September 2003

Dear Colleagues:

The New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) is pleased to present **"Integrated Recreation: A Review of Best Practices."** This document has been developed to assist community-based recreation providers to implement inclusive recreation programs for children with and without disabilities.

From over five years experience, DDPC in cooperation with grantees has been able to identify research driven practices that successfully:

1. Increase the capacity of organizations to deliver inclusive recreation opportunities.
2. Enhance the skills of recreation providers through training and information sharing.
3. Implement recreation programs that promote the inclusion and interaction of children with and without disabilities.

The document will highlight each of the DDPC funded initiatives with a brief history of model development and implementation, identification of successful practices, outcomes achieved, and lessons learned. The information presented is based on the work of 30 disability service and recreation providers that participated in four DDPC funded initiatives that promoted inclusive recreation from 1998-2003.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about this document, please contact Kerry Wiley, at the DDPC at 1-800-395-3372 or via email at kwiley@ddpc.state.ny.us. The **"Integrated Recreation: A Review of Best Practices"** document is also available on the DDPC website: www.ddpc.state.ny.us.

Sincerely,

George E. Fertal, Sr.   Sheila M. Carey
DDPC Chairperson   Executive Director

Enclosure

Integrated Recreation
A Review of Best Practices

New York State
Developmental Disabilities
Planning Council

September, 2003

Integrated Recreation:
A Review of Best Practices

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New York State
Developmental Disabilities
Planning Council

Background Information:

In 1996, The New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) disseminated a notice to disability service organizations, school districts, and organizations within the public and private sectors that DDPC was seeking input from the field to generate community-based ideas about providing support to individuals with disabilities and their families.

A number of agencies submitted program development ideas through an initiative called "**Field Initiated Ideas.**" DDPC used "**Field Initiated Ideas**" as a planning tool for potential Request for Proposal (RFP) development and as a means to identify emerging needs and or ongoing barriers in the disability field. Based on ideas submitted, common themes of need emerged. Recreation for children and adults with developmental disabilities was identified as a specific area of need. Specific outcomes from DDPC's "**Field Initiated Ideas**" initiative will be detailed in the **DDPC Related Initiatives** section of this document.

DDPC began an investigation of trends and discovered a shift in the delivery of services for individuals with disabilities.[1] Promotion of recreation services and supports for people with disabilities was born out of legislation. Legislation such as Rehabilitation Act and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act encouraged a shift in the delivery of services and supports for children with disabilities beyond school based settings.[2] Services and supports should be designed to support integration, where children with disabilities participate in age-appropriate, school and community-based activities with students without disabilities. A review of literature from 1989-1993 revealed a recognition that children with disabilities need to have opportunities for involvement in their community; to learn social behaviors that are appropriate in particular situations; opportunities to develop social skills that create interaction with their peers; and foster the development of other independent living skills.[3] The concept of recreation for people with disabilities has been perceived as initiating activities or approaches that provide opportunities to practice certain skills such as language development, development of cooperation skills and other social and academic skills. [4] [5]

Research by Schleien, Moon, and Ray indicates that when people with disabilities participate in leisure or recreation activities within the community, people experience positive outcomes related to health, physical fitness, mobility, language, and social skills.[6] [7] [8] The Rehabilitation Act and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act established recreation opportunities as necessary and related services and created a philosophy for inclusion.[9] The principle of inclusion "consists of the belief that students with disabilities are most appropriately educated along side their same-age peers and that separate education of any kind is inherently unequal." [10] Since the passage of this legislation, there has been an increasing trend to provide community-based supports and services for people with disabilities.

Through public forums, focus groups, and other data collection methods, DDPC discovered families of children with developmental disabilities within New York State were having problems accessing community-based before and after school recreation, sports and hobby programs, and other recreational activities that are available to children without disabilities. While successful models for integrated recreation have been developed and resource materials

about how to implement these models have been generated, DDPC determined that recreation programs do not routinely include children with developmental disabilities.

A review of relevant literature identifies gaps in the provision of integrated community-based recreation opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. Studies completed by Rynders & Schleien indicate that people with mild to moderate disabilities are not engaging in community-based recreation on a recurring basis. Literature documents that individuals with disabilities often participate in leisure and recreation activities in segregated settings away from their peers without disabilities, if any level of participation occurs.[11]

Despite documented evidence about the benefits of recreation, integrated recreation opportunities are limited for children and adults with disabilities. The limited availability of these programs has been attributed to:

1. A lack of knowledge about recreation programs available for people with disabilities.
2. Pre-conceived notions and attitudes about disabilities and the extent of support individuals will require. [12] [13]
3. Architectural barriers, which limit access to recreation opportunities.[14]
4. Transportation barriers that prohibit people with disabilities from getting to and from recreation sites including inaccessible transportation, problems with transportation schedules, a lack of awareness or understanding of transportation options and cost constraints.[15]
5. A lack of knowledge and staff skills to provide needed accommodations and supports to individuals with disabilities. For example, having trained staff available to provide sign language interpreting, having people who are trained in the use of assistive technology such as communication boards and devices. [16]
6. A lack of awareness among recreation staff about how to facilitate the inclusion or involvement of people with disabilities. [17]

Qualitative studies indicate people with disabilities are less likely to socialize, go to the mall, movies, theater, live music performances, sporting events, or specific events related to hobbies. These studies attribute the lack of participation to factors including a lack of accessibility, negative public attitudes, or discomfort. Generally, even when people of similar ages were compared, people with disabilities are still significantly less likely to participate in leisure activities. [18]

Research has shown that peer-based and cooperative learning activities can promote positive academic and social outcomes for students with and without severe disabilities. [19] Multiple studies have identified the benefits of children with and without disabilities interacting with each other.[20] For example, when teachers facilitate interaction using verbal and non-verbal strategies, a significant relationship was found between a child's level of sociability and teacher prompting. [21] Teacher prompting was directly related to children's verbal behavior. Group size also affected whether or not children talked more frequently to peers. [22] In addition, children with and without disabilities tend to increase their interaction when they engaged in a small-group activity. [23]

Successful inclusion is significantly influenced by three factors:

1. Attitude
2. Resources
3. Curriculum [24]

Inclusion builds upon the principles of least restrictive environment, students with disabilities participate in age appropriate activities with their peers with supports provided as needed. Research by Bricker describes three factors that influence the practice of inclusion in education settings:

1. Teacher's views about inclusion. Research studies indicate that when teachers receive specialized training and have opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues, they are more likely to increase inclusion of children with disabilities in general education settings. Teachers are also more likely to consider using strategies that promote inclusion when colleagues have successfully used the strategies. [25]
2. In successful inclusive environments, research has determined that collaboration occurred between special education and general education teachers. Teachers had an understanding that all children (children with and without disabilities) were being served.[26]
3. Research indicates that inclusion is successful when teachers provide training, structured activities, and support to ensure that students without disabilities interact with and facilitate the skills of children with disabilities.[27] [28] Examples of activities and support include the use of cooperative learning strategies such as dividing materials, resources, or information among group members, assigning students different roles within an activity, and structuring face-to-face interaction with verbal communication between children.[29] [30]

Research by Dattilo indicates that successful integrated recreation programs use "strategies including structured interactions; joint participation and fostering cooperative learning as well as activities that encourage age-appropriate behaviors between children." [31] [32]

Information gathered by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) supports documented research. In an effort to address noted barriers about providing integrated recreation and utilize research driven practices that support inclusion, DDPC initiated activities have been designed to:

- Offer incentives to generic recreation providers to develop integrated recreation programs and offer training to staff and other providers about how to initiate such programs.
- Encourage collaborative strategies between disability service providers and recreation programs including the use of mentoring strategies.
- Involve business and community-based organizations in the establishment of integrated recreation and social programs for children with disabilities.
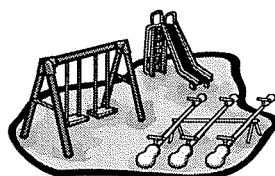
DDPC Initiatives

Since 1998, the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council has provided funding for projects to expand integrated recreation and socialization activities for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. To date, DDPC has funded four recreation initiatives. These include the:

- Recreation Incentive grant
- Partnering grants
- Recreation Motivation and Technical Assistance Grant
- Summer Integrated Recreation Grants

Common themes that will be reoccurring throughout this document include:

1. The need to have structural or organizational systems in place that support program delivery, including: trained staff and volunteers, adequate funds, facilities, supplies, and equipment to pursue project objectives.
2. The need to have skilled people who carry out project objectives.
3. The need for specific approaches that can be implemented to support the participation of children with developmental disabilities. The aim of this last objective was that children would not just be placed into recreation programs, but would truly participate and interact with children without disabilities.

A helpful categorization of interaction comes from research completed by La Greca and Mesibov.[33] Interaction is classified by the following behaviors: greeting, joining, inviting, engaging in conversation, engaging in sharing or cooperation, and the use of play skills.[34]

This report will highlight each of these initiatives focusing on models funded, barriers experienced, outcomes achieved, and lessons learned.

Recreation Incentive Grants

The overall goal of this initiative was to increase community-based recreation opportunities for children with developmental disabilities. DDPC provided a series of small incentive grants to organizations that were attempting to be integrated but needed support to make inclusion work. DDPC offered incentive grants up to $1,800.00. The grants were awarded for a one-year period and particular emphasis was given to organizations meeting the needs of under-served populations and to the geographic distribution of applicants.

