

“A responsibility of families, a responsibility of everyone”

Family Advocacy for Disability Inclusion in Latin America, North
America and Europe

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Before you read

— PART 0: A FEW THINGS
TO KEEP IN MIND



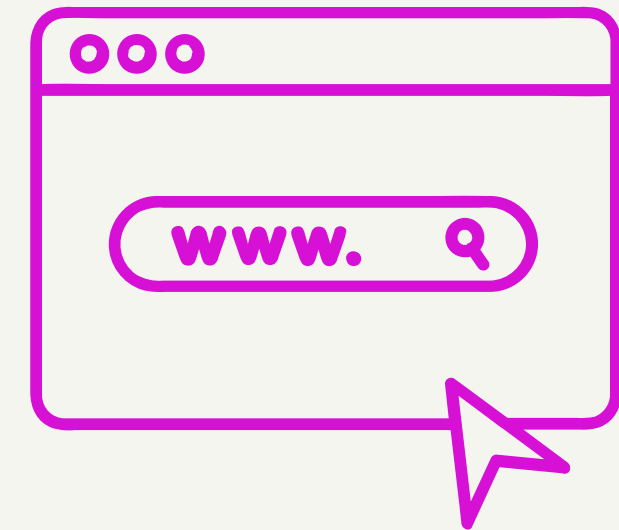
ABOUT THIS REPORT



This document is quite long.
You don't need to read it all at once.



This document has some difficult words.
You can find the definitions at the end, and on our website.



This document is one part of a research project.
That means there are more documents like this one that can give you more information.
You can read them on our website here.

TWO WORDS TO KEEP IN MIND



ADVOCACY

Advocacy is acting to support a specific person or cause. A person can advocate for something that affects them (self-advocacy) or that affects others (advocating for others).

There are many types of advocacy, like awareness campaigns, talking to politicians or starting legal cases.

In this research, we are focusing on advocacy at the school level; not at the government level

