



FACT SHEET

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Inclusive Education

Many individuals with deafblindness are educated in separate and specialized environments with limited integration opportunities in general education settings. Research and successful experiences have opened the doors to less restrictive educational programs for these students. When students who are deafblind are included, peers can model appropriate communication and behavior and provide opportunities for social interaction. Shared experiences between peers allows friendships to develop.

Inclusive, or integrated, education is an option chosen by the educational team, including the family as the primary member. In federal legislation *the least restrictive environment* (LRE) mandate states that the educational placement of an individual must be based on the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and located as close as possible to the student's home.

Inclusive, or integrated, education is the process of providing support, assistance, and information to ensure the successful inclusion of students with disabilities within the general education classroom. This support is provided by their educational team.

Inclusive education can benefit students with varying disabilities. While recognizing the unique learning needs of individuals, modifications and adaptations can be made to accommodate learners with deafblindness within a variety of educational settings. However, successful programming requires that the supports and supplemental services required by the IEP are provided and managed appropriately, and all professionals involved work in a collaborative manner. Personnel specially trained in low incidence disabilities of blind/low vision and Deaf/Hard of hearing and other related service providers must implement a **team approach** to provide related services.

Inclusive education is an option that should be available to every individual. Careful planning and collaborative efforts will ensure the successful inclusion of individuals in their school, community, and work environments.