Implementing White Paper 6

Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

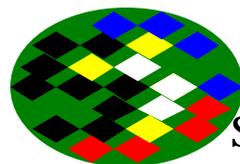# Participant's Manual

Version Two
July 2007

education
Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Materials developed by:

Sisonke
Consortium

Implementing White Paper 6
Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
Participant's Manual
Version Two
ISBN: 978-0-620-39184-9

© 2007 Department of Education
   Republic of South Africa

Contents

List of Abbreviations

ABET   Adult Basic Education and Training

AIDS   Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

DBST   District Based Support Team

DPO   Disabled Persons' Organization

ECD   Early Childhood Development

FM   Frequency Modulation (this refers to hearing aid technology)

HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ILST   Institutional Level Support Team

IT   Information Technology

LOLT   Language of Learning and Teaching

LRC   Learner Representative Council

LTSM   Learning and Teaching Support Materials

NCESS   National Committee on Education Support Services

NCSNET   National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training

NGO   Non-Government Organization

OBE   Outcomes-Based Education

SASA   South African Schools Act

SASL   South African Sign Language

SGB   School Governing Body

SMT   School Management Team

SSRC   Special School as Resource Centre

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Introduction

This is the first of two manuals aimed at assisting the implementation of Education White Paper 6, entitled *Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*, in South Africa. The Department of Education, in conjunction with provincial education authorities, engaged in a large-scale programme to field-test new ideas and practices towards a system of education that can include all learners, regardless of their diverse needs.

These manuals are designed to help the various people who are involved in the emerging Inclusive Education system in our country. This obviously includes educators and professionals who work for the education departments, but it also includes parents and community caregivers who are considered part of the overall learning systems. Crucially – and this will become clear across both the manuals – teachers play a pivotal role in the new Inclusive Education system.

This manual is about Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support of learners who experience barriers to learning of whatever kind.

The second manual is about Inclusive Learning Programmes. This covers ways in which we can differentiate the curriculum, and adapt content, context and materials in the classroom to suit the needs of all learners.

Most users of the current manual are likely to encounter it in the context of a Department of Education training programme. However, the manual is also written in such a way that you can use it for self study. If you work with the manual in your own time, do the activities carefully, and reflect on them and discuss them with your colleagues at school or in a district office, then you will also be able to learn much more about Inclusive Education philosophies and practices, and how they are being implemented in South Africa.

The primary purposes of this manual are:

1. to provide contents and a structure for training programmes that will be targeted at teachers and other professionals in all schools (including special schools and full-service schools) and district offices;
2. to help develop an overall understanding of the basic principles, organizational and operational requirements and delivery strategies associated with Inclusive Education;
3. to provide a resource for educators and specialized support personnel to use in their work with learners who experience barriers to learning.

Learning Time
Each manual is written for 40 hours of notional learning time:
- The activities in the manual provide for 20 hours of training time which is conducted over three days.

- In addition to this training time you are expected to do approximately five hours of reading, in preparation for and between training sessions.
- The manual also provides portfolio assignments that you are expected to carry out in your own time. These assignments should take about 15 hours in total, and are an opportunity for you to consolidate your learning. You can expect support from DBST members and designated district officials in doing these assignments.

Design of the manual

As you work through this manual, you will see that it is built on the idea that new understandings depend on, and arise out of, activity. Its contents will work best if you *engage systematically in the activities* that are set out for you here. If you don't do the activities, you will miss out on the most important part of the learning pathway has been designed for you. The learning approach in this manual follows a learning cycle in which activities are central.