Overview of Program Models

A total of eleven agencies received funding in the amount of $1800.00 each for a period of one year. Grantees included regional youth bureaus, local departments of parks and recreation, sports and recreation programs, youth development programs, and collaborations between generic recreation providers and disability service agencies. DDPC funds were used to defray enrollment costs, to purchase adaptive equipment and to offer subsidies for staff training. A description of the individual models follows:

- One agency launched a social club offering field trips to teens with and without developmental disabilities.
- Two agencies initiated integrated after school programming for children with and without disabilities.
- Two youth organizations provided leadership training to staff to strengthen skills on disability, integration, and inclusion strategies.
- Six grantees formed collaborative relationships with other community-based agencies that initiated integrated programs. Partnerships were established with Youth Bureaus and Departments of Recreation, and between generic recreation providers and disability specific agencies.

The incentive grants were offered with the intent to:

1. Increase the capacity of organizations to deliver recreation opportunities.
2. Enhance skills of individuals working in recreation organizations and/or agencies through training and information sharing.
3. Increase participation in recreation by children with developmental disabilities through one-time purchase of adaptive equipment that would support the participation of these children.

In general, projects realized the intent of the grant through the following strategies:

- Forming partnerships with other organizations,
- Providing training that targeted recreation staff, administrators, and other policymakers, specifically, individuals with decision-making power who could encourage further inclusion of children with disabilities in agency programs.

With an investment of approximately $20,000 over the course of a year, the following outcomes were achieved between October 1, 1998-September 30, 1999 [35]

Number of children with disabilities served	284
Number of staff trained	390
Number of policymakers (including program administrators) receiving training and information	255
Pieces of adaptive equipment purchased	100

Lessons Learned

1. Increasing capacity of organizations

Organizations needed to have certain organizational elements in place for program success. Successful programs required administrative support, individuals in decision-making positions that were committed to the philosophy of inclusion and were willing to develop the capacities of their agency to include children with developmental disabilities.

These projects also found that networking with schools and parents helped to facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities. Programs that effectively included children had established open communication between parents, schools, and disability service providers; all of these individuals could offer information and training resources.

Consistent with documented research, staff needed time to plan and discuss issues. Planning was found to be one of the key ingredients in successful inclusion programs. [36]

2. Training and information sharing

Program staff needed to have specific information to effectively achieve project objectives. Organizations that provided training to staff were better able to include children with disabilities into recreation programs.

Staff training typically included:

- Overview of agency policies and procedures.
- Safety training.
- Disability sensitivity training.
- Overview of disabilities including disability characteristics and behavior.
- Strategies to modify tasks and activities
- Training on behavior management.

Staff needed to have strong communication skills to be able to instruct and demonstrate tasks to children. Analyzing what tasks and materials would need to be modified to allow children with disabilities to participate was also an essential skill for staff. Furthermore, staff needed to be able to provide instruction through a variety of means including verbal instruction, use of pictures, and direct demonstration.

3. Promoting interaction between children with and without disabilities

DDPC had particular interest in expanding peer interactions between children with and without disabilities. Interactions can be broadly categorized in terms of "social skills including self-related behaviors (e.g., expressing feelings), task-related behaviors (e.g., asking and answering questions, group discussions) and interpersonal behaviors (e.g., greeting others, making conversation, gaining attention)." [37]

Many grantees used swimming, sports games and activities such as foosball, Ping-Pong, dance etc. that outlined rules, incorporated cooperative learning or used peer-mentoring or peer partnering approaches to encourage peer-to-peer interaction.

Composition of staff proved important to program implementation. Agencies found that staff who had previous knowledge or exposure to disabilities or child development helped to increase peer-to-peer interaction.

Partnering Grants

DDPC recognized the continued need to build agency and staff capacity to include children with disabilities in recreation programs. DDPC offered a total of $180,000.00 toward this initiative. Six agencies received $30,000.00 per year for three years for meeting the Request for Proposal requirements. The RFP was designed to target agencies that had experience providing integrated recreation and who were willing to partner with recreation agencies that had never included children with disabilities. The premise of such a partnership was that linkages would be established with personnel that had expertise to support the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Another important element of the Partnering grants was peer-mentoring. Projects typically fostered one-to-one relationships between youth with and without disabilities. The peer mentor relationships were established with the intent of cultivating positive role modeling, peer support, peer interaction, and joint problem solving. Peer-mentoring and cooperative learning have been used to facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities in educational settings. [38] [39] "Cooperative learning is one of the most frequently recommended strategies for effecting inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classroom programs."[40] Professional literature and lessons learned from DDPC grants indicate that the successful use of peer-mentoring requires that certain components be in place. These components include preparation and training for the peer mentor.[41] Peer-mentors received training on a variety of disability-related topics including sensitivity issues, facilitating inclusion, and how to communicate with someone with a disability.

Peer mentors provided direct help to the individual with a disability, answered questions, conveyed procedural or conceptual directions, and organized materials. DDPC wanted to incorporate these strategies into recreation programs funded by the Partnering Grants.

Overview of Program Models

Grants were awarded to six organizations in the amount of $30,000.00 per year for up to three years to implement objectives including:

1) Developing an outreach plan to recruit children with disabilities.

2) Implementing staff training to include children with disabilities.
3) Implementing recreation programs that promote interaction between children with and without disabilities.

Each of the six grants employed a different programmatic model. These models included:

- A disability service agency launched a peer-mentoring program in a rural area where children were matched with community-based recreation programs based on their expressed interest, geographic location, a child's ability to work within group settings, and assessment of their individual strengths and abilities.
- An after-school program targeting teenagers partnered with three community-based agencies to offer structured activities including art classes, karate, swimming, and African dance. The program used students without disabilities from the National Honor Society to serve as mentors and received credit for service hours.
- A school-based program run by a Jewish Community Center formed partnerships with local colleges and universities to recruit students to serve as one-to-one mentors for children with disabilities. The program provided activity options for children between the ages of 5-18, including sports, swimming, rollerblading, and workshops on makeup, fashion, and aerobics.
- A disability service agency partnered with three schools to establish a peer-mentoring model that matched students with and without developmental disabilities on a one-to-one basis. Students with disabilities chose a community activity to participate in with their peer mentor such as going to the movies, going out to eat, going to the museum, etc.. School liaisons were available to provide support and technical assistance.
- A disability service agency provided training workshops and individualized technical assistance to municipal departments, after school programs, and other community-based recreation providers. Training workshops included information on disability laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and its application to recreation programs, disabilities awareness, disability sensitivity, information on behavior modification, strategies for inclusion and how to make program modifications.
- A project coordinator provided technical assistance on how to include children with developmental disabilities in recreation or socialization programs. The disability service agency acted as a referral source for families to link children with community-based recreation programs and provided these agencies with information and technical assistance. Program options included art classes, school-based programs, and sports programs.
- A disability service agency partnered with a Jewish Community Center (JCC) to include children between the ages of 5-8 in an existing after-school program. Ongoing training and sensitization workshops were offered by the disability service agency to the JCC after-school staff. Training helped to address attitudinal issues, enhance staff skills and their ability to adapt program activities and integrate children with and without special needs. Family activities also provided a mechanism for families with special needs children to meet and connect with other families.

Objectives of the Partnering Grants included:

- Outreach
- Training, and
- Promoting interaction between children. [42]

A summary of grant specific outcomes follows from October 1, 1998-September 30, 2001:

Number of children with disabilities served	333
Number of staff trained	1219
Number of parents trained	276
Number of recreation programs improving policies and practices	244

Lessons Learned

1. Outreach

All projects developed assessment tools to identify the best program and activity matches for children with disabilities.

All projects developed fliers and pamphlets about program activities. Other outreach strategies included advertising in agency and municipal program newsletters and local newspapers.

Many projects discovered that establishing successful collaboration between agencies and agency personnel took longer than 12 months. Successful partnerships often required written agreements outlining expected roles and responsibilities between agencies.

Project coordinators often worked directly with parents to ensure an appropriate program match was established for children.

2. Training to facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities

Project coordinators needed to be directly involved with all aspects of program implementation including providing education, training, and technical assistance to recreation staff and mentors.

Many grantees provided training workshops on disability awareness and inclusion strategies for recreation supervisors, CSE chairpersons, and Directors of Special Education. Many of the projects incorporated disability sensitivity exercises such as wearing a blindfold and negotiating a room to experience what it might feel like to be visually impaired.

All projects developed training targeting recreation staff and key administrative staff, which included general information on disability issues and more specific training about activity modification and behavior management. Staff also needed training on how to make program modifications for children with disabilities. Additional training was needed on how to facilitate socialization among the children. Projects needed to provide instruction about specific strategies including:

- Parallel play and how to model appropriate play.

- Physical and verbal prompting .
- How to provide step by step instructions and tactics to break down activities for children.

Models that targeted teenagers provided training on disability and inclusion issues to high school students via health classes.

Many of the projects disseminated training manuals as supplements to the hands-on training that was provided.

3. Promoting interaction between children with and without disabilities
Program staff provided an assortment of activities for youth to participate in including sports activities, board games, art and drama, computer instruction, interactive games, free play, academic instruction (in large and small groups), and field trips.

Project coordinators were essential to individual project successes. Coordinators for each project provided hands on support to recreation staff. Duties of the coordinator included the recruitment of volunteers and mentors, assisting with the training and technical assistance offered to staff and mentors, setting up initial meetings between the mentor and individual with a disability, and evaluating the success of the peer-mentor match.

Coordinators needed to arrange weekly or biweekly staff meetings that allowed staff and mentors to discuss problems in carrying out program activities and plan alternate strategies.

All of the program models utilized a peer matching system or a buddy system between children with and without disabilities. Peer-mentoring occurred on a one-to-one basis or in small group settings. Models serving younger children used a modified buddy system where a staff person was assigned to the group of children with and without disabilities.