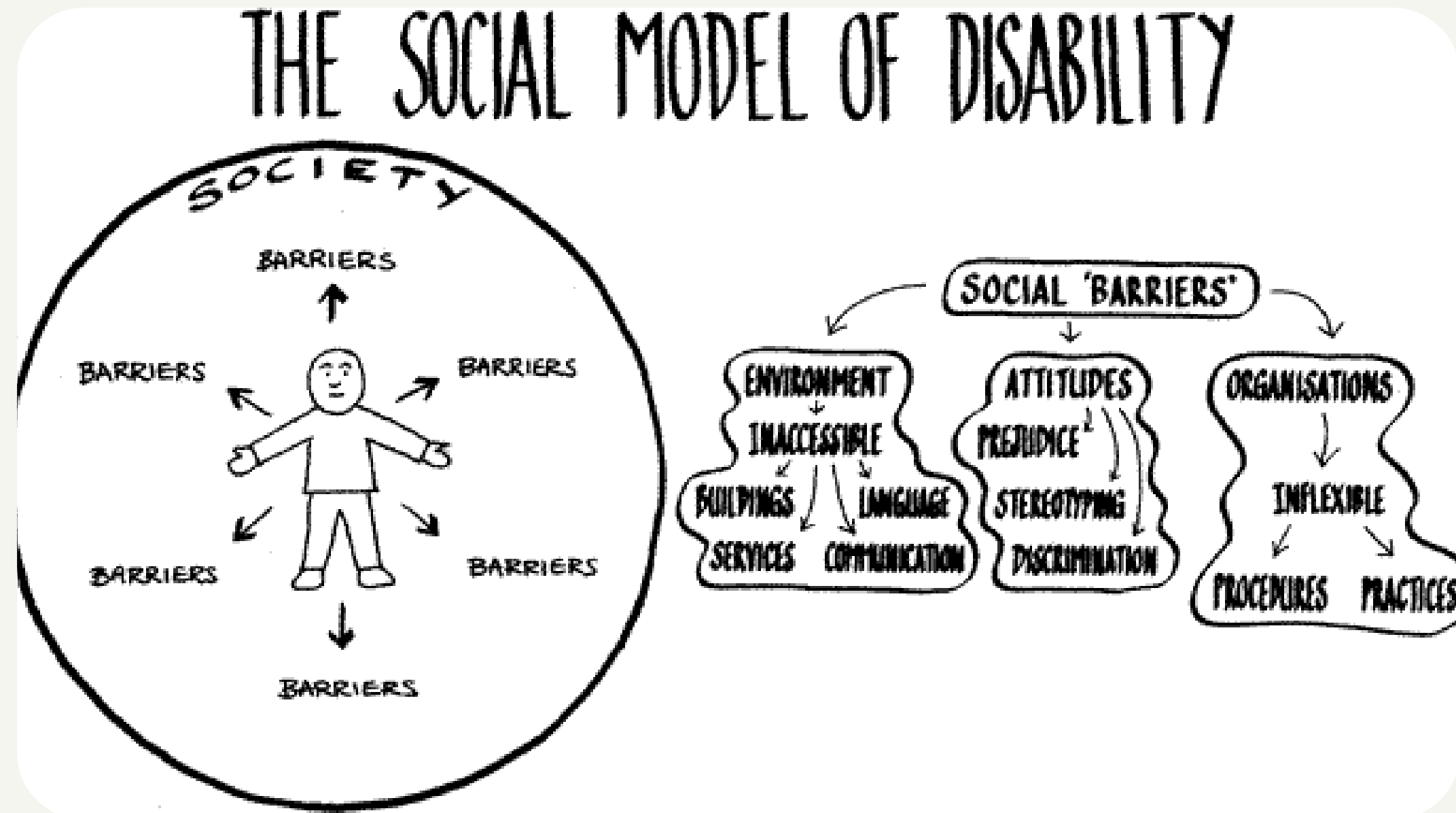


INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A type of education that includes people with and without disabilities in the same schools.

People with disabilities can have access to learning support assistants - which are called different names in different countries - but they are in the same classrooms as other students.

This research follows the social model of disability (explained later!)





The right to inclusive education

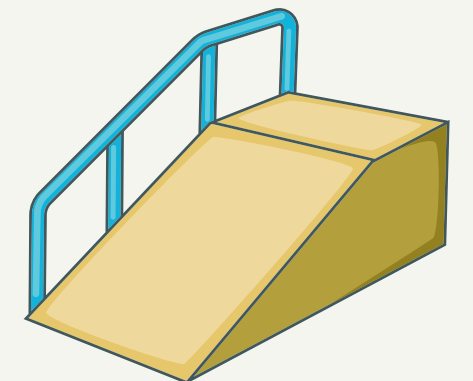
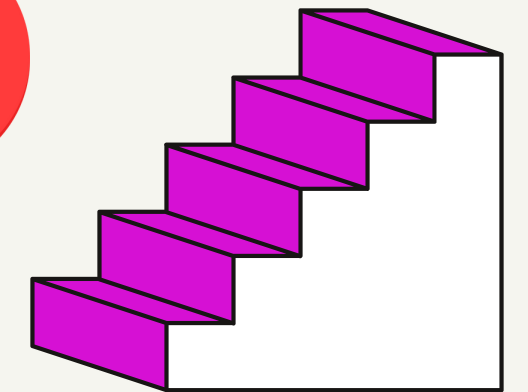
— PART 1

WHAT IS THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY?

The Social Model is a way to understand disability.

It says that a disability happens when a limitation (for example, not being able to move your legs) meets a barrier (for example, some stairs).

So if we focus on removing the barriers, we can make the world more inclusive.



SO IF...