You probably know quite a lot already about Inclusive Education, and we would like to build on that knowledge. There are activities that ask you to think differently about what you know, or do a task that gives you a new experience. But, in order to learn from an activity, you need to think about and discuss what you have learned. After each activity there are ideas and comments which should help you in this discussion and reflection. As you explore further, you not only learn new things, you also have more questions. It is these questions that frame the next activity. The cycle (or, if you like, the spiral) is repeated:
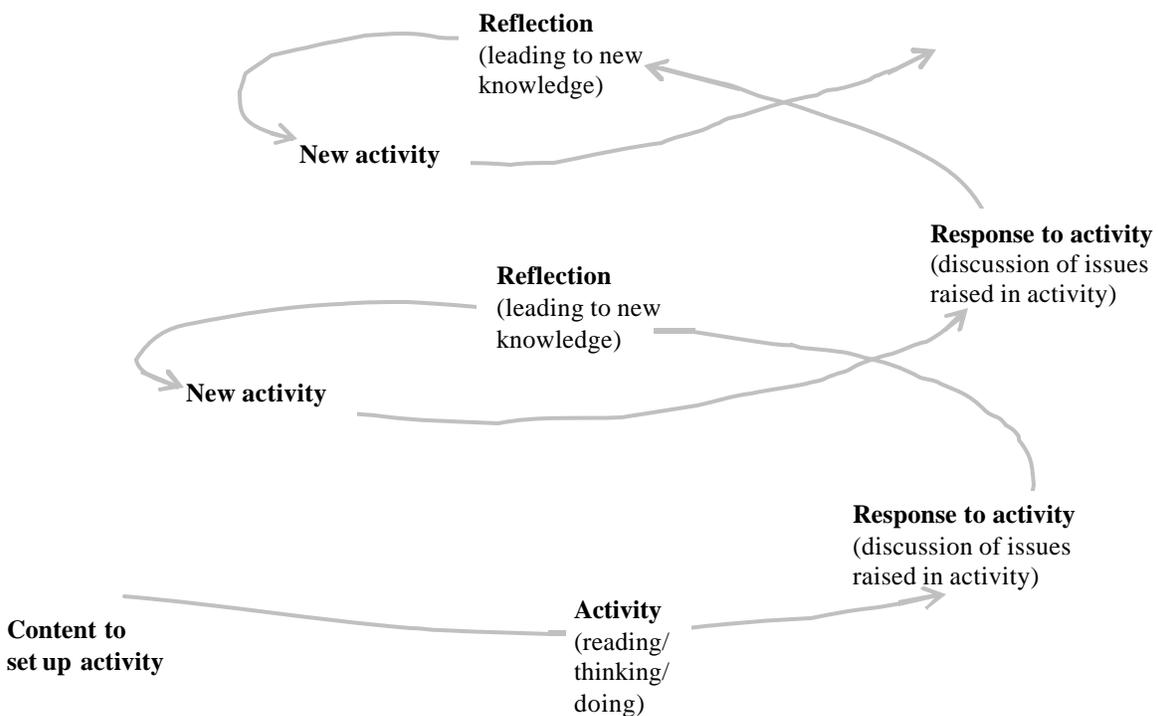
Diagram of a spiral showing how 'Content to set up activity' leads to 'Activity', which leads to 'Response to / discussion about activity', which leads to 'Reflection' on activity. A new cycle then begins with a 'New Activity'.

Finally, at the end of a number of cycles, the end of a unit is reached – by which time you will have had a chance to achieve the outcomes set at the beginning.

Each section has a key portfolio task that will help you to draw together the learning through all the activities in the units that make up the section. Your lecturer may or may not decide to use this key assessment task for formal assessment purposes.

The following headings (with associated icons) guide you through the learning process:
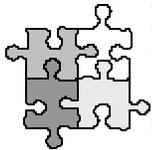
Learning Activities:
Certain activities in the Manual are essential learning tasks. It is important that you apply your mind to each one of these tasks, and answer the set questions. In the training sessions, your facilitators will ask you to spend time doing all of these tasks. Follow instructions given for the activity carefully and write down any other comments or ideas that come to mind as you learn. These are designed primarily to help you learn something new, to acquire a new understanding about something.
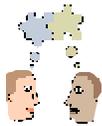
Reflection:
Opportunities to think about and discuss what you have done and what you have learned from the activities. When you learn something new, in a learning activity or a group discussion, you need an opportunity to reflect on what you have learnt, and to make sure you understand it. These sections of the manual are written to help you to consolidate your new understandings.

