



TITLE: Inclusion Support

DOCUMENT: Service Standard

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The regional center promotes inclusion of children and adults with developmental disabilities in community settings. Further, the Lanterman Act mandates that, in developing a service plan, the “planning team...first consider services and supports in the natural community, home, work, and recreational settings.”

All children need opportunities to interact with their peers in a variety of settings. Many children with a developmental disability benefit from engaging in group activities in typical settings with their non-disabled peers. Sometimes they need extra support to participate in such activities. If a child with a disability is found to need this type of support, the regional center may provide inclusion support.

The regional center provides inclusion support by supplementing staffing of an integrated program with an inclusion specialist who provides consultation to the staff. The specialist works directly with the staff members, teaching them how to support the disabled individual and encourage others in the program to engage and accept the individual with disabilities.

The child’s parents would typically be responsible for the cost of the activity itself. This is consistent with the Lanterman Act requirement that parents of a child with developmental disability have the same responsibility as parents of a non-disabled child to provide opportunities to their son or daughter.

Inclusion support is temporary since it aims to help staff within typical community programs develop the capacity to support the child with disabilities without outside assistance. For this reason, it is expected that the specialist “fade” from the setting within a reasonable period of time, leaving the program staff with skills and knowledge they need to support the child with a disability.

Inclusion support is offered only to programs that are willing to accept this type of assistance and assume responsibility for the child when the specialist fades. If turnover among the

program staff or other change necessitates additional consultation, the support specialist may return to the program to provide those additional services. Since the inclusive program is chosen by the parents, they are expected to obtain the consent of the program to accept the assistance of the inclusion support specialist.

A child's need for inclusion support is determined by an individualized assessment conducted by an inclusion specialist. Support is terminated when the program staff has learned to support the child, if the program staff is unable to develop the capacity to support the child, or if the child is no longer benefitting from participation. If the specialist has been unable to fade from the program after six months, an assessment is conducted to determine the need for additional inclusion support. If it is determined that the staff is unable to develop the capacity to support the child without the assistance of the support specialist, the regional center may replace this support with the services of a one-to-one aide. (See the LRC service standard on one-to-one support for children.)