LIMITATION

in a person

- Physical
- Sensorial
- Intellectual

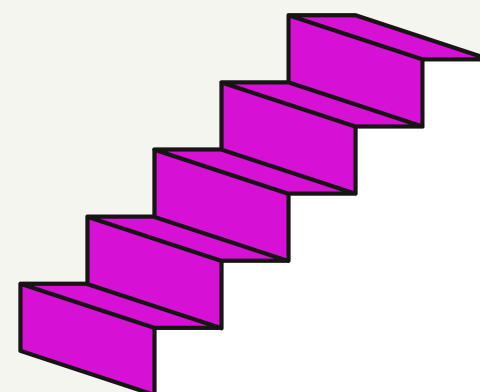


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BARRIER

in society

- Physical
- Legal
- Cultural
- Attitudes



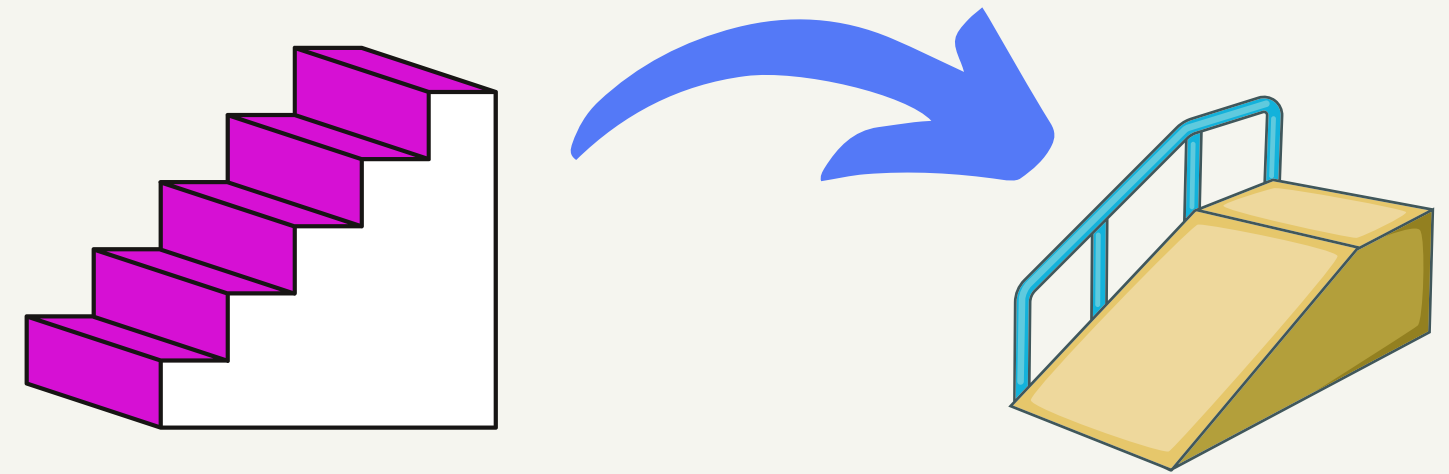
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DISABILITY

THEN...

SOCIETY needs to
remove the barriers

to make sure people
with disabilities **are**
included.

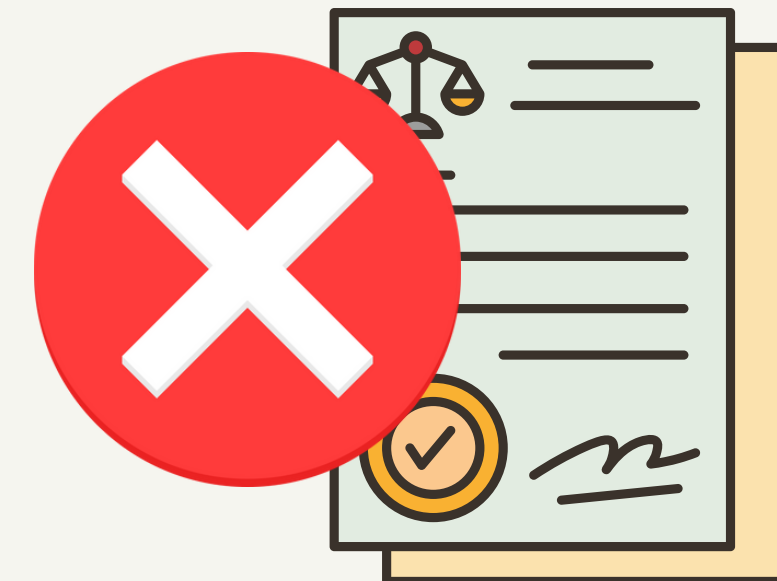


SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EDUCATION?

Governments and schools need to remove the barriers that stop students with disabilities from having access to education.



For example: If that barrier is that the law says that students with intellectual disabilities should study in separate schools, that law needs to be changed.



Case study: The UK

- The [UK Alliance for Inclusive Education](#) is a campaign created in 1989. It is run by adults and children with disabilities.
- In the 1990s, children with disabilities had to go to “special schools” in the UK. The Alliance organized a campaign against this.
- Their campaign was so successful that in 2001, the UK passed the [“UK Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001”](#), which allowed parents to choose between special and mainstream education.



Case study: Romania

- The [European Center for the Rights of Children with Disabilities \(CEDCD\)](#) is an organization created by Madalina Turza, mother to a child with a disability.
- In 2013, they created a group of organizations to fight for a law to protect children with disabilities in Romania. They organized debates, working groups, marches and petitions.
- By 2016, they had been able to change a law that forced parents to put their children into separate “special” schools. Now, parents can choose!



THIS IS ALSO IN THE LAW!

The **Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD)** is a document that says all the rights people with disabilities have.