Previous disability experience was found to be helpful in the implementation of these projects. Grantees made specific efforts to recruit staff with backgrounds in special education, therapeutic recreation, and other disability fields due to the knowledge that these individuals would have in activity modification, behavior management etc.. For example, staff knew to simplify activity patterns, adapt the play or activity areas (e.g. make the area smaller and remove obstacles, modify body positions, slow the activity pace etc.).

Transportation was a barrier identified by all projects. Parents often had to transport their child to activities. Many projects could not allocate funding toward transportation.

Results from these grants underscored the continued need for:

- Disability awareness and disability sensitivity training for recreation staff.
- The need to circulate information and provide training about successful strategies used to include children with disabilities into programs, and
- How to make program modifications to include children with disabilities.

To address these needs, DDPC formulated a grant to recruit an umbrella organization to provide information, technical assistance, and incentives for recreation agencies to include children with developmental disabilities into ongoing programs. Specific emphasis was placed on targeting minority and other under-served populations.

Recreation Motivation and Technical Assistance Grant

DDPC issued a grant in the amount of $50,000 for one-year for a disability service agency to provide technical assistance to encourage recreation and after-school programs to include children with disabilities in these programs.

DDPC was seeking an 'umbrella' organization with the capacity to assist other recreation programs to facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities into existing recreation programs. The selected umbrella organization had to demonstrate:

1. An infrastructure that could disseminate information to multiple organizations and audiences.
2. Knowledgeable staff that could provide support and technical assistance to recreation providers.
3. Demonstrate experience with traditionally under-served populations.

Overview of Project Model

The Chinese-American Planning Council (CAPC) of New York City was selected as the grantee for this initiative through a competitive Request for Proposal process. Basis of the award included the following:

- CAPC demonstrated the infrastructure to disseminate information and provide technical assistance through its twenty-year history of providing childcare, early intervention, family support services, and multiple other social service programs.
- CAPC demonstrated capability to achieve the project intent through the agency's history of providing social, educational, cultural, and economic support services to Asian immigrant populations.

- CAPC demonstrated its knowledge of recreation and under-served populations though long-established relationships with ten day care service providers, and ten youth service programs.

Project objectives included the following:

1. Outreach to promote the involvement of children with disabilities into community recreation programs.
2. Providing information and technical assistance to recreation providers.
3. Promoting interaction between children with and without disabilities.

Over the course of project implementation, the grant period was extended from one year to three years due to the recognition that more time was needed to develop the project infrastructure. With an investment of $150,000, the following outcomes were achieved by CAPC over the three year period:

- 110 children with disabilities were served by peer advocates over three years of the grant.
- 1250 children with disabilities were served by the incentive grants provided to affiliate and community-based programs.
- Over the three years of the grant, 20 community-based providers and 20 Chinese-American Planning Council Program Affiliates became more inclusive as a result of collaboration and technical assistance.
- 250 people receiving training in integrated recreation over the three years of the grant cycle. [43]

CAPC staff served as an information resource for daycare and after-school recreation programs. Material about disabilities and progress in the developmental disabilities field was sent out on a quarterly basis in both English and Chinese. Recreation staff received information regarding best practices in inclusion and inclusion strategies, accessibility, and accommodations.

CAPC offered $300 incentive grants to make recreation programs more inclusive to children with developmental disabilities. The intent of the incentive grants was to build relationships between recreation providers to share best practices, strategies for inclusion, and related information to infuse inclusion into agency policies and practices.

Incentive grants were used to cover fees to attend outings to zoos, parks, aquariums, museums, and sporting events within New York City. Some agencies sponsored events to assist with cultural assimilation. Agencies sponsored craft fairs where children with disabilities created the exhibits. CAPC also hosted holiday parties for children. Some events were structured to help address language and cultural changes for children.

In Chinese culture, the term developmental disability is synonymous with mental retardation. Mental retardation is considered a disgrace in many Chinese families. CAPC staff made considerable effort not to use the term 'developmental disability' and instead used specific disability terms such as Asperger Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and Epilepsy.

The program sought to establish an information exchange among the affiliate and community-based programs. The Chinese-American Planning Council disseminated information to day care and youth service providers about:

- Inclusion strategies and how to make inclusion work
- Articles that defined elements necessary for integrated recreation /integrated child care
- Resources with suggested activities to support the inclusion for children in day care programs

Lessons Learned

1. Outreach to promote involvement of children with disabilities
The skills of the project coordinator were crucial to the project's success. CAPC experienced agency restructuring during the course of project implementation. The restructuring caused changes in personnel which included the project coordinator. The coordinator position needed to have someone who had skills in community outreach, skill to provide counseling and support, develop peer leadership, and provide ongoing training and support to address recreation and behavior issues within the affiliate programs.

The coordinator had to identify potential community partners that would promote integrated recreation. The coordinator had to work with project partners (community and affiliate agencies) to organize events and develop materials that promoted integrated recreation. The coordinator had to maintain continuous contact with community-based and affiliate programs.

Contact occurred through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, agency presentations etc. The ongoing presence of the coordinator was needed to obtain "buy in" about the project from the community-based and affiliate programs. Outreach and publicity to community-based and affiliate organizations about the project and its intent was continuous. The coordinator needed to educate staff of these programs about the benefits of inclusion.

Children served by this project were recruited through schools, social workers, and self-referrals. Other means of outreach included the radio, press releases, publications in the various ethnic media, day care centers and word of mouth.

2. Information and technical assistance:
The project coordinator held presentations, training workshops, and provided one to one assistance for case workers in Family Support programs, staff in the after-school and daycare programs and directors of Youth Service programs.

Training included identifying characteristics of particular disabilities, defining what inclusion is and how recreation staff could engage children in recreation activities. Case examples were used to demonstrate inclusion strategies. CAPC found that staff needed on-site materials that could be referred to when attempting to engage children in activities.

CAPC also implemented training for peer advocates to support children with disabilities in program activities. Peer advocates provided support in after-school programs, provided

homework help and attended field trips. The role of the peer advocate in these activities was to address any issue that may interfere with the inclusion process for children.

Peer advocates would modify tasks, clarify routines etc., to allow children to participate in activities. CAPC recruited peer mentors from high schools and college settings. Recruitment of peer mentors was a barrier for this project. Similar to the Partner Grants, staff turn over and schedule conflicts reduced consistent participation of the peer mentors. The project coordinator played a crucial role in providing support to peer mentors.

Training and close monitoring of peer advocates through regular group meetings was essential. The group meetings offered a forum to share what difficulties were experienced during an activity. These meetings also offered the project coordinator the opportunity to conduct booster sessions on skills and techniques that would assist with the inclusion process.

3. Promoting interaction between children with and without disabilities
Case management was added as a project component during the third year of the project. The majority of the families served by CAPC lacked English proficiency and the knowledge needed to navigate the different service systems. CAPC staff determined families were more receptive to including their children in programs once primary needs such as housing, employment, financial assistance, transportation, etc. were met.

Unlike the previous projects, CAPC had to deal with cultural issues experienced by the Chinese-American population being served. A cultural gap, cultural stigma, and language barriers contributed to children with disabilities not being included into existing recreation programs.

Additional barriers to inclusion included:

1) A fear that children without disabilities would become delayed or disabled by associating with children with developmental disabilities. Parents of children with disabilities in Chinese culture do not always seek out support services out of fear of being ostracized.
2) Staff serving these families felt ill equipped to handle children with disabilities.
3) Language barriers limit access to existing recreation opportunities. Most parents were not fluent in English as a second language.
4) Chinese families place a higher value on the academic success of their children over their involvement in socialization or recreation activities. [44]

It was necessary for recreation staff and the peer mentors to be aware of potential behaviors that might be exhibited by individuals with disabilities and medical needs that might arise. Special consideration was given to the design of activities. For example, seating arrangements were strategically set so children with and without disabilities were paired together.

Peer mentors were on hand to assist the children with disabilities with any help they might need to complete an activity. The peer advocates also prompted children without disabilities to mingle and interact with the children with disabilities.

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The incentive grants increased the number of children with disabilities who participated in integrated recreation activities. The availability of funds allowed for the purchase of supplies and covered enrollment fees that might have been cost prohibitive to some families.

Programs had to be responsive to expressed parent interests (e.g. providing academic support through tutoring) to increase the likelihood that the parent would allow their child to participate in an integrated recreation program. The addition of tutoring was well received because parents viewed the support as leveling the playing field for their child who was struggling academically. Children received homework help from a peer mentor followed by recreation activities such as story-telling and or a group game activity. Peer mentors also provided support in a school-based computer lab.

CAPC found that a peer-mentoring component increased a parent's willingness to have their child participate in recreation activities.
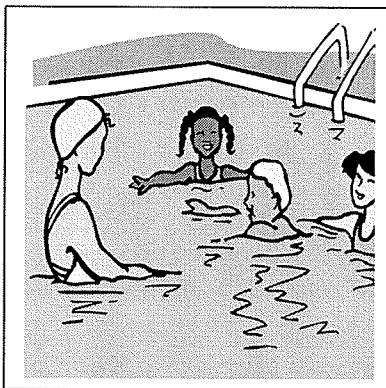
Summer Integrated Recreation Grants

Despite the work completed by the Partnering grants and the ongoing work of the Chinese American Planning Council, DDPC continued to receive notice that families were not able to access integrated programs for their children, particularly during the summer months. This was due to program's inability to serve children with developmental disabilities since staff at summer programs did not have sufficient training or information to serve these children. Information gathering efforts identified the following needs specific to providing summer programs for children:

1. A need for established collaboration between parents, school personnel, and community service providers to create integrated summer program options for children with disabilities.
2. A need for trained staff that could provide integrated programming for children.
3. A need to instruct staff about methods and approaches to facilitate participation between children in age-appropriate activities.

