



For families of children with disabilities, the search for the right recreation program is about much more than play.

It's about finding a place where your child will be valued, supported, safe, and celebrated.



An opportunity to grow more confident, connect with peers, and feel true belonging.

Somewhere they are recognized for what they **can** do, instead of excluded for what they can't.





# S.U.C.C.E.S.S.F.U.L.

## Inclusive Recreation Checklist for Families

The S.U.C.C.E.S.S.F.U.L. checklist can help families ask key questions to determine the best program fit for their child:

**S**

STAFFING &amp; SUPPORT...

**U**

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR...

**C**

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES...

**C**

CARE PLANNING...

**E**

ENGAGEMENT &amp; PARTICIPATION...

**S**

SAFETY &amp; SUPERVISION...

**S**

STRUCTURE &amp; SCHEDULING...

**F**

FRIENDSHIP &amp; SOCIAL SKILLS...

**U**

UNIVERSAL DESIGN...

**L**

LIVED EXPERIENCE &amp; REFERENCES...



# S

## STAFFING & SUPPORT

- How are staff trained to support children with disabilities?
- How are specialty instructors/contracted programmers trained to support children with disabilities?
- Who is responsible for providing accommodations/inclusion supports for my child?
- What is the typical staff-to-child ratio? What if my child needs more support?
- Is there a nurse, mental health professional, or behavior specialist on site?

# U

## UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR

- What training/experience does staff have with positive behavior support?
- What are the behavioral expectations for participants? Are there behavioral guidelines/policies?
- What ways are positive behaviors reinforced or behavioral struggles supported?
- How are incidences of escalated, high-need, or unsafe behaviors handled?
- Do suspensions or dismissal/expulsion occur?

# C

## COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- What is the process for feedback and communication with families?
- What is the best way for families to communicate with staff? Who do we contact?
- What types of communication can I expect about my child's successes? Struggles?
- Will we have an opportunity to visit/tour?
- Are information/materials provided beforehand to help us prepare?

# C

## CARE PLANNING

- Are experiences/activities individualized in any way?
- Are choices, adaptations, or modifications provided?
- How are accommodations and inclusion supports planned and provided?
- Are sensory supports and spaces available? How are they used?
- Are there any materials, information, or resources that would be beneficial for us to provide?

# E

## ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

- Are inclusion and acceptance part of the program's core values?
- How are welcoming, belonging, and empathy fostered?
- How is engagement encouraged?
- In what ways are different levels of participation supported?
- How are activities adapted and modified for different abilities?

# S

## SAFETY & SUPERVISION

- What safety protocols are in place for emergencies, allergies, or medications?
- Are there fenced areas or elopement prevention measures?
- Are staff trained in CPR, first aid, and crisis response?
- What supports are in place during off-site experiences/field trips?
- Are there swim/water safety procedures, certified lifeguards, etc.?

# S

## STRUCTURE & SCHEDULING

- Is there a balance of structured activities and free time?
- Are visual schedules or other visual tools available (task cards, social scripts, etc.)?
- How are activities adapted for different ability levels?
- Are individual or alternative choices offered?
- Are schedules or activity plans available beforehand?

# F

## FRIENDSHIP & SOCIAL SKILLS

- How does the program promote social interaction and inclusion among participants?
- In what ways are friendships/connections between children with and without disabilities encouraged?
- Are social, emotional, or behavioral skills supported/taught?
- Are there ways/opportunities to contact or connect with other participants/families?
- How are bullying/peer conflicts addressed?

# U

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- Is the space physically accessible (classrooms, playgrounds, ramps, paths, bathrooms, program areas)?
- Are activities designed with accommodations and inclusion in mind?
- Are off-site experiences and field trips assessed for accessibility and inclusion?
- Do staff use/know ASL, different languages, visuals, cues, or signals?
- Are adapted materials or equipment available?

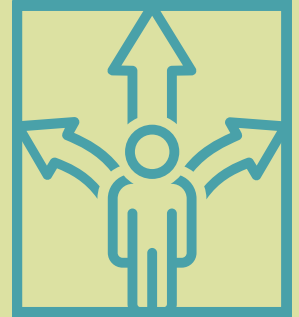
# L

## LIVED EXPERIENCE & REFERENCES

- Can we connect with other families whose children have participated/attended before?
- Do you have success stories to share?
- Can you describe how a difficult situation was solved in the past?
- Can we connect with any staff beforehand?
- What happens if the program is not the right fit?

Use the **SUCCESSFUL** checklist to promote transparency, conversation, and collaboration. It might be eye-opening and educational for everyone involved.

There are no right or wrong decisions based on the answers to each question—there are just your decisions based on your child's/your family's needs.



Remember, success doesn't look the same for every child. For some, it's a terrific month, week, day, or moment. For others, it's trying something new, making a friend, or simply feeling safe and accepted.

You're not just checking boxes.  
You're advocating for your child to be included and empowered.



Ask bold questions.  
Expect clear answers.  
Make informed choices.  
Work together.  
You (and your child) deserve nothing less.

