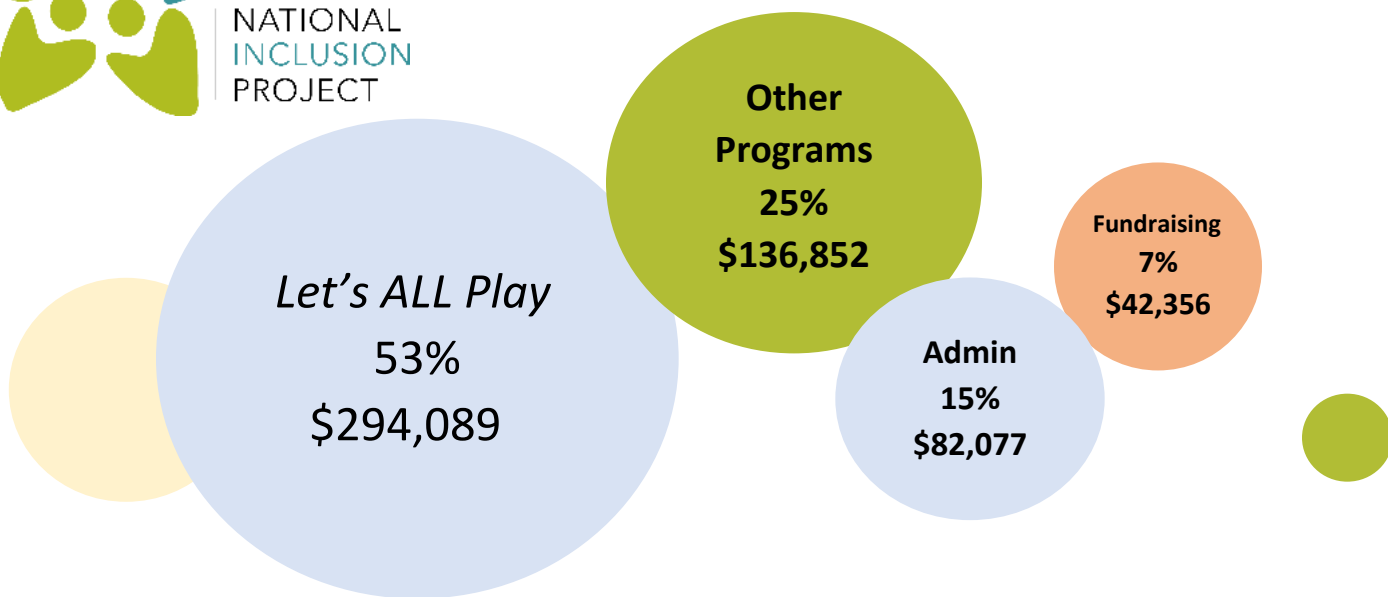
The annual Champions Gala is the organizations largest event to raise awareness for inclusion and all that it has to offer for children across the country. A 'State of the Project' address reviews organization achievements, celebrates successes and highlights goals. Individuals, groups and corporate Champions of Inclusion are recognized as we honor leadership, commitment and passion to ensure that no one sits on the sidelines. The Champion Honorees share their work and life experiences which inspire attendees as to how everyone can make a difference.

The annual Power of Play Conference provides a framework and resources for program providers, educators, families, and specialists to implement successful inclusion. The conference has information that is beneficial for those new to inclusion, as well as the inclusion veteran who wants to do more and/or better serve in an inclusive setting. Utilizing leading practitioners, educators, and experts in the field of inclusion this is growing into a must attend conference for those who seek to start inclusive social programs and those seeking to improve skills.



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The generosity and unwavering commitment of our donors and sponsors is why the National Inclusion Project is able to serve so many communities across the country. In that 94% of our 2017 income was provided through individual donations, maintaining and growing our base of supporters is critical to sustain spending levels and expand inclusive opportunities for children. One program at a time, we are enabling children of all abilities to be involved and to belong.

The National Inclusion Project is thankful for the support of its donors and volunteers. Your contributions and overall support make what we do possible.

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**NO CHILD SHOULD SIT ON THE SIDELINES!**