



# Florida Center for INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

## Inclusion Works for All

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities is “committed to assuring that people with disabilities have the supports needed to design and achieve lives of quality and meaning. Such lives are characterized by opportunity, inclusion, and participation.

Supports for people with disabilities should be provided in a manner that recognizes people’s inherent competence; reflects the personal preferences of each individual; conveys that the person receiving services is a valued, respected community participant; and assists individuals to achieve self-determined lives of mastery, satisfaction, and meaning. Such supports can only be provided in community settings (Community for All Toolkit, 2004).” The support of individuals with disabilities in the community includes all aspects of participation, support, and social belonging including:

- ◇ Housing
- ◇ Recreation and leisure activities
- ◇ Employment
- ◇ Health care services
- ◇ Neighborhood, community, and civic organizations
- ◇ Early childhood, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education
- ◇ Faith communities
- ◇ Social relationships
- ◇ Transportation
- ◇ And all other aspects of community living

The ability to include individuals with disabilities within all aspects of community life is directly related to the value we place on inclusion and the commitment to provide adequate supports. In translating this value to practice, the relevant question is not “Can inclusion happen?”, but “What supports are needed to ensure inclusion happens?”

### What Works?

Across the country there are numerous demonstrations of how to use supports to ensure community inclusion and the effective outcomes for individuals with disabilities. These demonstrations include evidence that:

#### **Self-Determination Works!**

An evaluation conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation of individuals in 10 states who participated in a pilot on self-determination including determining how dollars were used to support them. The study used a central hypothesis of: If people gain control, their lives will improve, and costs will decrease. An evaluation of the effort revealed:

- ◇ an increase in power and choice making for the consumer;
- ◇ improvements in quality of life including: friendships, privacy, health, safety, freedom of movement, etc., and
- ◇ a reduction in costs for services and supports ([www.eoutcome.org](http://www.eoutcome.org) for full report)



## Community Living Works!

For every person with a disability that lives within an institution, residential facility, or specialized health care setting there is a person with similar support needs who lives in the community. Across the country institutions are shutting down. Nine states have closed all of their public institutions.

Comprehensive community services costs less (about 85%) than institutional care and offers individuals with disabilities greater access to social relationships, meaningful activities, community participation, and enhanced quality of life. People who move into communities from institutions show improvements in daily living skills, community participation, frequency of contact with family members and others in the community, greater choice, and greater life satisfaction.

## School Inclusion Works!

Students with disabilities who are taught within the general education classroom with supports and systematic instruction achieve superior outcomes in academic, communication, social, and behavioral skills acquisition. Teachers who teach students with disabilities successfully become more confident about their ability to teach students with diverse learning needs.

There are no studies that document adverse academic or social effects on students without disabilities when students with disabilities participate in the general education classroom. Students without disabilities who are educated with students who have disabilities are more positive and accepting of persons with disabilities than students who have not been exposed to students with disabilities.

## Resources

- ◇ *Community for All Toolkit*  
<http://thechp.syr.edu/toolkit/>
- ◇ *The Center on Human Policy*  
<http://thechp.syr.edu>
- ◇ *The Council on Quality and Leadership*  
[www.thecouncil.org](http://www.thecouncil.org)
- ◇ *National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities*  
[www.nacdd.org/](http://www.nacdd.org/)
- ◇ *University of Minnesota's Research and Training Center on Community Living*  
<http://rtc.umn.edu/>
- ◇ *TASH*  
<http://www.tash.org>
- ◇ *Quality Mall*  
[www.qualitymall.org](http://www.qualitymall.org)
- ◇ *Florida Inclusion Network*  
[www.floridainclusionnetwork.com](http://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com)
- ◇ *Center for Applied Special Technology*  
[www.cast.org](http://www.cast.org)
- ◇ *Inclusion Resources*  
[www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)
- ◇ *Inclusion Daily Express*  
[www.inclusiondaily.com](http://www.inclusiondaily.com)
- ◇ *General education access*  
[www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php](http://www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php)
- ◇ *National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities*  
[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)