In Article 24, the CRPD says that **everyone** has the right to inclusive education. That means that people with disabilities have the right to go to school with everyone else.



THIS CREATES SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Social connectedness means that everyone has the right to be a part of the community. People can be part of the community by:

Having a **place** to connect in.



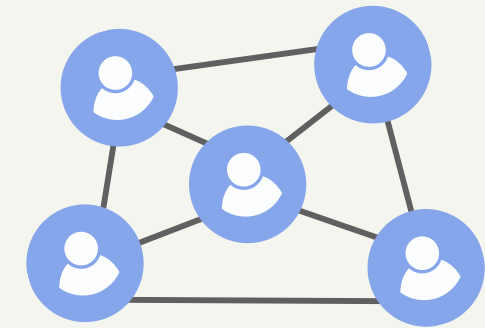
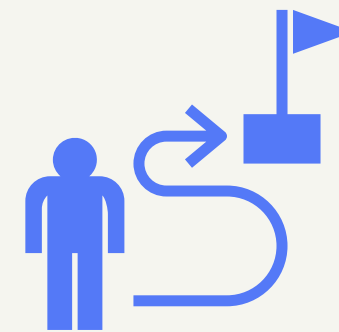
Having **people** to connect to.



Having **power (a voice)** to make connections and change things.



And a **purpose (a goal)** in their connections.



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CREATES SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS BECAUSE

All students, with or without a disability, study in the same **place**.



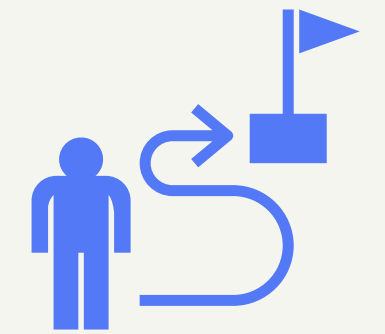
This helps them learn how to act around **people** who do and don't have a disability.



It also means we listen to **the voice** of people with disabilities who have fought for inclusive education.



And we have a shared **purpose** to make sure everyone is learning, **together**.



BUT WHAT EXACTLY IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

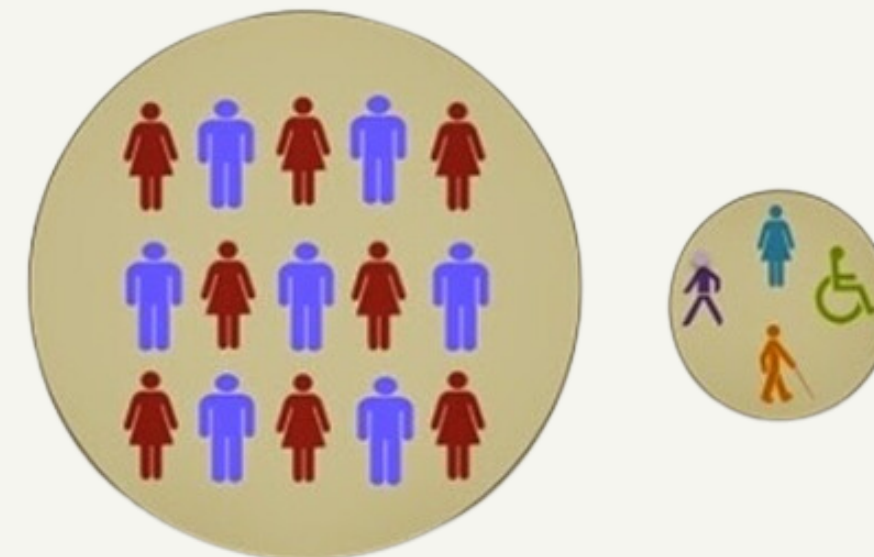
IT IS

Changing the whole education system to make sure that students with intellectual disabilities are in mainstream classes and are really learning.



IT ISN'T

Putting students in separate classrooms in the same building, or putting them in the same classroom without making sure they learn.



Case study: Colombia

- In Colombia, the Ley General de Educación (General Education Law) says that children with disabilities have the right to inclusive education.
- There is another law, Decree 1421, that sets out rules for inclusive education. These include:
 - Families can give information so that schools can create individual learning plans.
 - Families have to agree with the individual learning plans.
 - Families and schools need to have constant communication.
 - Families need to have support networks with each other!



