

8 Keys to Inclusion

Playworld Systems has developed an independent, peer-reviewed educational and inspirational resource for inclusive play covering subjects such as forming a planning committee to what should be in a restroom at the playground. You can get it here: Playworld.com/Inclusion

We have selected the most powerful ideas below.



Physical, Sensory and Social Activities

Offer activities that stimulate and affect the physical, sensory and social well-being of children. Children of all abilities have varying needs, so a mix of activities on the playground will encourage children to reach individual goals.

Multiple Challenge Levels

Choose play activities that provide graduated levels of challenge to ensure that all ages and abilities are actively engaged on the playground.

Grouping of Activities

Invite engagement between children of diverse abilities by locating similar types of equipment in the same area. Contiguous play places these activities together while co-located play encourages similar play at various ability levels in close proximity.



Elevated Play

Children generally like the experience of height. Being above everyone else is exciting and provides a sense of accomplishment. Be sure there are activities for all abilities at all elevations.



Pods, Rooms and Zones

Develop specialized areas of play around either stimulating or calming activities. For those who are easily stimulated, areas of quieter play can be comforting. These areas are easily found via the orientation pathways, which guide people to different areas of play. For people with spatial issue disabilities, these pathways offer security without the fear of getting lost.



The 'Coolest Thing'

Identify the piece of equipment that children will be most excited about and ensure that this play activity is accessible and usable for all.



Unitary Surfacing

Protective surfacing (such as rubber tiles, mats, turf, or a combination of energy absorbing materials) forms a unitary shock absorbing surface. This type of surfacing makes it easier for wheelchairs and strollers to enter and navigate in the playspace, unlike mulch or other loose materials.



Routes and Maneuverability

Travel routes around and through the playground and surrounding areas should be wide enough for people and wheelchairs to pass, transfer onto and off of equipment, and get close to activities.