Overview of Program Models
In an effort to respond to these identified needs, DDPC awarded grants in the amount of $25,000 to ten recreation providers to:

1. Increase opportunities for summer-based integrated recreation and socialization programs for children with disabilities.
2. To conduct outreach and publicity to the community about the project with the intent to recruit children.

3. To provide training and staff development to facilitate the integration of children with disabilities with children without disabilities.
4. Promote interaction between youth with and without developmental disabilities.
5. Increase parent involvement and awareness about integrated recreation.

A variety of program models were established including:

- An urban public library system established an inclusive literature-based gardening program for children with and without developmental disabilities.
- A performing arts organization established a partnership with a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), an academic program for children with disabilities, to provide a five-week integrated drama, arts, and theater experience for children with and without developmental disabilities.
- A partnership was formed between an Urban City Youth Bureau and a disability service provider to run a six-week integrated summer program at three city parks. Children participated in a variety of sports and arts and crafts activities.
- A partnership was formed between a parent run disability advocacy organization and a Jewish Community Center to provide an integrated summer day camp in two-week to six-week sessions at an existing day camp. Youth participated in activity modules including sports, arts and crafts, hiking, dance, nature, music, trips, theater, and overnight camp experiences.
- A disability service agency recruited children with developmental disabilities and placed the children into existing community-based recreation programs such as girl/boy scout camps, and day camps at a farm and science museum. The program also offered center-based activities.
- A community-based agency partnered with a school district to offer a school-based evening program for middle school students between the ages of 12-16. The program operated for six weeks and included activities such as Karate, drama, swimming and other sports. The program also conducted a series of field trips to other community activities. Every Friday the project held a family night to promote family involvement.
- A disability service agency formed a partnership with a charter school to integrate children between the ages of five and thirteen into an existing summer program at the charter school. The program used social skills training and structured activities to facilitate integration. Children participated in a variety of group games, sporting activities, and field trips.
- Two disability service agencies partnered with community recreation sites to offer an integrated day camp program for youth with and without disabilities at local parks and recreation sites.
- A collaborative partnership between an urban YWCA and the Department of Youth and Community Development implemented a four week integrated summer camp for adolescents. Recruited children participated in activities including swimming, dance, theatre, arts and crafts and a variety of sports activities.

Projects were designed to serve children between the ages of 5-16. Activities ran Monday through Friday for two to six week intervals over the summer. Some projects broke activity sessions into two to four week intervals depending on the model.

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Grantees offered a variety of daily activities including swimming and sports activities, nature and gardening, music, crafts, computers, drama, community field trips, and structured "free time".

Many agencies discovered that the program schedule effected what children could attend. Many children with significant needs were not able to attend the recreation programs because they were in 12 – month school year programs.

Some of the projects served children who did not speak English as their primary language. Program restructuring needed to occur to accommodate the need for language interpreters as well as providing program materials in other languages.

Grant specific outcomes between January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2002 included the following:[45]

Number of children with disabilities served	551
Number of parents receiving training on integrated recreation	289
Number of staff trained	516

Lessons Learned
1. Increase opportunities for children with disabilities
Agencies needed to establish clear roles and responsibilities with their collaborating partners. This often occurred through written memorandums of understanding. Agencies also had to establish solid methods of communication with their collaborating partner. It was determined that using multiple methods was most effective and included written letter, with follow-up by telephone and email.

Timing was crucial to all of the projects. Planning for summer programming needed to occur at the beginning of the year. Projects needed at least six months to effectively plan and conduct outreach activities. Recruitment of children needed to occur in early spring to be effective. Follow up contact with families needed to occur at least two weeks in advance of the program start up to remind families of the start date, program structure, expectations, etc. Staff had to make repeated phone calls to families to remind them to send in registration forms. Some project staff reported that families found the program fees cost-prohibitive even with financial scholarships offered from grant funds.

Responsibilities of the Project coordinator and/or Project team were crucial. The coordinator and/or project team was responsible for networking with school districts, and providing supervision and staff support to hired summer recreation staff. The project coordinator also served as the intermediary between families and communicated the successes and challenges experienced by children.

Programs needed to develop a system of communication between families. Some programs established contact with parents at the drop off and pick up times for children. Other programs

contacted parents weekly or maintained a daily log that documented daily activities, behaviors etc.

Many programs had to develop transportation support and/or arrangements during project implementation. Agencies offered assistance by arranging para-transit service or by providing bus tokens to those families whose children could utilize public transportation. There were cases where program staff also transported children using their own vehicle or the agency vehicle.

2. Outreach and publicity

All projects had a publicity or marketing campaign announcing the program intent. Grantees used a variety of strategies to market the programs including face-to-face meetings with recreation providers and parents, project "open houses" and dissemination of brochures, fliers, and registration packages. All projects used local schools as a means to advertise the project as well as using the local newspapers. Some projects formed Advisory Committees to assist with outreach and planning activities.

Successful outreach strategies to recruit children included direct contact with parents, school personnel, the Committees on Special Education and provider agencies. Many projects found partnerships with local school districts essential for planning, recruitment, and project implementation. Programs found that when outreach was conducted earlier, agencies received a higher response rate from schools and families.

Two of the projects used home visits as a means to recruit children. Home visits assisted staff to build rapport with families and strengthened family participation. The home visit also assisted staff to assess potential programmatic needs and work with parents to generate ideas about how to address needs or issues that may arise with a particular child.

All programs developed screening processes that helped to assess the types of needs that a particular child had and the type of support that would be required, and the type of assistance that could be put into place to effectively enhance the participation of the child.

Three projects developed individualized recreation plans for children with disabilities who were participating. The individualized recreation programs were used to identify and document support needs. The individualized recreation plans were a beneficial tool that assisted staff to determine strategies that would allow a child to achieve the maximum level of participation.

3. Training and staff development

All projects implemented staff training. DDPC specified that all staff development must include the collaborating partners. Like the Recreation Incentive grants and the Partnering grants, training included the following:

- Overview of agency policies and procedures.
- Safety training and how to manage medical issues.
- Disability sensitivity and awareness training, activity adaptation, friendship facilitation strategies including coaching, mentoring and positive reinforcement.

- General facilitation skills and strategies to include children with developmental disabilities.
- Specialized training on behavior modification techniques.

Many projects had staff on site that was available to provide technical assistance, intervention and support on issues related to behavior and activity modification.

Staff from various disciplines was used. Areas of expertise included Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Recreation Therapy, and Special Education. While such expertise was helpful to some of the projects, recruiting these experts during the summer proved difficult. In addition, some projects felt that the willingness of staff to implement inclusive practices was more important than their technical background, thus experience with special needs can be valuable but is not essential.

Many programs had difficulties getting staff from their collaborating partners to attend staff training. This difficulty was attributed to time and scheduling issues.

4. Promoting interaction
All projects were required to implement techniques that promoted interaction between children with and without disabilities. These projects utilized research driven strategies that have proven successful in other DDPC recreation initiatives including:

- Coaching and social skills training. [46]
- Problem solving instruction.
- Modeling and behavior instruction. [47]

Program structure was an important factor to ensure successful inclusion for some children. For some children, activities and schedules needed to be clearly defined, as did roles and expectations. Children responded positively to knowing what activities were planned and when activities would be done each day.

Project staff had to ensure the availability of materials, equipment, and supplies that allowed children with and without disabilities to participate at similar levels.
Examples of activity modifications cited in literature include:

- Changes in the time required or permitted for play.
- Use of specialized or modified equipment.
- Changes in the size or structure of a group or team, and
- Changes to activity rules. [48]

Examples of activity modifications used by projects included:

- Staff prompted children using verbal cues, coaching, and direct instruction.
- Staff provided individual skill building sessions for youth if they had difficulty engaging in individual or group activities or sports.
- Staff modified activities (rules and procedures) so all children could participate.

Project staff indicated that the most important element of activity design was to make modifications before an activity began.

Peer partnering was used extensively. Children with disabilities were matched to children without disabilities and many activities were completed in small groups.

Children assumed leadership roles in activities where they displayed special traits or skills. One program had a camper choreograph a dance and teach other children the dance steps.
Several projects held disability awareness activities for youth. Examples included participants receiving instruction in sign language, or using wheelchairs to play basketball or completing activities while blindfolded.

The summer recreation projects served more children with behavior issues as this initiative progressed. To effectively address these issues, staff utilized research proven strategies including:

- Behavior prevention techniques including establishing rules, arranging the physical environment, and planning for transitions.
- Praising for positive social behavior.
- Enforcement of program and activity rules.
- Correction of incorrect situational behaviors through modeling and social cues. [49]

Staff also had to use a more hands on approach, which included 1:1 support and assistance. [50]

5. Promoting parental involvement
Many projects experienced difficulty promoting parental involvement, particularly involving families of children without disabilities in program activities. For some projects, the lack of involvement of parents of children without disabilities was attributed to the program structure. In some cases the program was a drop in model that did not require formal registration.

Some of the projects discovered that parental involvement was more important to the agency than the parents. Qualitative interviews suggest that parents viewed the summer recreation program as a vehicle for respite. In general, parents felt their children were engaging in meaningful activities in safe environments and that trained and knowledgeable staff was addressing their children's needs. Strategies to promote parental involvement included:
- Some programs holding formal "training." Training included information about inclusion, parenting, or behavior management to promote participation of parents.
- Some projects used more informal mechanisms for involving parents such as holding a "Family Day, or hosting a cook out or a "Friday Family Night" which included dinner, swimming, and games.

