

# Integration

## Integration is:

- being a part, being included
- having the same privileges
- being close to non-disabled age peers to learn from them
- receiving specialised services without being segregated
- working close to non-handicapped people
- living in ordinary houses
- being treated with respect
- not being labelled unnecessarily and never in a devalued fashion

## Integration is not:

- being forced into impossible competition
- being denied special services, including necessary support
- mixing people with different disabilities
- merely using services already in existence
- assimilation, co-ordination or co-operation among agencies

## Benefits of integration to disabled people

### More possibilities for learning:

- relevant skills
- others will have higher expectations and not expect conformity to a handicapped role
- wider variety of experiences
- more contact with positive models

### A better chance of acceptance:

- as a contributing member of society
- being seen in the company of valued people
- people respond positively to normative behaviour which is more likely to occur in ordinary settings
- self-image strengthened

## A wider range of choice:

- more likely to meet needs
- wider range of people available and more chances to form mutually satisfying relationships
- more possibilities to exercise autonomy, citizen privileges and freedom

## Benefits of integration to people without labels

### Non-disabled people are more likely to learn:

- to tolerate differentness and become less afraid
- skills in being with people who are different
- models of positive resolution of life's difficulties
- how to help people with disabilities

## Benefits to services

### Services are more likely to be:

- of good quality
- based on right
- good value for money

## Inclusion

The term inclusion has come to be used widely in recent years to draw attention to the aim of actively welcoming labelled people into the mainstream life of the community. Efforts are made to support the growth of relationships between labelled and non-labelled people. Simply being present is not enough. We have to celebrate differences between people so that each person, no matter what their labels, can feel they belong.

## Acknowledgements

These notes are based on teaching by Wolf Wolfensberger, John O'Brien, Alan Tyne and Paul Williams to whom grateful acknowledgements are made.

4 January 1995

*Briefings* are published by the North West Training & Development Team, Calderstones, Whalley, Clitheroe, BB7 9PE. ☎ 01254 821334. They may be freely copied and distributed.