

CREATING INCLUSIVE SPACES: TIPS & TRICKS

MAKE A DAILY SCHEDULE AVAILABLE IN PRINTED AND VERBAL FORM

DRINK, SNACK, BREAK

(usually water)

KNOW WHERE THE RESTROOMS ARE AND MAKE THEM ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

NOTICE, DON'T DIAGNOSE

You are not doctors, you are counselors. Be aware of diagnoses if you were given one—otherwise notice, approach and assist.

GIVING REASONABLE TIME EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS FOR EACH ACTIVITY

Don't be afraid to be transparent about what their behavior should be. This includes formal programming and even free time. Also give rules/expectations in manageable increments.

PROVIDE WARNINGS ABOUT LOUD NOISES, SUDDEN CHANGES, ETC.

If you know there's potential for change, be transparent about that.

BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR LANGUAGE

Language can make or break the inclusivity of a space. Use people first language when appropriate, ask about gender pronouns, use non-gendered phrases (friends rather than girls & boys).

WHEN HAVING DISCUSSIONS, USE THE 10 SECOND RULE BEFORE CONTINUING

Silence is OK. It takes 3 seconds to process, 3 seconds to think about an answer, 3 seconds to get courage to answer, and answer at the last second.

DON'T BE AFRAID TRY A DIFFERENT WAY

Not everything is going to work, you may need to adjust. It's OK to make mistakes. It may take a few tries to get it right.

WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK

Most campers can reasonably communicate their needs, if something isn't working, ask them what will work.

EVERY BEHAVIOR IS COMMUNICATION

Be aware of the room, especially non-verbal communication. Our behavior is a message about how we're feeling – even if we don't verbalize it.

PROVIDE SPACE FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

If appropriate, allow campers to be how they feel the most physically comfortable (standing, sitting on the floor, etc.) Provide fidget toys for campers to use to help keep focus. Give options

for completing a task. For instructions or prompts, get a white board or just write on a piece of paper for visual cues.

HAVE OPTIONS FOR TOUCH

Create a culture of asking before you touch others and offering no-touch options for activities that involve touch.

ASSUME GOODWILL

Create a culture of positivity. Build a foundation that we are all here for the right reasons and doing what we think is right or what we need at that moment.

Remember: these are all suggestions; use your best judgment, trust yourself and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Don't stress about implementing all of these at one time!

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