

Disability Awareness: Community Support

Est. Time: 4 Hours

Objective

Obtain information about the community resources available to support students with disabilities and their families.

Overview

Families of children with disabilities are likely to encounter a wide range of circumstances related to their child's disability. They may experience significant stressors related to meeting everyday living needs (e.g., financial concerns, healthcare concerns, lack of support). In many cases, they take on additional roles that can be both time-consuming and overwhelming, such as advocate or inclusion specialist. As a result of those circumstances, these families often need additional support from their community. These supports could range from financial assistance to childcare for their children with and without disabilities to transportation). As such, it is important that educators offer support by not only listening but being understanding of families' individual circumstances and acknowledging their stressors. Most importantly, educators can support students with disabilities and their families by providing information about relevant products and services available in the community.

Activity

In groups of four or fewer:

1. Select a disability and compile information about local agencies that are specifically geared to serve this type of disability.
2. Create a handout summarizing the information. For each agency include the name, address, Web address, telephone number, target population, and a brief description of the provided supports.
3. To enhance this activity, interview someone who works at one of the agencies or someone who has this type of disability to gather more information about available supports in the community.