


**Building Blocks for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings**

Ariane Gauvreau & Ilene Schwartz  
June 12, 2024

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**WELCOME**



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**Hello! I'm Ariane Gauvreau**

- Senior Director, Professional Development and Training at the Haring Center.
- Past ECSE teacher and Early Intervention Provider, teaching professor, coach, and behavioral consultant.
- Live outside Seattle with my husband and two children

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# Hi! I'm Ilene Schwartz

- Director, Haring Center for Inclusive Education
- Professor, College of Education
- My work centers on effective strategies for inclusionary practice for children with disabilities
- Live in Seattle with my husband Steve and our dog, Leon




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## UW's Haring Center




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## Our Objectives

- Discuss why inclusive environments are important and beneficial for ALL children
- Introduce the Building Blocks Framework and how you use this in your classroom or program to promote inclusion of all children
- Explore how we can use this framework to support a specific child




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**Inclusive Schools are Better Schools for ALL**

- Research DOES NOT suggest learners make more progress in segregated programs (Lipsky, 1997; Roberts et al., 2019; Sailor, 2003)
- Lack generalization opportunities (Bellini et al., Strain, 2014)
- No ideal student for inclusion



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### Benefits for Neurotypical Learners

- Positive social and academic outcomes
- Positive beliefs towards individuals with disabilities and differences
- Higher on measures of empathy and understanding of differences
- Tend to work in social service fields – teachers, nurses, social workers, etc.
- Parents of kids in inclusive programs show more empathy and pro-inclusive beliefs, too!

(Downing et al., 1996; Farrell, 2002; Kalemboaka et al., 2007; Ruggi et al., 2010; Staub et al., 1994)



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### Benefits for Neurodivergent Learners

- Higher academic scores
- Higher on communication measures
- More opportunities for friendships and greater social networks
- Better prepared for post secondary settings

Cole et al., 2012; Dessemontet et al., 2012; Sharpe, 2005; Newman et al., 2005; Wagner et al., 2006)



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### More evidence-based practices implemented in inclusive programs

- More Family involvement
- Higher Quality Instructional plans
- Higher levels of collaboration across educators
- Better Assessment practices (Strain, 2014; Buysse et al., 1999)



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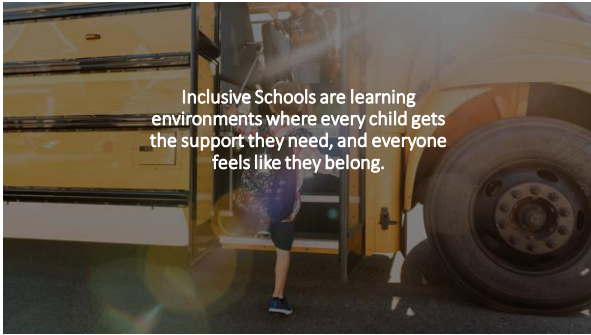
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### Children placed in self contained programs tend to stay in self contained programs

- Impacts children, families, and communities in negative, traumatic ways
- Amount of time in self contained programs *increases over time*
- Children of color more likely to be placed in self contained AND special education programs

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We also know that simply putting children with and without disabilities in the same classroom does not lead to inclusion!



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We must provide opportunities and instruction for children to develop friendships and a sense of belonging!



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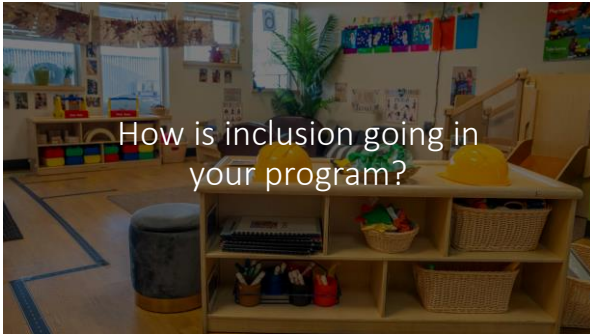
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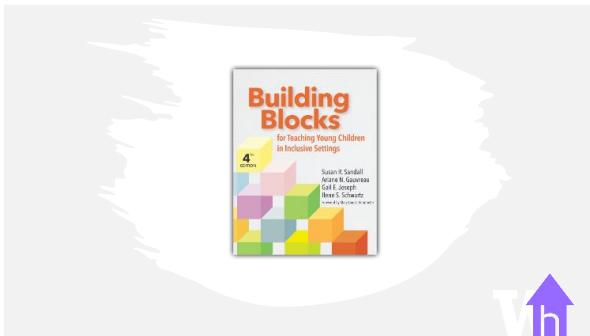
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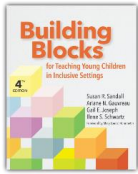
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### Building Blocks Framework




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### Developing the Framework

- Using the Building Blocks framework can help **all** children participate, learn, and thrive in early learning settings.
- Based on the work of the Early Childhood Research Institute on Inclusion.