Despite these efforts, relationships and formal contact with the families, particularly families of children without disabilities were difficult to establish. One program asked parents to be a part of the project planning. Parents provided input in a focus group to develop strategies to increase

the numbers of children with disabilities involved in the program. Parent input was also sought for the development of a promotional video about the integrated recreation program.

In general, parental involvement increased when staff from the summer programs sought input from parents or invited parents to be a part of the program decision making (e.g. providing input about program structure and activities).

Related DDPC Initiatives

Field Initiated Ideas
The Field Initiated Ideas project was developed as a mechanism to gain input from families and disability service providers about service gaps, capacity needs, and potential strategies to address needs. Field Initiated Ideas was designed to assist DDPC to develop and test new approaches that supported the independence, productivity and inclusion of children with developmental disabilities. Submitted ideas had to address systems change, be family-centered, and/or consumer-driven. Ideas had to demonstrate community-based approaches and linkages to under-served populations.

Through an application process, agencies could apply for up to $25,000 for a period of one year to develop and demonstrate projects that enhanced knowledge and practices for children and adults with developmental disabilities. A description of models that promoted integrated recreation follows.

Project Adventure

Overview of the Program Model
In 1998, DDPC awarded $25,000 to a school district in Long Island to replicate the "Project Adventure" model. The model was developed in Massachusetts in 1971 and incorporates principles of active learning, challenge, and teamwork.

The program involves students engaging in activities that use a ropes course and includes high and low elements. The high elements are "belayed activities which require ropes, safety harnesses, and other equipment." [51] Low ropes elements focus on individual goals such as overcoming fear and team building. For example, a student may monitor another student while they are on the low rope element. Students also engage in challenge and problem solving activities known as "Initiatives". Initiatives are group problem-solving activities that require participation of all members to complete an assigned task [52]

The Physical Education Teacher initiates the activity with a verbal explanation of the problem. Students with and without disabilities engage in attempts to solve the identified problem. Following completion, the teacher facilitates a discussion about the problem and the attempts to solve it. The model has been used with a variety of populations and various age groups. "Project Adventure" strengthens communication, cooperation, and problem-solving skills of participants.

DDPC funds were directed toward staff instruction in "Project Adventure" techniques. Funds were also used to purchase equipment.

Grant specific outcomes included the following:

- At the conclusion of the 12-month funding cycle, the Project Adventure model served a total of 108 high school students with developmental disabilities.
- A team consisting of three Physical Education teachers and one Special Education teacher received training in the "Project Adventure" Model.

Lessons Learned
1. Staff development
Physical Education Teachers play a crucial role in the implementation of the model. Teachers need time to plan with their team, including the co-teachers and the Special Education Teacher. To successfully implement the "Project Adventure" model, teachers need strong facilitation skills. In addition to being able to set up and structure the class, teachers need strong skills in group dynamics, skill in developing rapport between group members, skill in specific techniques such as belaying, and skill to develop ways to assist students to apply the skills used within the "Project Adventure" activity outside of the classroom setting.

Throughout model implementation, the "debriefing session" was identified as crucial to including children with developmental disabilities. The process of debriefing allows the teacher to assist the class in evaluating what they have accomplished as well as to reinforce the goal of the task. Most tasks emphasize cooperation and team building strategies.

2. Promoting interaction
Students with and without disabilities were broken into small groups for skill development in areas including rope skills, belaying, and climbing. The student groups are established by the teacher based upon prior class work and the responsiveness of students to each other. Specific responsibilities were assigned to students for task completion. Often a group leader was chosen

to be responsible for leading activities. Students were also assigned to set up, track, and clean up equipment.

Anecdotal reports from project staff indicate that the project model has expanded and will include an Outdoor Education strand in 2004. The project continues to provide a link between special education, the high school and physical education.

Natural TIES

Overview of the Program Model
In 1998, DDPC awarded $25,000 for a one-year period to a disability service organization to implement and replicate the "Natural TIES" program model. The disability service agency effectively demonstrated in their Field Initiated Ideas application that adults living in community-based group homes do not have access to integrated social or recreation opportunities.

The "Natural TIES" program sought to create and support friendships between people with and without disabilities. An individual without a disability was paired with an individual with a disability to participate in one to one social activities. The DDPC-funded project targeted adults living in group homes in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Project objectives included the following components:

1. Community Education and Awareness about the Natural TIES model.
2. Staff training about inclusion and inclusion strategies.
3. Pairing people with and without disabilities to participate in community-based activities.
4. Conducting an investigation to determine the effect of friendship on lifestyle and happiness for people with developmental disabilities.

The disability service agency facilitated a total of 20 friendships between individuals with and without disabilities.

The agency has provided training on inclusion and strategies to support inclusion to 750 people between 1998-2003 in elementary, secondary schools, colleges, and provider agencies.[53]

Similar to other DDPC-funded peer-mentoring models, outreach was critical in bringing about successful matches. The disability service agency sought to identify participants by presenting at colleges, high schools, group homes, parent meetings, and other civic organizations. The project also conducted interest assessments prior to individuals being matched. Matching individuals with similar interests increased the likelihood of a successful long-term match.

Ongoing support was necessary to facilitate interaction in the beginning of the friendship. The agency sponsored individual meetings to monitor the success of the peer match. As part of the project evaluation, the disability service agency tracked data related to peer interactions. Participants tracked data on outings and interactions via a journal.

Data from the investigation of lifestyle and happiness was not conclusive since the data was only collected for five individuals. Anecdotal reports from the agency indicate that 25 additional friendships between individuals with and without disabilities began as a result of the model.

Lessons Learned
Staff development:
Throughout project implementation, it was determined that ongoing technical support was needed to facilitate interaction between individuals with and without disabilities. All staff needed to receive training about inclusion, friendship facilitation or development, and strategies that promote inclusion. Anecdotal reports indicated that staff needed to learn to promote friendship as part of their job.

Together Including Every Student (TIES)

Overview of the Program Model:
Two parents of children with developmental disabilities developed a collaborative relationship with their local school districts and the local Pupil Service Director and used Field Initiated Ideas to develop and implement Together Including Every Student (TIES). The TIES model was developed based upon the lack of participation of children with developmental disabilities with their peers in community and extracurricular activities. Within school settings, children often receive physical assistance, instructional, and material modification, and other supports from an adult.[54] Literature also documents an increase in the use of paraprofessionals and Instructional Assistants[55]. "These paraprofessionals have become a primary mechanism to implement more inclusive practices within the context of the school day."[56] However, after school, many students with developmental disabilities are not able to join social or recreation activities due to a lack of individualized support and knowledgeable activity leaders.

The TIES model moved away from the reliance on the Paraprofessional and instead relies on the concept of Natural Supports, which emphasizes "providing supports in the environments the person is in including the home, neighborhood, local school and regular classroom." Natural supports make use of people who would be in the environment including classmates, co-workers, or the general education teacher.[57]

TIES sought to expand the choices and opportunities available for students with developmental disabilities to engage in extracurricular, social, recreation, and leisure programs. The peer mentor model also assisted children with disabilities to develop leisure skills, friendships and community connections.[58]

DDPC awarded $25,000 for the project to be launched initially in two schools. Objectives of the project included the following:

1. To facilitate the participation of students with developmental disabilities in extracurricular and community activities.
2. To create effective natural support through the use of trained student volunteers.
3. To encourage the independence and socialization of students with developmental disabilities.
4. To promote connections in the school and community. [59]

The TIES model assisted students with developmental disabilities (ages 8-21) to become involved in recreation and social activities including YWCA programs, town recreation programs, extracurricular clubs, community arts programs, summer camp and summer recreation programs, and local sports games and programs.

Student volunteers were recruited through a variety of existing school-based mechanisms such as collaborating with school counselors, school district newsletters, cable televised announcements, program brochures, presentations to school service clubs, and disability service agency newsletters.

Interested students completed an application to assist the project coordinator to determine their individual interest and abilities. All volunteers attended a one-hour training workshop that covered the values of diversity and disability awareness, the definition of developmental disabilities, the significance of inclusion, the role of friendship facilitation, the importance of people first language, and the volunteer's role and responsibilities along with a question and answer or discussion period.

Students with developmental disabilities were recruited through a mailing from the school to the family. Applications of interested students were reviewed, and the project coordinators collaborated with the student and family to identify their strengths, interests and needs. Participants were matched with volunteers based on mutual interests, abilities and availability.

Individual support plans for youth with disabilities were developed by the project coordinator. These plans included activity details, participant needs including medical issues, communication issues, behavioral or social issues, participant's strengths, including hobbies and interests, and what individual supports were needed by the participant. The volunteer's responsibilities were clearly defined. The activity leader also received a copy of the support plan so they could be aware of the participant's needs and the volunteer's role.

DDPC funds were used to produce a volunteer training workshop and a project manual. The project manual included detailed explanation of the program design, implementation, evaluation and replication.

Grant specific outcomes included the following:

- In 1998, a total of 29 youth were served.
- A total of 158 individuals received training. Training participants included staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation. Many of the youth with disabilities served through TIES also participated in extended school year programs.
- From 1998 through 2003, a total of 260 youth with disabilities have been served.
- A total of 375 student volunteers have received training.
- A total of 150 individuals have received staff training. [60]

The TIES model has expanded to 8 school districts within Rochester New York and four school districts outside of Rochester New York and includes youth between the ages of 8-21. Program enhancements continue including a website (www.tiesprogam.org) and a volunteer training video.

