

# INCLUSION STRATEGIES

## **Addressing the Needs of Special Students** *How Can I Help ALL my Students Learn about Health?*

Today's classroom contains students from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of learning styles, strengths, and challenges. With careful planning, you can address the needs of all students in the health classroom. The following tips for instruction can support your efforts to help all students reach their maximum potential.

- Survey students to discover their individual differences. Use interest inventories of their unique talents so you can encourage contributions in the classroom.
- Be a model for respecting others. Adolescents crave social acceptance. The student with learning differences is especially sensitive to correction and criticism, particularly when it comes from a teacher. Your behavior will set the tone for the way students treat one another.
- Expand opportunities for success. Provide a variety of instructional activities that reinforce skills and concepts.
- Establish measurable objectives and decide how you can best help students meet them.
- Celebrate successes and praise "work in progress."
- Keep it simple. Point out problem areas if doing so can help a student effect change. Avoid overwhelming students with too many goals at one time.
- Assign cooperative group projects that challenge all students to contribute to solving a problem or creating a product.

### **How Do I Reach Students with Learning Disabilities?**

- Provide support and structure. Clearly specify rules, assignments, and responsibilities.
- Practice skills frequently. Use games and drills to help maintain student interest.
- Incorporate many modalities into the learning process. Provide opportunities to say, hear, write, read, and act out important concepts and information.
- Link new skills and concepts to those already mastered.
- Allow students to record answers on audiotape.
- Allow extra time to complete tests and assignments.
- Let students demonstrate proficiency with alternative presentations, including oral reports, role-plays, art projects, and musical presentations.
- Provide outlines, notes, or tape recordings of lecture material.
- Pair students with peer helpers, and provide class time for pair interaction.

### **How Do I Reach Students with Behavioral Disorders?**

- Provide a structured environment with clear-cut schedules, rules, seat assignments, and safety procedures.

- Reinforce appropriate behavior and model it for students.
- Cue distracted students back to the task through verbal signals and teacher proximity.
- Set very small goals that can be achieved in the short term. Work for long-term improvement in big areas.

### **How Do I Reach Students with Physical Challenges?**

- Openly discuss with the student any uncertainties you have about when to offer aid.
- Ask parents or therapists and students what special devices or procedures are needed, and whether any special safety precautions need to be taken.
- Welcome students with physical challenges into all activities, including field trips, special events, and projects.
- Provide information to help able-bodied students and adults understand students' physical challenges.

### **How Do I Reach Students with Visual Impairments?**

- Facilitate independence. Modify assignments as needed.
- Teach classmates how and when to serve as guides.
- Limit unnecessary noise in the classroom if it distracts the student with visual impairments.
- Provide tactile models whenever possible.
- Foster a spirit of inclusion. Describe people and events as they occur in the classroom. Remind classmates that the student with visual impairments cannot interpret gestures and other forms of nonverbal communication.
- Provide taped lectures and reading assignments.
- Team the student with a sighted peer for written work.

### **How Do I Reach Students with Hearing Impairments?**

- Seat students where they can see your lip movements easily and where they can avoid visual distractions.
- Avoid standing with your back to the window or a light source.
- Use an overhead projector to maintain eye contact while writing.
- Seat students where they can see speakers.
- Write all assignments on the board, or hand out written instructions.
- If the student has a manual interpreter, allow both student and interpreter to select the most favorable seating arrangements.
- Teach students to look directly at each other when they speak.

### **How Do I Reach English Language Learners?**

- Remember, students' ability to speak English does not reflect their academic abilities.
- Try to incorporate the students' cultural experience into your instruction. The help of a bilingual aide may be effective.
- Avoid cultural stereotypes.
- Pre-teach important vocabulary and concepts.
- Encourage students to preview text before they begin reading, noting headings, graphic organizers, photographs, and maps.

### **How Do I Reach Gifted Students?**

- Make arrangements for students to take selected subjects early and to work on independent projects.
- Ask "what if" questions to develop high-level thinking skills. Establish an environment safe for healthy risk taking.
- Emphasize concepts, theories, ideas, relationships, and generalizations.
- Promote interest in health by inviting students to make connections to behaviors.
- Let students express themselves in alternative ways, such as creative writing, acting, debate, simulations, drawing, or music.
- Provide students with a catalog of helpful resources, listing such things as agencies that provide free and inexpensive materials, appropriate community services and programs, and community experts.
- Assign extension projects that allow students to solve real-life problems related to their communities.