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### Foundation




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### Curriculum Modifications



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### Examples of Curriculum Modifications (more on this later!)



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### Embedded Learning Opportunities



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### Embedded Learning Opportunities

- What to teach
- When to teach
- How to teach



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### Child-Focused Instructional Strategies



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### Child-Focused Instructional Strategies: Highly Individualized Instruction



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There are MANY ways to use this text!

- Follow the 7 Building Blocks Steps – we'll talk about these today!
- Explore the Curriculum Modification Section to transform ideas for certain children
- Use the Embedded Learning Opportunity Forms to plan for instruction within routines and share across a team
- Use our new Implementation Resources to reflect or assess how certain aspects of Building Blocks are going in your program

The best way is the way that works best for you!




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### Building Blocks Implementation Steps

- Step 1** • Assess the quality of the learning environment.
- Step 2** • Identify and clarify the classroom schedule.
- Step 3** • Plan for an individual child
- Step 4** • Clarify the problem, issue or concern
- Step 5** • Create Plans
- Step 6** • Construct an activity matrix
- Step 7** • Implement and evaluate plan




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### Step 1: Assess the Quality of the Learning Environment




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### High-quality Early Childhood Programs

- Engaging interactions with teachers
- A responsive and predictable environment
- Many opportunities for learning
- Intentional teaching
- Developmentally appropriate materials, activities, and interactions
- Safe, hygienic practices
- Appropriate levels of child guidance and support
- Meaningful involvement for families



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### Quality Classroom Assessment Form

Quality Classroom Assessment Form				
Date: _____				
Classroom: _____				
Team members: _____				
Goal: _____				
Indicator	Yes	No	Not sure	Examples
1. Do children spend most of their time playing and exploring with other children?				
2. Do children have access to various activities throughout the day?				
3. Do teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day?				
4. If the classroom has a designated area for original artwork, have teachers and children been using it?				
5. Do children have written messages (e.g., letters to their parents) and experiential connections?				



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Quality Classroom Assessment Form				
Date: 6/12/24				
Classroom: ECSE				
Team members: Julie, Steve				
Goal: Assess the classroom environment				
Indicator	Yes	No	Not sure	Examples
1. Do children spend most of their time playing and working with materials or with other children?	X			Children are busy and active most of the time.
2. Do children have access to various activities throughout the day?	X			We schedule different sorts of activities.
3. Do teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day?	X			Teachers emphasize and make meeting times with whole group, individual time during jam-do-read.
4. If the classroom has a designated area for original artwork, have teachers and children been using it?	X			Lots of artwork, no writing.
5. Do children have written messages (e.g., letters to their parents) and experiential connections?	X			Classroom organized for high scope, learning centers, programs based on children's data.



EXAMPLE: Quality Classroom Assessment Form

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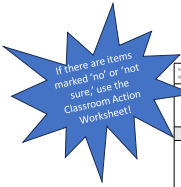
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### Classroom Action Worksheet

Classroom Action Worksheet				
Date: _____				
Team members: _____				
Indicator*	What's the problem?	What can we do?	Who will do it?	By when?
4. Class decor	We have artwork but not writing	Ask children to talk about their art. Write their names and post with their art.	Dolores & Maggie	Start on Monday
8. Book Reading	We have storytime for whole group. Not everyone listens.	Make the library corner more interesting. Have an adult in this center to read to small groups and one to one.	Maggie will fix library corner. Dolores will get props.	Next week
9. Adaptability of curriculum	This doesn't seem to be making progress in her fine motor skills.	Ask special education teacher to provide more info and to break down objectives. Ask her to demonstrate.	Dolores will talk to special education teacher.	In 2 weeks

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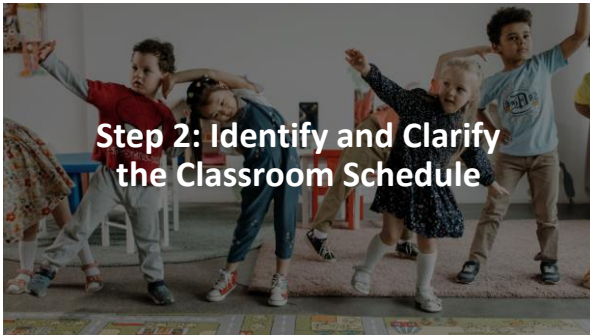
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### Step 2: Identify and Clarify the Classroom Schedule

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**Establishing a Structure for Your Day**

When there is a consistent, predictable sequence of events children feel secure and become increasingly independent.