Stop, think and discuss:
At various points in the Manual, we ask you to stop and take some time to reflect on a particular point. During the training sessions your facilitator may ask you to discuss these with your colleagues in a small group. But they are most useful for when you are reading or studying the Manual on your own. Try to link the issue raised with what you have read, with what you have already learnt about Inclusive Education, with your own previous experience, and so on. The purpose of these activities is to help you consolidate your understanding of a particular point before moving on in the Manual.

Portfolio Assignments:
These are activities that bring together the ideas and material in the section. You will carry them out in your own work environments, after the completion of training. In certain circumstances they may be used by your trainer, mentor or an assessor for assessment purposes. At the end of each Portfolio Assignment there is an assessment grid that indicates the criteria for each task.

Study Time:
Next to each learning activity in this Manual, there is an estimate of the time you should reasonably be spending when you do it. For each unit, we also provide an idea of the *notional time* needed to complete all the activities and reflections. The idea is that in each unit, the essential activities (not including 'Stop, Think and Discuss') will take up about two-thirds of the notional time. This allows time for extra reading and discussion that you might want to do.

SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT

In this first manual, Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support, you will be introduced to the overall concept of Inclusive Education. The focus of this manual is on identifying barriers to children's learning and assessing the levels of support that children need in order to reach their full potential.

Each section of this manual explores the answers to these questions:

Section 1 & 2 What is Inclusive Education? Who is involved in Inclusive Education?	**Section 3** What is Screening, Identification and Assessment? Who is involved in Screening, Identification and Assessment, and how is it done?	**Section 4** How are people supported in implementing Inclusive Education?
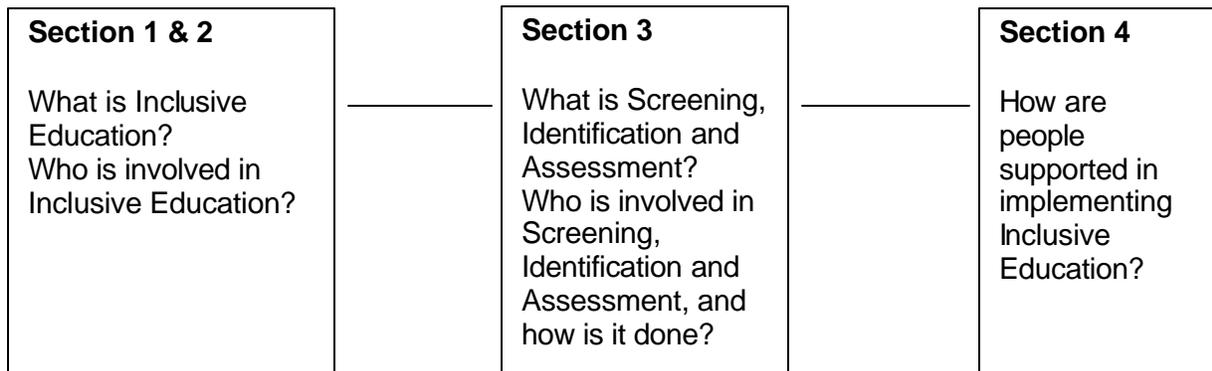
In order to answer these questions you will work with a number of Case Studies. You will meet some interesting children in these Case Studies, namely, Dineo, Nomvula, Xoliswa and Bashir.

In the second manual we focus on Integrated Learning Programmes, and explore how we can support learners who experience particular barriers to learning in the classroom.

SECTION 1:
UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Unit 1:

Moving from Special Needs to Inclusive Education

Unit Outcome:
By the end of this unit, teachers will have a better understanding of Inclusive Education in South Africa

Assessment Criteria:
- Describe reasons for the introduction of Inclusive Education
- Give a brief overview of the legislation supporting Inclusive Education.
- Identify the main principles of Inclusive Education.
- Explain the differences between a Medical Model and a Social Model of disability.
- Motivate the rationale for moving from a 'special needs' to a systemic view of learning barriers.