Lessons Learned:
1. Staffing:
The role of the coordinator in project implementation was crucial. The coordinator responsible for implementing the program needs to display creativity and resourcefulness. They needed to possess knowledge about developmental disabilities, inclusion, methods and techniques used in organized recreation, community resources, safety practices, recreation equipment, and materials. The coordinator must have the ability to effectively communicate with all project constituents including students and families, general education teachers and special education teachers, administrators, and community recreation staff.

The coordinator was responsible for the recruitment of students with disabilities and the student volunteers, as well as conducting a review of the match of interests, ability, and needed accommodations. The Coordinator also provided ongoing technical support to the student volunteers and activity leaders.

2. Program implementation:
For successful implementation of TIES the following elements were necessary:

The peer match process needed to pair students with similar interests and complementary strengths in activities. The coordinator worked with the program staff and the student volunteer to ensure needed supports were in place.

School-wide publicity was used to inform families about TIES since the coordinator was unable to contact families initially. Connections to disability service providers and local parent groups also assisted in the promotion of the TIES model.

The school administrator protected the confidentiality of all students with disabilities. The school administrator disseminated a mailing, program information, and an application to all eligible students. Once a parent returned the completed application to the coordinator, collaboration began to identify an activity that the student desired to join. Parents also shared their experience with other parents, which helped to spread the value of TIES.

3. Training

The coordinator provided disability awareness training to students without disabilities and activity leaders. One of the key elements that TIES used as a strategy to promote interaction was partial participation. Project staff found that activity leaders were not familiar with the concept of partial participation or other strategies that supported the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Training needed to be structured to provide information about:

- Characteristics of developmental disabilities.
- How disabilities can affect behavior.
- Friendship facilitation and other support strategies.
- The promotion of Person First Language.

The TIES coordinator needed to collaborate with key school district staff including principals and teachers to provide disability awareness training to students. Teachers were also an important resource to identify strategies to accommodate an individual student's need.

4. Promoting interaction

Successful implementation of TIES required that the coordinator provide encouragement to parents and offer a variety of recreation opportunities that would support their child. Overcoming the hesitancy about enrolling their children into a program due to past negative experiences, the uncertainty of success, or questioning if their child would be welcomed were all significant barriers for families. A central component of developing integrated recreation is the willingness of parents of children with disabilities to enroll their children into recreation programs.

The use of the Individualized Support Plan assisted in the identification of needed supports for the student with a disability. The plan identifies specific strategies to support the student with a disability in the chosen activity. The Individualized Support Plan was also shared with the activity leader.

5. Program continuation:

The DDPC funded model received continuation support from Family Support Services. Family Support Services currently provides funding to provide training on the implementation of TIES for one year to interested school districts. The TIES model requires commitment from the local school district to continue the program after 12-months. The TIES model continues to expand based on the collaborative efforts of eight project coordinators that meet monthly to improve and strengthen the program.

Program Sustainability

The dilemma with many projects is how to continue to operate after a primary funding source ceases. Resulting program changes can include reductions in staff, changes in personnel and planning time, fewer opportunities for staff development, changes in available resources and program space.[61]

Projects struggle to continue even with positive evaluation of procedures or practices due to the "short-term influx of funds that may allow for structural, resource, and/or personnel changes that are impossible to continue beyond the developmental phase of the project." [62]

Continuation is often pursued via short term, project specific grants, as opposed to more long-term marketing and planning strategies.[63] For successful program sustainability the following elements need to be in place: organizational infrastructure, staff development processes,[64] adequate management capacity, and diversified outreach/networking and fund raising strategies.[65]

Studies of programs serving at-risk children including children with disabilities identify particular characteristics that contribute to program continuation and sustainability. These include a defined set of policies and procedures,[66] offering professional development and follow up technical assistance [67] Effective training strategies include methods such as a peer teaching where staff works together with the technical assistance to refine program implementation.[68]

Studies also document that effective programs also have "sustainable support networks", entities which provide access to resources including training, space, raw materials which produce newsletters and other project relevant materials.[69]

A variety of other factors have been identified as contributing to program effectiveness including strong leadership, vision, training, administrative support, collaboration and the use of multiple strategy versus single strategy approaches.[70]

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned throughout the implementation of the DDPC Recreation Initiatives and other DDPC grant activities support the conclusions drawn in documented research. Successful programs exhibit qualities such as strong leadership, and they develop "support networks" with other community organizations. Despite these efforts, some agencies face difficulties sustaining project activities after DDPC funds are no longer available. Agency staff are often busy implementing the project and spend very little time marketing their success either within the agency or out in the community. Additionally, continuation funding often does not become a priority until the grant funds are about to run out.

DDPC has learned that agencies need assistance to focus organizational resources to improve long-range planning, program development, fundraising strategies, and program visibility. Before any continuation activity or campaign can be launched an assessment of organizational readiness needs to be conducted.

In an effort to ensure success, the organization must produce a plan that outlines accomplishments (in broad terms) with specific activities for the coming year. The plan should include a description of the problem being addressed and strategies to address the problem including an action plan to implement activities with timelines and responsibilities.

Technical Assistance for Continuation Grants

As was demonstrated in previous projects, building the capacity of organizations and accessing and coordinating resources is difficult because groups with similar missions are competing for the same resources. Capacity-building in this context refers to resource mobilization, program development, and management practices. Projects need assistance to identify program strengths and identify elements of a project that need continuation resources and funding. They need assistance to identify appropriate community funders to support the mission of the organization. The goal of the Technical Assistance for Continuation Strategies initiative was to provide initial training and follow up technical assistance to assist fledgling agencies in:

- Developing sound management practices.
- Strengthening leadership skills and investing in staff training.
- Building partnerships through community participation.
- Developing marketing and communication strategies.

Overview of Program Model

DDPC awarded grants in the amount of $30,000.00 for up to three years to two agencies, one upstate and one downstate to:

1. Help agencies assess project and/or organizational capacity related to project sustainability and identifying strategies for continuation.
2. Provide tools for organizations to increase funding opportunities for the project or organization.

Grant Specific Outcomes include the following[71]

A total of 53 agencies have received training and technical assistance between September 2000-June 2003.

Lessons Learned from this initiative include:

- Project staff needs to develop specific skills in leadership, finance and fundraising.

- Building the capacity of an organization takes more than one year.

- Agencies must have ability to seek resources. Some organizations are strong in economic terms but lack organizational structure. Effective capacity building includes development of core skills and capabilities in leadership, management practices, finance and fundraising, and program development and evaluation.

- For effective capacity building to occur, organizations have to have knowledge of what is going on within the organization, knowledge of what is needed and agreement from key stakeholders about the needs.

- Board development is a key component of capacity building. Board development training needs to include information on board/staff roles and relationships, board management; recruitment, development/fundraising, and financial management.
- Organizations also need training on community building and initiative-based fundraising.[72]

Conclusion

Children with disabilities can be included in recreation programs provided a combination of information, training, and on-going support is available.

The success of programs rests on the abilities of the staff to collaborate and communicate. Basic training in communication, self-expression, listening skills, problem solving, facilitation, and team building are valuable to program design.

Knowledgeable staff, who can modify activities, provide modeling and other inclusion strategies, will increase the number of children with disabilities served by recreation programs.

To foster successful integrated recreation programs, the following elements are required:

a) Programs need to have an infrastructure that supports inclusion of children with disabilities.

b) Examples of infrastructure include having:

   - A means to reach and communicate with families of children with and without disabilities.
   - Access to training resources that support inclusion
   - Personnel who are familiar with disability issues.
   - A network of "collaborators" who can support the project concept, and most importantly an administration that supports and encourages the participation of all children.

c) Training and technical assistance about inclusion, hands-on inclusion strategies, and strategies that promote peer interaction are essential. Specific training is needed on behavior management and situation-specific interventions.

d) Collaboration between service providers and other community agencies is critical. Collaboration between colleges and school districts can augment staffing needs and composition. Collaboration between agencies also offers the opportunity to pool resources such as staff and space.

e) Additional funding is needed to augment training, staffing, and program operating costs.
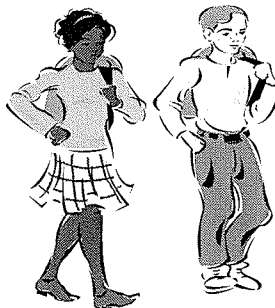
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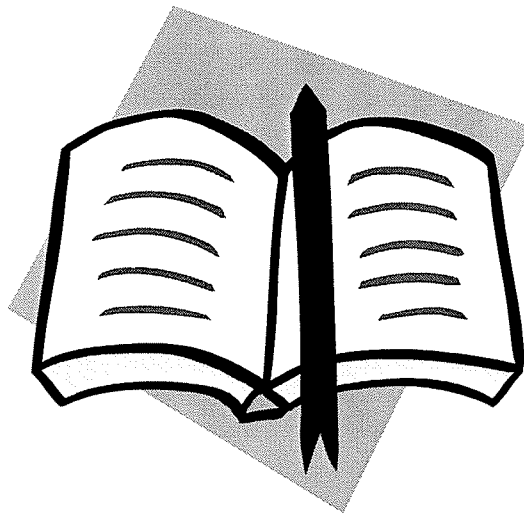
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DDPC Recreation and Incentive Grants
Allegany ARC
Amherst Town Youth Bureau
East End Disabilities Inc.
Family Empowerment Council, Inc.
Girls Incorporated of Central New York,
Helderberg House Inc.
North Tonawanda Department of Parks & Recreation
STRIDE Inc.
Summit Educational Resources
Utica Community Action Inc.
YWCA of Cortland

Partnering Grants
Delaware Opportunities
Exceptional Family Resources
On Your Mark
Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo
South East Consortium for Special Needs
Westchester Jewish Community Services

Motivation and Technical Assistance Grant
Chinese American Planning Council

Summer Integrated Recreation Grants
Brooklyn Public Library
Catskill's IDEA
Center for the Disabled
Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo
Learning Disabilities of Genesee Valley
Learning Disabilities of Western New York

Lourdes Youth Services
Resource Center for Independent Living
Summit Educational Resources
YWCA of New York

Other DDPC Initiatives:
Field Initiated IDEAS
"Project Adventure"
Port Washington Union Free School District

Together Including Every Student (TIES)

Developmental Disabilities Institute "Natural TIES"

Technical Assistance for Continuation Grants
Resource Center for Independent Living
Support Center for Nonprofit Management

Integrated Recreation Resources

Special Camp Guide 2003: A Directory of Camps and Summer Programs for Children and Youth with Special Needs by Resources for Children with Special Needs Inc.