- Balanced
- Consistent
- Flexible
- Responsive


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### Daily Schedule Guidelines

- Offer a balance of:
  - Active and quiet activities
  - Small and large group
  - Teacher directed and child initiated
- Lots of time for playing and learning
  - Allow at least 60 minutes for at least one choice time.
- Outdoor time (ideally 40-60 minutes)
- Adequate time for routines and transitions
- Reading daily
- Include times for teaching content daily

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### Clarifying the Schedule Checklist

New in the Fourth Edition of Building Blocks!

Clarifying the Schedule Checklist				
Observation	Yes	No	Sometimes	Notes
1. The team uses a visual schedule that represents a child's age level and includes visual information about each activity.				
2. The team references the schedule throughout the day and shares with the child.				
3. There is a balance of active and quiet times.				
4. There are times for smaller group and whole group instruction and/or play.				
5. There is a balance of child and adult directed activities.				
6. Children are actively participating in activities and play during the majority of the day.				
7. There is adequate time for routines and activities, including transitions.				
8. We review children's waiting time, sequence activities and daily transitions.				
9. The schedule is used to create an activity minute.				

**Next Steps for Clarifying the Schedule**  
 1. What will you do? Who is responsible? When is our deadline?

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### Step 3: Planning for an Individual Child

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Child Assessment Worksheet		
Date: _____		
Teacher's name: _____ Child's name: _____		
Classroom activities	Classroom expectations	Child's level of performance
		Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern _____
		Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern _____
		Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern _____
		Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern _____

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Child Assessment Worksheet		
Date: <u>1/27</u>		
Teacher's name: <u>Zemik</u> Child's name: <u>Shay</u>		
Classroom activities	Classroom expectations	Child's level of performance
Arrival	Be able to wait with other children until everyone gets off bus. Walk to class with the group without holding teacher's hand.	Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern <u>X</u>
Circle time	Sit on his mat. Watch the teacher. Participate in songs and fingerplays. Practice counting and learning names. Answer general knowledge questions.	Strength _____ Average <u>X</u> Area of concern _____
Small-group time	Participate in planned activity. Attend to concepts and skills taught in planned lessons. Share materials. Sit at the table.	Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern _____
Free-choice time	Try activities in the different areas. Play with minimal teacher support. Apply concepts and skills. Explore all centers.	Strength _____ Average _____ Area of concern <u>X</u>

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Planning Worksheet: Section I	
IEP Today	
Date: _____	
Teacher's name: _____ Child's name: _____	
The "IEP Today" is based on the child's complete individualized education program (IEP) and reflects the team's current goals and the associated objectives that are the current focus of instruction.	
Goal/Domain	Current objective(s)

Step 5: Clarify Current Concerns – Review the IEP, IFSP, or Individual Learning Plan

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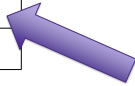
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Planning Worksheet: Section II			
Date: _____		Child's name: _____	
This planning guide will help you collect more specific information for areas of concern for specific children. Using the CMI Assessment Worksheet, identify three activities on which you would like to focus your attention. Once you identify the problem, collecting information is the next for instructional planning for children in inclusive settings.			
(Key: CM = curriculum modification; ELO = embedded learning opportunity; CFI = child-focused instructional strategy)			
Activities	Define concern	What are you currently doing?	Plans for instruction
			CM ____ ELO ____ CFI ____ Describe: _____
			CM ____ ELO ____ CFI ____ Describe: _____
			CM ____ ELO ____ CFI ____ Describe: _____

Clarify concerns by brainstorm possible ideas for instruction




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Step 5: Create Plans

- Curriculum Modifications
- Embedded Learning Opportunities
- Child Focused Instructional Strategies

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Curriculum Modification Planning Form – New in 4<sup>th</sup> Edition!

Curriculum Modification Planning Form			
Team Members: <b>Jake &amp; Ariane</b>			
Classroom:	Room:	Grade:	Subject:
Teacher:	Observer:	Curriculum Modification:	In Place?
Circle		Teacher is not aware of the instruction he can use (material, source)	
Circle		Animal Cube (they, access to her seen board board or other subject related to the book, flight toy)	
Circle		These website cartoon	




