



# PATHWAYS TO INCLUSION

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Inclusion Readiness Tool

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The Advocacy  
Network on  
Disabilities

# INCLUSION READINESS TOOL (IRT)

The Advocacy Network on Disabilities' All Children Together (ACT) project is The Children's Trust's Resource Network for the Special Needs of Children with Disabilities and their families. Its role is to work with The Children's Trust and the organizations it funds to increase our community's capacity to provide quality, inclusive programs to children with disabilities.

## WHAT IS THE INCLUSION READINESS TOOL?

The INCLUSION READINESS TOOL (IRT) is a self-assessment to help you determine your organization's current readiness to provide quality services to children with disabilities, and to serve as a guide for "next steps". It can be completed internally by administrative and direct care staff, as well as with the assistance of an Advocacy Network on Disabilities/ACT Inclusion Specialist.

## WHAT THE INCLUSION READINESS TOOL IS NOT

While The Children's Trust encourages its programs to complete the Inclusion Readiness Tool (IRT), the IRT is

- **NOT** comprised of goals that are intended to be met immediately; but rather, of ones to accomplish over time as part of a multi-year capacity building process;
- **NOT** something you have to tackle alone; an Inclusion Specialist can help you, and if your organization has been an Individual Program Inclusion Plan (IPIP) partner in the past, we will pre-fill the goals we know you have already met;
- **NOT** in final form. We are continuing to pilot it this year, and your feedback will help refine and improve it.

## SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE ALL CHILDREN TOGETHER (ACT) RESOURCE NETWORK:

- Thousands of individuals have successfully completed hundreds of trainings on dozens of topics.
- More than 100 agencies have become Individual Program Inclusion Plan (IPIP) partners – which essentially entails working with The Advocacy Network on Disabilities staff to develop and implement a plan that better equips the organization to provide quality services to ALL children.
- More children with disabilities are participating in a greater number of programs funded by The Children's Trust, and are achieving increasingly improved outcomes.
- The Children's Trust's Core Contract includes the expectation that providers comply with federal law under the Americans with Disabilities Act, including implementing reasonable accommodations to include children with disabilities and their families whenever possible.

We believe that the Trust as a funder, you as a provider, we as a Resource Network, and all of us as a community, have made significant progress on the Pathway to Inclusion. You may be surprised to see just how many of the core program competencies your organization has already achieved.

**QUESTIONS?** Please contact an Advocacy Network on Disabilities Inclusion Specialist at 305-596-1160, or e-mail us at [info@advocacynetwork.org](mailto:info@advocacynetwork.org).

# PATHWAY A

## ORIENT/TRAIN STAFF

*Professional development is an important component to attain a high quality inclusive program. Administrators play an essential role in preparing their staff to meet the needs of all children by planning and being proactive. It is important to take inventory of the professional development that administrators and direct care staff have received or need in regards to children with disabilities including the ADA.*

✓	GOAL	HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS	DATE
	1-A1	A qualified <sup>2</sup> staff member is identified to become the organization's "go-to" person on matters of inclusion	
	1-A2	A minimum of 50% of the organization's staff including the "go-to" person, successfully completes the Discovering Inclusion training online	
	1-A3	Senior management staff <sup>1</sup> successfully completes "An Administrator's Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act" training within the grant cycle, or sooner as indicated by The Children's Trust	
	2-A1	The designated "go to" staff successfully completes an evidence-informed behavior training provided by a qualified entity and/or 1 training offered by the ACT Resource Network	
	2-A2	A minimum of <b>50% of the program's staff</b> successfully completes an evidence-informed behavior management training provided by a qualified entity	
	3-A1	A minimum of 50% of the organization's staff participate in one additional training offered by the ACT Resource Network	
	3-A2	If serving children with disabilities, organization identifies and addresses the informal and formal training needs of staff	
	4-A1	As part of staff orientation, the organization reviews its Policies and Procedures regarding inclusion	
	4-A2	Within 90 days, new staff and volunteers successfully complete Discovering Inclusion training (online or in-person)	
	5-A1	The annual staff training plan includes a component on Inclusion	
	5-A3	Organization provides opportunities for ongoing professional development on disability topics to better prepare staff to effectively work with children with disabilities	

<sup>1</sup> Senior Management staff refers to individual(s) within the organization who has/have the authority to make and implement decisions for the organization and/or the individual responsible for the organization's compliance with federal, state, and local equal opportunity laws.

