



Inclusive Party Tips

It can be heartbreaking for a child, and their families, to discover they were not invited to a birthday party or event because of their disability. Families of typically developing children are sometimes worried about adapting a party to be inviting and safe for the child with disabilities. At the National Inclusion Project, we do not see this as a lack of care, but a lack of knowledge.

Try these tips the next time you want to make your child's birthday or event more inclusive:



Take the extra step to invite the child and family personally

Add a hand-written note to the family letting them know that you want their child at the event. Telling them how much your child values the friendship with their child will be touching and help open the door to inclusion.



Offer some solutions to make it work

Families with children with disabilities sometimes feel it's intrusive to ask for special arrangements for their child. Families of typically developing children can help by offering some solutions. See if these work for your next event:

- Offer earlier arrivals before the rest of the guests for a calmer time for one-on-one interaction.
- Modify activities to be inclusive for all children, and share your plans with the families.
- Invite the families to stay for the party. It doesn't have to be a drop-off party for everyone.
- Embrace a flexible schedule. Offer the option to show up late and leave early.



Ask the other family how you can include their child

Start a conversation. Share contact information. Reach out to talk, brainstorm, and develop a relationship. It is important that each family feels prepared and positive. Kids will match your energy and optimism.



Be okay with a "No" or a No-Show

We all know that life doesn't always go as planned. Sometimes things don't work out for a myriad of reasons. Keep inviting the child and their family to future playdates and parties to show how much you value their friendship.