
EFFECTIVE MAINSTREAMING



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Effective Mainstreaming

To Suzanne

Preface

With passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL94-142), the Congress challenged our nation's educational system to expand the mainstream to include students with disabilities. Although many school districts have been able to respond positively, educators are still experiencing problems meeting this challenge. This book is intended to assist you in meeting the challenge of implementing effective mainstreaming in your school.

The book has been written to be teacher-, student-, and parent-oriented. It is research-based, but it is also practical. I have tried to translate the research into practice so that it both addresses and expands the realities of the classroom setting.

The book approaches mainstreaming as an ongoing, dynamic process for all students, regardless of their disability. Thus, rather than organizing the book into chapters by disciplinary areas that focus on information about the nature and needs of students with varying disabilities, the book is organized to follow a model for effectively mainstreaming all students with special needs. Chapter titles and content relate to and address the key factors that contribute to effective mainstreaming. Within each chapter are workable guidelines and procedures for successfully mainstreaming students with a wide range of disabilities. (Chapter 1 presents an overview of the chapters.) The book is designed as a text for undergraduate, graduate, or in-service courses for teachers, ancillary support personnel, and administrators interested in teaching and providing services to mainstreamed students. Because of its focus on instructional procedures, the book also could serve as a supplementary text for a course on methods or consultation.

When writing a book, an author must develop a philosophy that becomes the framework for the text. Several philosophical assumptions concerning effective mainstreaming guided the development of this book.

As you read and think about the following assumptions, you will learn about the book and the author.

Effective mainstreaming can improve the educational system. Inherent in the concept of mainstreaming is recognition of the need to individualize the educational system for students with disabilities. The result can be an educational system that is more able to accommodate and respond to the individual needs of *all* students. Thus, changes in the educational system designed to facilitate effective mainstreaming also can benefit nonhandicapped peers, teachers, parents, ancillary support personnel, and administrators. For example, all students will benefit when a teacher modifies large group instruction to improve the performance of a mainstreamed student. Similarly, as the educational system learns to respond to the needs of parents of mainstreamed students, the system increases its ability to respond to all parents.

Effective mainstreaming involves a sensitivity to and an acceptance of cultural diversity. Society is undergoing many changes that are also changing our schools. School districts throughout the United States are serving an increasing number of students from multicultural backgrounds. Our ability to redefine the mainstream to address the unique needs of these students and their families, as well as incorporate their visions and contributions, is critical in expanding the cultural base of our educational system and promoting effective mainstreaming.

Effective mainstreaming involves collaboration among educators, parents, students, community agencies, and other available resources. When these forces are working in synergy, the likelihood for effective mainstreaming is increased. This book outlines the roles and responsibilities of educators, parents, mainstreamed students and their peers, and community agencies to promote effective mainstreaming, and offers strategies for integrating these roles so that individuals work cooperatively. All roles are important, but it is the union of these roles that leads to effective mainstreaming.

In fact, this book is a result of the collaborative efforts of my students, colleagues, friends, and relatives. The book is an outgrowth of many ideas I learned from students in Woodlawn Junior High School (Buffalo, New York) and Public School 76 (Bronx, New York) and colleagues from P.S. 76: George Bonici, Nydia Figueroa-Torres, Jean Gee, and Jean Barber. Similarly, I gained much of the information presented here through interactions with teachers, administrators, and students in the Easton (Pennsylvania) Area School District, who both welcomed me and shared their experiences.

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I also want to acknowledge my colleagues who provided support and guidance through all stages of the book. Sandra Fradd and Marcia Norton were instrumental in encouraging me during the initial stages. I especially want to recognize Catharine Reynolds, Meenakshi Gajria, Karen Giek, Lee Bell, and Nancy Schniedewind for supporting and inspiring me throughout the process. My deepest appreciation also goes to Lynne Crockett and Connie D'Alessandro for their invaluable assistance in preparing the accompanying graphics and coordinating the copyright permissions. I also want to thank my colleagues who compiled the appendix.

This book would not have been possible without the efforts of Robert Miller and Diane Kraut of Macmillan. I sincerely appreciate their sensitivity to me. I also am grateful to the reviewers Sandra B. Cohen, University of Virginia; Deborah Gartland, Towson State University; James A. McLoughlin, University of Louisville; Sharon F. Schoen, LaSalle University; Carol Chase Thomas, University of North Carolina, Wilmington; and Rich Wilson, Bowling Green State University. Their thoughtful and professional comments helped shape and improve the book.

I want to acknowledge my parents, Anne and Harry Salend, my son, Jack, and my mother-in-law Agnes Russ for their love and support. Finally, I dedicate this book to my collaborator in life, Suzanne Salend, in recognition of her love, intelligence, faith, and encouragement.

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Presenting a Model for Effective Mainstreaming



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