<sup>2</sup> A qualified staff member refers to a program manager, lead teacher, or supervisor for whom there is a reasonable expectation they will remain employed to act in this capacity

# PATHWAY B

## INCLUSIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

*A high quality program has written policies and procedures that are necessary to guide the operation of the program and administrative decisions. It carefully examines these policies and procedures for potential discriminatory language, actions, and processes. These programs also include policies that specifically address how the program will meet the needs of children with disabilities*

√	GOAL	HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS	DATE
	1-B1	Organization has a written Non Discrimination policy that includes “disability”	
	1-B2	Enrollment/registration documents for all participants include “Getting To Know Me” or similar form that gathers information about the child’s preferences, habits, and interests	
	2-B1	Organization has a written discipline policy based on positive behavior techniques	
	2-B2	The dismissal policy clearly indicates the process and documentation required to terminate enrollment and incorporates progressive steps that include parent involvement, use of positive behavior plans, and consultation with outside experts, when needed	
	3-B1	The organization has an inclusive admission policy	
	3-B2	All children who meet essential eligibility requirements are enrolled	
	3-B3	The organization has established protocols and instruments to conduct an individual assessment for each child requiring accommodations	
	3-B4	Develop an individualized inclusion plan to implement accommodations or document that reasonable accommodations cannot be made	
	4-B1	The organization has established protocols to insure implementation of reasonable accommodations, or a plan for referral when accommodations cannot be achieved	
	4-B2	Inclusive policies and procedures are part of the employee handbook that is provided to each staff member	

4-B3	Each employee acknowledges, in writing, that they have received, read, and understand the organization's inclusion policies	
5-B1	Organization has a policy to actively recruit children with disabilities for enrollment	
5-B2	Organization annually reviews and refines program's inclusive policies, procedures, and practices	

**1"ProgramStaff" refers to those individuals who work in the project funded by The Children's Trust including those working directly with children, those who are involved in the registration and intake process, and their supervisors.**

**PATHWAY C: SAFETY** *A high quality program ensures that all students that attend are safe while in their care. They prepare ahead of time for possible emergency situations that may arise from enrolling children with disabilities, like adjusting emergency plans and establishing procedures.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	C 1	If serving a child with a disability, the child's Inclusion Plan addresses safety issues	
	C 2	Evacuation plan includes process to ensure specialized equipment and medications are taken with the child	
	C 3	Fire/safety drill plan includes procedures on evacuating children with disabilities (children who use a wheelchair, sensory sensitivity, etc.)	
	C 4	Organization has a designated staff member who serves as the liaison between program and safety agencies, when the need arises	
	C 5	Organization annually reviews, and if necessary, revises safety plan	

**PATHWAY D: ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**PATHWAY D: ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS** *A high quality program establishes and maintains strong community collaborations and relationships in order to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission. It is important for programs to be familiar with agencies and resources throughout the area that can assist with inclusion of children with disabilities, provide assistance to their families, and provide supports and guidance to staff.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	D 1	Establishes a relationship with The Advocacy Network on Disabilities' All Children Together Network	
	D 2	In a location visible and accessible to both parents and staff, organization maintains and displays current information on resources for children with disabilities and their families	
	D 3	Organization is knowledgeable about other community resources that can be accessed to assist participants with special needs and their families	
	D 4	Seek Additional resources from in-kind, public, private grants and program fees	
	D 5	Organization's website contains links to other websites or resources that provide supports and services to children with disabilities and their families	

**PATHWAYS E: MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT**

**PATHWAY E: MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES** *A high quality program identifies materials and supplies that assist children with disabilities to participate in the program. Having materials ready and available prior to enrollment reassures families that you are flexible and prepared.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	E 1	Classrooms have materials (Books, posters, games, dolls/action figures) that show positive and diverse images of children with disabilities	
	E 2	Organization has identified funding for specialized materials and supplies, as needed	
<b>IF ORGANIZATION IS SERVING CHILDREN REQUIRING ADAPTIVE MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT &amp; SUPPLIES</b>			
	E 3	Has appropriate adaptive materials, equipment and supplies available	
	E 4	Staff are trained on how to use adaptive materials, equipment and supplies	
	E 5	There are protocols to ensure materials are maintained in safe/working order and replaced as needed	
	E 6	Through monitoring, assure materials are used regularly and appropriately	

**PATHWAY F: FAMILY SUPPORT**

**PATHWAY F: FAMILY SUPPORT** *A high quality program establishes strong partnerships with the families they serve. They provide them with the opportunity to communicate the special needs of their children and provide*



them with supports and resources. Quality programs also provide families with opportunities to engage with other parents. Communicating to parents that you are inclusive and welcome all children allows parents to feel comfortable about enrolling their child and therefore more open to contribute to the program.

