

Increasing the Presence and Participation of Mentally Challenged People in Community Life and Promoting Social Integration- A review

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Abstract

Strengthening the community integration of people with mental illnesses, mental retardation, and developmental disabilities will require a collaborative effort bringing together individuals with disabilities, provider programs, decision-makers, and the broader community to address the barriers that keep people with serious disabilities from effectively pursuing the opportunities in life that are available to others. Experience suggests that more people with developmental disabilities are willing to take on the work of social integration when the family members and service workers in their lives strongly support them. This support begins with appreciation of the person's worth and contributions, recognition of the person's signature strengths, hope for the valued roles a person can play, willingness to accommodate the changes in routines and assistance strategies required to increase the person's participation, and openness to learn from what emerges as the person's networks, memberships, and friendships grow.

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