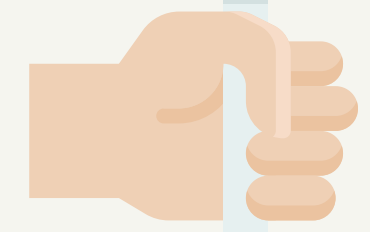
HOW CAN EVERYONE LEARN IN THE SAME CLASSROOM?

When all students learn together, students need to make some changes. These changes are to make sure that students with intellectual disabilities can truly learn in the classroom.



We call these changes **reasonable accommodations**. They make including people with disabilities easier.

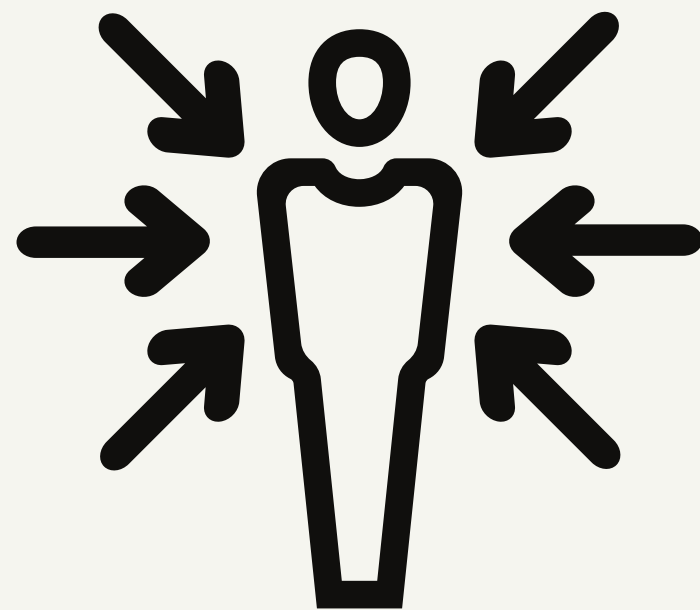
HUMAN
RIGHTS



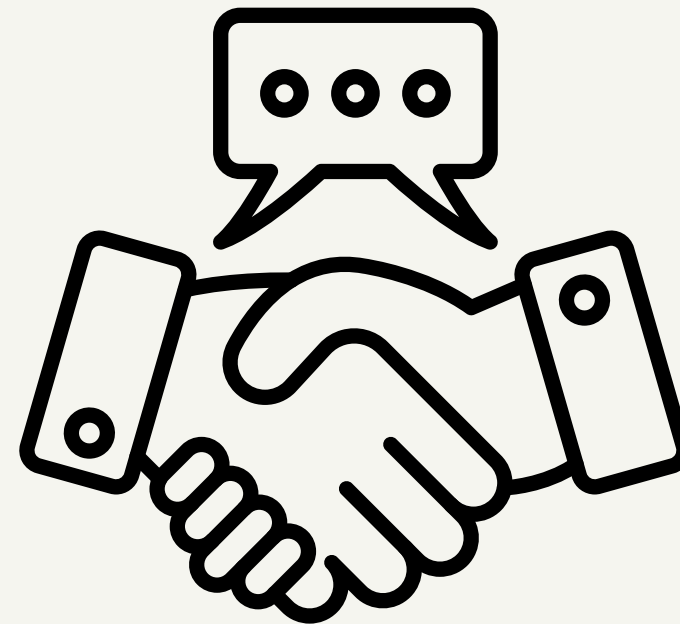
Reasonable accommodations are a **right** that every person with a disability has under the CRPD (Article 2).

Reasonable accommodations are

Specific to
each person



Negotiated with
the school



Free of cost



SOME REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS COULD BE

Changing the
teaching style

Giving handouts in easy-to-read
format, giving students extra time



Changing the
curriculum

Replacing a lesson with something
more relevant or accesible



Learning support
assistance

Letting students have an assisstant in
class (without charging extra!)



Case study: Interviewee S3

- One of the people we interviewed is a mom who lives in Costa Rica. She has a daughter, who we will call Ana.
- Ana goes to an inclusive school. In her school, she has a learning support assistant who makes sure the lessons are adapted to Ana's needs. She also works with Ana in extra classes to make sure she's learning.
- Once a week, the support teacher teaches a lesson for Ana and her classmates! This way, the other students are also learning about the way Ana learns. This has been super helpful for them as well!



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- We asked 31 Special Olympics families about their experiences with inclusive education. You can read what we found [here](#).
- We did research on how families advocate for inclusive education. You can read what we found [here](#).