A Directory of camps and summer programs for children and youth in the Metro New York area. The directory lists more than 300 camps and programs. Information includes a description of the type of camp, disabilities served, fees, transportation, etc. The directory also contains a practical "how-to" advice section for interviewing camp directors and locating referral services.

Together Including Every Student (TIES)

TIES is designed to facilitate participation of children and adolescents with disabilities in traditional after-school and community recreation by providing natural support from peer partners. http://www.tiesprogram.org/welcome.htm

Komissar, C., Hart, D., Friedlander, R., Tufts, S., & Paiewonsky, M. (1997). Don't forget the fun. Boston, MA: Children's Hospital.

This guide provides individuals with general ideas on advocating for, providing, and participating in integrated community-based recreation. Topics covered include understanding differences, building local teams to promote community recreation, addressing common issues and concerns, accommodation strategies, activity modifications, finding or developing necessary supports, and developing volunteer support. A guide to national resources is also included.

Maria Paiewonsky and Susan Tufts,

"Recreation in the Community" Institute for Community Inclusion: The Institute Brief, Volume 9, no.1 (1999). This publication details recreation topics including outreach and advertising tips, modifications, strategies for staff training, and ideas on facilitating friendships. http://www.communityinclusion.org/publications/pdf/recbrief.pdf

DDPC Integrated Recreation Grant Products:

(2003). Our Garden Club. Brooklyn Public Library. (Video)

Our Garden Club is an inclusive literature based gardening program for children. It gives children with and without disabilities the opportunity to get together in their neighborhoods to learn about gardening.

(2003.) Our Garden Club Manual. Brooklyn Public Library.

The Our Garden Club Manual details that planning and activities implemented for the *Our Garden Club program,* an inclusive, drop-in, summer recreation program, at two branch libraries.

(2001) Recipe for Fun Manual. YWCA of New York City.

The Recipe for Fun Manual details the planning and implementation process to run an integrated day camp program for adolescents.

Program Sustainability Resources

Markarian, Margie. 1993. Fund-raising: tough times; here's how members can help their favorite charities and foundations keep the coffers filled despite cutbacks in government and corporate giving. Black Enterprise, December, 76+.

Abstract: Article details fundraising strategies including:
* Targeting new donor bases, with an emphasis on minorities and small businesses.
* Developing innovative partnership and sponsorship opportunities with corporations.
* Creating and marketing unique special events

New York State Foundations: A Comprehensive Directory. 7th ed. New York, NY: The Foundation Center, 2001.
Abstract: A comprehensive directory of more than 7,000 independent, company-sponsored and community foundations currently active in New York State that have awarded grants of one dollar or more in the latest fiscal year. Available from the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003-3076. Telephone: (800) 424-9836. http://www.fdncenter.org/

Online Resources:

The web site: http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/Memorial/grants/proposal.htm maintained by the Grants Information Center at U.W. - Madison offers "Proposal Writing-Internet Resources" and has an annotated list of print resources specific to proposal writing.

The Fundraising Directory:
www.fundraisingdirectory.com is an online guide to fund raising that contains a lengthy list of fund-raising web sites.

The web site offers a network of links to Federal government information including funding sources for non-profits. http://www.nonprofit.gov/

The web site offers a "Free Toolkit for Board of Directors" which includes a collection of tools specific to Nonprofit Organizations. http://www.mapnp.org/library/boards/boards.htm

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Technical Assistance Organizations within New York State

Support Center for Nonprofit Management assists nonprofit and public interest organizations to build capacity by providing management training and consulting, as well as disseminating information and practical resources on topics including Management & Leadership, Fundraising and Program Development, Financial Management, Board Development, and Communication. The web site also provides links to other technical assistance resources.
http://www.supportctr.org

Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) administers a wide variety of independent living and advocacy services that are consumer-directed. The technical assistance project funded by the DDPC assists agencies and programs to improve their capability to plan, deliver, manage and evaluate programs through strategies such as establishing new external linkages with other organizations, use of strategic planning, or improving board functioning.

Council on Community Services in New York State provides an array of technical assistance and training including board development, fund development planning, risk management, grant writing, personnel policies, employee benefits training, consultation, and business support services. http://www.ccsnys.org/

Long Island Community Foundation offers training workshops two times a year during the fall and spring, for staff, boards, and volunteers of nonprofit organizations. Topics cover issues including proposal writing, board development, fundraising, legal issues, etc.
http://www.licf.org/litac.html

Rensselaerville Institute provides technical support and services on subjects including Outcome Management, Outcome Funding, and Strategic Mapping. Consultants provide hands on technical assistance, training and consultation on investing, contracting, monitoring, reporting and managing outcomes. http://www.rinstitute.org

Maidstone Foundation provides support to fledgling groups engaging in start up activities. Technical Assistance includes general organizational development, leadership development, staff and board of director training and individualized consultation services. Maidstone Foundation specializes in providing support to populations and agencies serving including individuals with developmental disabilities, immigrants, and other under-served populations.
http://www.maidstonefoundation.org/Programs.htm

Other Resources:
Foundation Center http://www.fdncenter.org/[73]

The Nonprofit Good Practice Guide at **NonprofitBasics.org** captures and organizes good practices to assist nonprofits in improving their efficiency and effectiveness. The Guide, with nine topic areas, is designed as a resource directory and capacity building tool for new nonprofit managers. The Guide is a project of the Philanthropic and Nonprofit Knowledge

Management Initiative at the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership.

The **BoardSource** site contains articles related to nonprofit governance, information about upcoming conferences and events for leaders. A useful section for new nonprofit board members is " **Frequently Asked Questions**," answers to frequently asked questions about nonprofit governance.
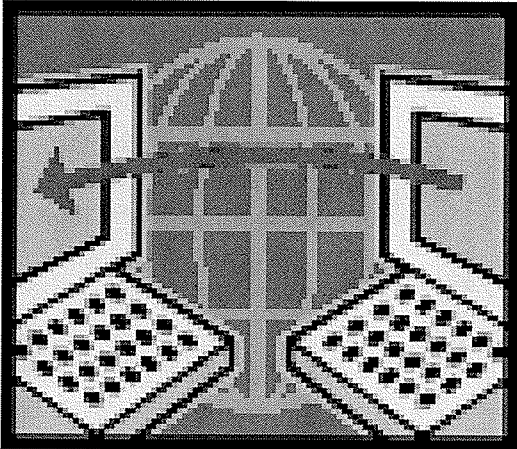
[1] Carolyn Hughes, and Laura T. Eisenman, "Secondary Transition Programming for Students with Disabilities: Accomplishments and Shortcomings," PJE. Peabody Journal of Education 71, no. 4 (1996): 139.

[2] Hughes and Eisenman, 134.

[3] Hughes and Eisenman, 134-139.

[4] Reuven Feuerstein, Yaacov Rand, and John E. Rynders, Don't Accept Me as I Am: Helping "Retarded" People to Excel (New York: Plenum Press, 1988), 246.

[5] Stewart Ehly, Peer-Assisted Learning ed. Keith Topping, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 168-181.

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[7] Recreation and leisure studies indicate that "active participation in planned leisure activities within the community will result in positive gains in health and physical fitness, mobility, language, social skills and in self-fulfillment or self-image. " Paul Retish, and Shunit Reiter, eds., Adults with Disabilities: International Perspectives in the Community, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999), 19 and 130.

[8] Jean B. Crockett, and James M. Kauffman, The Least Restrictive Environment: Its Origins and Interpretations in Special Education (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999), 17.

[9] Everyone learns from INCLUSION; Specially designed instruction puts students with disabilities in regular class environments," The Washington Times, 17 November 2002, D01.

[10] Rollanda E. O'Connor, and Joseph R. Jenkins, "Cooperative Learning as an Inclusion Strategy: a Closer Look," Exceptionality 6, no. 1 (1996): 30.

[11] "Students with severe disabilities experience fewer opportunities to practice, refine, and expand their social skill repertoires, thereby reducing the likelihood that they will develop friendships." Jo M. Hendrickson et al., "Middle and high school students' perceptions on being friends with peers with severe disabilities," Exceptional Children 63, no. 1 (1996). and Retish and Shunit Reiter, eds., 130-135.

[12] Jo M. Hendrickson et al., "Middle and high school students' perceptions on being friends with peers with severe disabilities," Exceptional Children 63, no. 1 (1996).

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[15] Retish, and Shunit Reiter, eds., 133.

[16] Retish, and Shunit Reiter, eds., 133.

[17] Retish, and Shunit Reiter, eds., 130-135.

