Implementing Inclusive Education
Partnering with Parents

For Inclusive Education Teacher Discussion Forum
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SA inclusive education set against international movement

• UNESCO “Education for All: Meeting basic learning needs” 1990
  “Special Needs Education: Access and quality”

Salamanca Statement 1994

• “schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions” (p59)

All photographs taken from the public domain
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007

• SA obligated to recognise rights and provide equal opportunities for all... at all levels without discrimination
• Persons with disabilities not excluded from general education system
• Reasonable accommodations
• Individualised Support
Education White Paper 6

- renewed emphasis on the role and the rights of families who have children with diverse learning needs.
- Traditionally, the role of the family being involved only in activities such as *fundraising* and *homework*.
- Broader role: participating in **curriculum decisions**, **learning support** provisioning and **services**.
BENEFITS FOR THE SCHOOL

- Improved behaviour
- Better attendance
- Improved academic performance
- Greater understanding
- Individual Support Plan

University of Johannesburg
Adopt a holistic approach

The child is embedded in a set of *interdependent* and *interconnected systems*

Family and school – being the most influential systems in a child’s development.
EVER CHANGING OVER TIME

INDIVIDUAL

PEERS

SCHOOL

FAMILY

COMMUNITY

SOCIETY
EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

Managing the reality of the school and home situation often is a **daily struggle**

Families **need support** to accept the reality of having a child with severe learning difficulties.

The process of accepting is **traumatic** as **dreams** have to be adapted.

University of Johannesburg, Jean Fourie
Families often feel overwhelmed and incompetent as they:
- consult a variety of professionals
- they find coordinating all these services challenging
Strategies in developing effective family-school partnerships

- Recognise the family as the child’s most important support system and **welcome** and **respect** them as partners in all decision making processes.

- Acknowledge the **socio-economic challenges** of a family

- Identify the **impact of a child** with diverse learning needs on a family

- Acknowledge the **strengths of a family**
• Professional **educator development programmes** should include training on the fostering of family-school partnerships

• New families should undergo an **induction programme** into the school

**Opportunities** for family involvement should be created e.g. to assist with paired reading, classroom assistance, outings
Individualisation of appropriate teaching aids, management aids, assistive devices and apparatus
Thank You and Questions
Literature Reviewed