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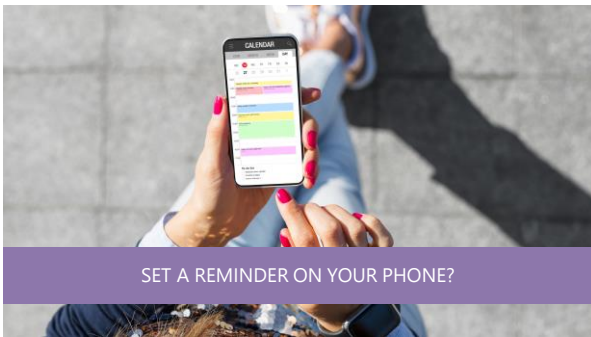
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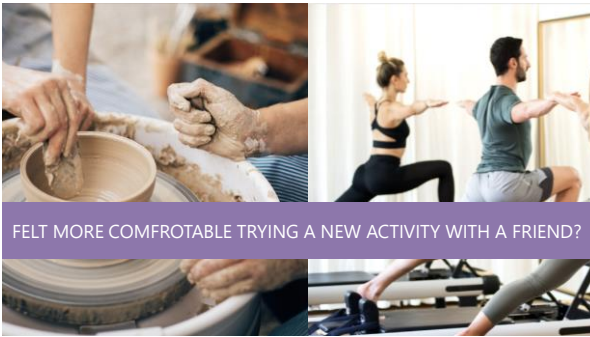
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THEN YOU HAVE USED A MODIFICATION!

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Similarly to modifications in our personal lives, modifications can help support children in early learning settings!



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### Curriculum Modification

A change to the ongoing classroom activity or materials in order to facilitate or maximize a child's participation in planned activities, interactions, and routines.

— Sandall et al., 2024



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### Curriculum Modification

SMALL CHANGE,  
**BIG IMPACT**



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### WHEN DO WE USE THEM?

When a child is not fully participating in a meaningful way.



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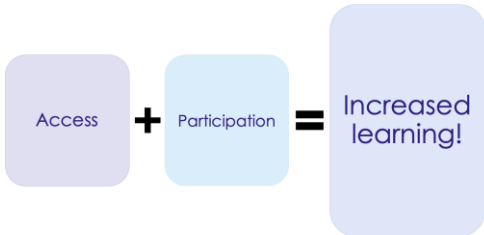
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### WHY DO WE USE THEM?



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**SIMPLE,  
BUT INTENTIONAL**

- Easy to implement
- Sometimes, we may not even need additional resources
- Can use more than one



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**SIMPLE,  
BUT INTENTIONAL**

- Thoughtful planning
- Deliberate implementation
- Immediate impact

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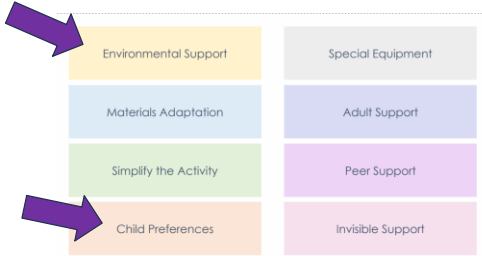
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### TYPES OF CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS



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**Environmental Support**

> Altering the physical, social, and temporal environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning.

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**Using a visual or Timed Timer**

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Including a Child's Photo at their Table



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Creating visuals to help a child understand what activity is coming next



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Helping a child regulate their emotions using the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) Visuals



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### Snack Talk



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### Spots to help children know where to stand when lining up



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**Child Preferences**

Identify and integrate the child's preferences into routines and activities.

- Favorite People
- Favorite Activities
- Favorite Things

Three images illustrating child preferences: a yellow marker, a superhero figure, and children playing on a red mat.

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Example: Putting a child's favorite character on their carpet square at circle



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Example: Putting vehicles in each area of the classroom to help a new student feel more comfortable initiating play across areas.



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Example: Peppa in the Car

Helping a family gather a bin of toys to keep in the car, for a child who has difficulty getting into their car seat.

The child can listen to Peppa music and play with the figurines once they are buckled up.



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**ELO-at-a-Glance**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Team members: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

What are you going to do? Show the picture.

What are you going to say? Show go to circle.

How will you respond? Show the activities, grade and mental list of what to put in it. If not done, repeat instructions and practice again.

What materials do you need? Pictures of people at Circle time, Show and give, Give the ones, Two paper, Two red cards, Two and three, How many opportunities do you provide each day? Use One's together chart to track progress!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10	10	10	10	10




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### Summary

- Inclusive environments are beneficial for ALL children and families
- But, we have to *intentionally* plan for the full participation of children with disabilities or other support needs in our program
- The Building Blocks Framework provides tools to assess, plan, and reflect on how inclusionary practice is going in your program




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**The Haring Center can help!**



We provide **training, coaching, consultation, and program review** to any community looking to advance inclusion and equitable practices.

[haringpd@uw.edu](mailto:haringpd@uw.edu)      [Haringcenter.org/PDU](https://Haringcenter.org/PDU)

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