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[19] Christine L. Salisbury, Ian M. Evans, and Mary M. Palombaro, "Collaborative problem-solving to promote the inclusion of young children with significant disabilities in primary grades," Exceptional Children 63, no. 2 (1997).

[20] Research studies showing that integrated programs promote social interactions include work from Peck, Carlson & Helmstetter, 1992; Staub & Peck, 1994-1995. Paddy C. Favazza, Leslie Phillipsen, and Poonam Kumar, "Measuring and Promoting Acceptance of Young Children with Disabilities," Exceptional Children 66, no. 4 (2000):491.

[21] Mark Brown, and Doris Bergen, "Play and social interaction of children with disabilities at learning/activity centers in an integrated preschool," Journal of Research in Childhood Education 17, no. 1 (2002).

[22] Research documents that "students with disabilities can benefit greatly from increased academic engagement and additional practice in basic skills areas." Although studies results vary depending on the type of mentoring and/or cooperative learning strategy used, the approach has been identified as an important intervention strategy for increasing inclusion of students with special needs. Stewart, 168-181.

[23] Mark Brown, and Doris Bergen, "Play and social interaction of children with disabilities at learning/activity centers in an integrated preschool," Journal of Research in Childhood Education 17, no. 1 (2002).

[24] Paddy C. Favazza, Leslie Phillipsen, and Poonam Kumar, "Measuring and Promoting Acceptance of Young Children with Disabilities," Exceptional Children 66, no. 4 (2000): 491.

[25] Deborah L. Speece, and Barbara K. Keogh, eds., Research on Classroom Ecologies: Implications for Inclusion of Children with Learning Disabilities, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), 129.

[26] Nancy Mamlin, "Despite Best Intentions: When Inclusion Fails," Journal of Special Education 33, no. 1 (1999): 36.

[27] Judith J. Carta, "Chapter 13 Barriers to the Implementation of Effective Educational Practices for Young Children With Disabilities," in Issues in Educating Students with Disabilities ed. Edward J. Kameenui, and David Chard, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997), 266.

[28] Tess Bennett, Deborah Deluca, and Deborah Bruns, "Putting inclusion into practice: perspectives of teachers and parents," Exceptional Children 64, no. 1 (1997).

[29] Joanne W. Putnam et al, "Collaborative skill instructions for promoting positive interactions between mentally handicapped and nonhandicapped children," Exceptional Children 55, no. 6 (1989).

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Belva C. Collins, Meada Hall, and Terri A. Branson, "Teaching leisure skills to adolescents with moderate disabilities," Exceptional Children 63, no. 4 (1997).

[32] Retish, and Shunit Reiter, eds., 132.

[33] Research by La Greca and Mesibov (1979) and Gresham (1982) have suggested that certain social skills are important for successful peer interaction.
Shirin D. Antia, Kathryn H. Kreimeyer, and Nancy Eldredge, "Promoting social interaction between young children with hearing impairments and their peers," Exceptional Children 60, no. 3 (1993).

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[36] Rosemarie Kolstad, Mary M. Wilkinson, and L.D. Briggs, "Inclusion programs for learning disabled students in middle schools," Education 117, no. 3 (1997).

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[38] "Research studies have repeatedly demonstrated that students without disabilities can be effective in teaching a wide range of academic and developmental skills to students with disabilities" Research includes Carr & Darcy, 1990; Charlop, Schreibman, & Tyron, 1983; Donder & Nietupski, 1981; Egel, Richman, & Koegel, 1981; Fenrick & McDonnell.
John Mcdonnell et al., "Supporting the Inclusion of Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities in Junior High School General Education Classes: The Effects of Classwide Peer Tutoring, Multi-Element Curriculum, and Accommodations," Education & Treatment of Children 24, no. 2 (2001): 141.

[39] Studies identify several benefits of small-group instruction and peer approaches for students with disabilities including increased peer interaction, and improved generalization of skills.
Russell Gerstein, Ellen P. Schiller, and Sharon Vaughn, eds., Contemporary Special Education Research: Syntheses of the Knowledge Base on Critical Instructional Issues, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000), 125.

[40] Rollanda E. O'Connor, and Joseph R. Jenkins, "Cooperative Learning as an Inclusion Strategy: a Closer Look," Exceptionality 6, no. 1 (1996): 30

[41] Gerstein, Schiller, and Vaughn, eds., 28.

[42] Information and Lessons Learned reported were obtained from Quarterly Program Reports, Grantee Publications, Project Staff Interviews, and Grantee Cluster Meetings.

[43] Information and Lessons Learned reported were obtained from Quarterly Program Reports, Grantee Publications, Project Staff Interviews, and Grantee Cluster Meetings.

[44] Information and Lessons Learned reported were obtained from Quarterly Program Reports, Grantee Publications, Project Staff Interviews, and Grantee Cluster Meetings.

[45] Information and Lessons Learned reported were obtained from Quarterly Program Reports, Grantee Publications, Project Staff Interviews, and Grantee Cluster Meetings.

[46] Examples of social skills include: "the ability to cooperate on a team, to compete with the use of formal rules, engaging in socially acceptable of physical contact etc."
Stephen L. J. Smith, Dictionary of Concepts in Recreation and Leisure Studies ed. Raymond G. McInnis, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 5.

Research by Covill-Servo, 1982; Ladd 1981; and Oden and Asher 1977 stress coaching and social skills training or strategies. Research by Shure & Spivack, 1978 focus on problem solving skills. Studies completed by Finch and Hops, 1982 focus on the use of behavioral shaping and intervention strategies.
Thomas D. Yawkey, and James E. Johnson, eds., Integrative Processes and Socialization: Early to Middle Childhood, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1988), 158.

[48] Smith, 12.

[49] Antonis Katsiyannis, Jennifer S. Ellenburg, and Olivia M. Acton, "Address Individual Needs: The Role of General Educators," Intervention in School & Clinic 36, no. 2 (2000): 116.

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[51] Gerald T. Moote, and John S. Wodarski, "The acquisition of life skills through adventure-based activities and programs: a review of the literature," Adolescence 32, no. 125 (1997).

[52] Gerald T. Moote, and John S. Wodarski, "The acquisition of life skills through adventure-based activities and programs: a review of the literature," Adolescence 32, no. 125 (1997).

[53] For additional references on **Friendship Facilitation** see: Cook. Jonathan, "Facilitating Friendships for Children with Disabilities." Focal Point , Vol. 15(2)
(2001):http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/FPinHTML/FocalPointFA01/pgFPfa01FriendFacil.shtml

[54] Literature documents that the "prevailing social interaction pattern of persons with disabilities is often 'top-down'; that is, an authority figure (a teacher, paraprofessional etc.), creates and enforces conditions to which the child must respond." Reuven Feuerstein, Yaacov Rand, and John E. Rynders, Don't Accept Me as I Am: Helping "Retarded" People to Excel (New York: Plenum Press, 1988), 246-251.

[55] Michael F. Giangreco et al., "Paraprofessional Support of Students With Disabilities: Literature From the Past Decade," Exceptional Children 68, no. 1 (2001): 45.

[56] Michael F. Giangreco et al., "Attitudes about educational and related service provision for students with deaf-blindness and multiple disabilities," Exceptional Children 63, no. 3 (1997).

[57] Michael F. Giangreco et al., "Attitudes about educational and related service provision for students with deaf-blindness and multiple disabilities," Exceptional Children 63, no. 3 (1997).

[58] Information referenced for the TIES program was compiled with the assistance Leslie Hulbert and Kathleen Costello, the TIES Coordinators and with the assistance of Jane Muthumbi, DDPC Program Associate, and via DDPC Quarterly Reports, Staff Interviews, and the Field Initiated Ideas Final Evaluation data.

[59] Information reflected about TIES was obtained via the assistance of Leslie Hulbert and Kathleen Costello, TIES Coordinators.

[60] Statistics compiled with the assistance of Kathleen Costello, TIES Coordinator.

[61] Mary Jo McGee-Brown, "Chapter 11 Multiple Voices, Contexts, and Methods: Making Choices in Qualitative Evaluation Early Childhood Education Settings," in Qualitative Research in Early Childhood Settings ed. J. Amos Hatch, (Westport, CT: Praeger Paperback, 1995), 199.

[62] McGee-Brown, 199.

[63] Stephanie Lowell, Les Silverman, and Lynn Taliento, "Not-for-profit management: The gift that keeps on giving." The McKinsey Quarterly (2001): 147.

[64] Lowell, Silverman, and Taliento, 147.

[65] McGee-brown, 199.

[66] Olatokunbo S. Fashola, and Robert E. Slavin, "Promising Programs for Elementary and Middle Schools: Evidence of Effectiveness and Replicability," Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk 3, no. 3 (1997): 292.

[67] Anderson, Lorin W. and Leonard O. Pellicer, "Toward an Understanding of Unusually Successful Programs for Economically Disadvantaged Students." Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk 3, no. 3 (1998): 237-263.

[68] Olatokunbo and Slavin, 292.

[69] Olatokunbo and Slavin, 292.

[70] Olatokunbo and Slavin, 292
     Lowell, Silverman, and Taliento, 147.

[71] Statistics compiled with the assistance of Dr. John Vogelsang, from the Support Center for Nonprofit Management and Rose Marie Roberts, from the Resource Center for Independent Living.

[72] Information and Lessons Learned reported were obtained from Quarterly Program Reports, Grantee Publications, Project Staff Interviews, and Grantee Cluster Meetings.

[73] Technical Assistance Resource list compiled with the assistance of Maria C. Onetti, DDPC Program Associate, Children's Issues Committee and Dr. John Vogelsang, Support Center for Nonprofit Management.