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	F 1	Parent Orientation includes a discussion of organization's commitment to including all children	
	F 2	A staff person is identified to address any concerns other family members may raise about including children with special needs and/or the organization offers workshops for all families on disability awareness, inclusion, etc.	
	F 3	Organization has formal process to obtain feedback from families	
<b>FOR ORGANIZATIONS SERVING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES</b>			
	F 4	Organization provides ongoing opportunities to review and exchange information on the child's goals, progress, and challenges	
	F 5	Families are welcome to bring in teachers, therapists, and others to assist their child and/or staff and maintain a sign in/out log	
	F 6	Families are provided supports and resources necessary for the child's successful participation in the program	

**PATHWAY G: PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY**

**PATHWAY G: PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY** *A high quality program evaluates accessibility of the facility, develops and implements a plan for improvements necessary to reduce barriers to include children with disabilities.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	G 1	Organization performs initial accessibility scan of travel, hardware, restrooms, furniture, etc.	
	G 2	Organization creates an action plan (short, medium, and/or long-term goals) to address barriers	
	G 3	Organization shows evidence of progress implementing action plan	
	G 4	The organization annual reassesses its facilities for changes needed to better serve children with physical disabilities	
<b>IF ORGANIZATION IS SERVING CHILDREN REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PHYSICAL CONDITIONS</b>			
	G 5	Adaptations are implemented such as adjusting table height, changing door handles, etc.	
	G 6	Organization insures that all children can fully participate in program activities, including field trips	

**PATHWAY H: MARKETING INCLUSION**

**PATHWAY H: MARKETING INCLUSION** *A high quality program communicates to the community that it is*

*inclusive. It promotes inclusion through its marketing materials, website and advocacy efforts.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
	H 1	Facility prominently displays signs/notices indicating that children of all abilities are welcome	
	H 2	Marketing materials, such as brochures and website, include positive and diverse images of children of all abilities	
	H 3	Marketing materials, such as brochures and website, include statements that the organization welcomes children of all abilities	
	H 4	Program information is available in accessible formats, or resources are identified to develop them, if needed	
	H 5	Organization targets recruitment efforts at families of children with disabilities	
	H 6	Organization shares success stories about inclusion and its benefits through website, newsletter, and/or other means of communication	

**PATHWAY I: INDIVIDUALIZED INCLUSION PLAN**

**PATHWAY I: INDIVIDUALIZED INCLUSION PLAN** *A high quality program identifies and addresses concerns or needs a child may have in order to participate in the program. An individualized Inclusion Plan is created and implemented for each child who needs it.*

√	GOAL	<u>HIGH QUALITY INDICATORS</u>	DATE
<b>IF ORGANIZATION IS SERVING A CHILD/CHILDREN REQUIRING INDIVIDUALIZED INCLUSION PLANS</b>			
	<i>I 1</i>	Staff identify child’s interests, preferences, and needs through discussions with family and results of the “Getting to Know Me” or similar tool	
	<i>I 2</i>	Families are encouraged to invite the child’s teachers, therapists, and significant others to participate in the planning and development of the inclusion plan	
	<i>I 3</i>	Staff and families communicate to develop an individual inclusion plan that identifies how needed support services will be implemented	
	<i>I 4</i>	Inclusion plan is regularly reviewed and updated, to reflect changing circumstances and needs	

# INCLUSION READINESS TOOL TRACKER

Agency/Program Name \_\_\_\_\_

STEP 1 GOAL	DATE MET	STEP 2 GOAL	DATE MET	STEP 3 GOAL	DATE MET	STEP 4 GOAL	DATE MET	STEP 5 GOAL	DATE MET
1-A1		2-A1		3-A1		4-A1		5-A1	
1-A2		2-A2		3-A2		4-A2		5-A2	
1-A3				3-A3				5-A3	
1-B1		2-B1		3-B1		4-B1		5-B1	
1-B2		2-B2		3-B2		4-B2		5-B2	
1B-3				3-B3		4-B3			
				3-B4					

In addition to above requirements for Pathways A and B:

- To complete Step 3 must have completed 1 each from Pathways C, D, E, F, G, and H.
- To complete Step 4 must have completed a total of 2 each from Pathways C, D, E, F, G, and H, and 1 from Pathway I and be serving children with disabilities.
- To complete Step 5 must have completed a total of 3 each from Pathways C, D, E, F, G, and H, and 2 from Pathway I and be serving children with disabilities.

C		D		E		F		G		H		I	
SAFETY	DATE	ALLIANCE	DATE	MATERIALS	DATE	FAMILIES	DATE	ACCESSIBILITY	DATE	MARKETING	DATE	INDIV PLAN	DATE
C-1		D-1		E-1		F-1		G-1		H-1		I-1	
C-2		D-2		E-2		F-2		G-2		H-2		I-2	
C-3		D-3		E-3		F-3		G-3		H-3		I-3	
C-4		D-4		E-4		F-4		G-4		H-4		I-4	
C-5		D-5		E-5		F-5		G-5		H-5			
				E-6		F-6		G-6		H-6			



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