Recommended training time for this Unit:
120 minutes (2 hours)

Introduction

In this Unit we examine where Inclusive Education comes from, what it means and what our own attitudes are to 'special needs', Inclusive Education and change.
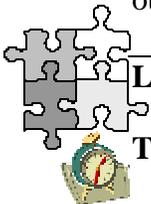
Learning Activity 1

Time Needed: 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions in pairs. Some of your thoughts can be shared with the big group afterwards.

1. When you were at school, what was your experience of children with 'special needs'?
2. Did you have 'special needs' children in your class, or at your school?
3. How did you interact with children with 'special needs', at school or in the community?
4. What were 'special needs' children labelled?
5. Have you ever been labelled?
6. When you think of a 'special needs' child what comes to mind?
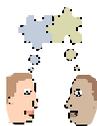
Reflection
Some of you may have had very positive experiences of 'special needs' children. It is possible that there is a 'special needs' child in your family who is deeply loved and well cared for.

It is possible that you yourself had difficulty learning to read, or with numbers, and that you were labeled 'naughty' or 'slow'. Many of you probably had the experience of so-called 'problem' learners being left at home and discriminated against by others in the community and by society at large. You will have experienced the fact that South African children were not only separated out into racially segregated schools, but they were also separated out in terms of their abilities or disabilities. Many children who were not learning or developing adequately in mainstream schools were often discriminated against by management, teachers and other learners.

a. Historical Perspectives

In South Africa, like many other countries, education was based on the concept of exclusion, which meant in practice that only children and youth who were perceived as 'normal' went to mainstream, ordinary schools. 'Special needs' needs children were supposed to be sent either to special schools, or special classes. In order to get a special placement, learners were assessed and then classified into different categories, like Attention Deficit Disorder, Learning Disabilities, moderately or severely 'mentally handicapped', and others. These labels determined where learners were placed in special education facilities.

However, in practice, due to the inequitable delivery of education in South Africa, only some privileged children were placed in these special facilities. Some disadvantaged learners were accepted into the schools but most were ignored, or rejected or not included in the educational system at all.

It has become clear that the concept of 'special educational needs' has to be widened to include all children who, for various reasons, are failing to benefit from school. The definition adopted here is broader and more inclusive than the traditional definitions that are usually restricted to disability categories.

The new definition includes the following:
- Children who are currently enrolled in primary school, but for various reasons do not achieve adequately,
- Children who are currently not enrolled in primary school, but who could be enrolled if schools were more responsive,
- The relatively smaller group of children with more severe impairments who have special education needs that are not being met.

b. Moving to Inclusive Education

Around the world, over time, people have learned more through research and experience, about inclusion. The political and social norms are changing, and there is increased pressure from the human rights movement to move towards inclusion. Inclusive education is part of democracy and human rights. In the context of South African history, the move to Inclusive Education is absolutely vital to ensure an equitable and fair future

for all. It demands of us to think differently about what we do in our schools and classrooms.

However, before we explore how to implement Inclusive Education, let's examine the Inclusive Education legislation.

South African legislation supporting Inclusive Education

The South African Constitution entrenches our rights to "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms".[i] This diagram briefly outlines the legislative process that has led to Education White Paper 6.[ii]

1996 Constitution: establishes the right of all citizens to basic education; outlaws any discrimination against any person on any grounds.

South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996): public schools must
- admit learners and serve their educational needs without unfairly discriminating in any way
- provide education for learners with special education needs at ordinary public schools
- provide relevant educational support services for such learners
- ensure physical facilities at public schools are accessible to disabled persons

Nov 1997 - National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET); National Commission on Education Support Services (NCESS): final report *Quality Education for All: Overcoming Barriers to Learning and Development*

August 1999: *Consultative Paper on Special Education No.1 Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*

Education White Paper 6: 2001 gazetted in terms of the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996); provides the framework for Inclusive Education and training system.

Providing Inclusive Education in South Africa means that many human rights issues are affirmed and historical, inequitable education practices are reversed.

In 1993 the United Nations General Assembly developed rules about the education of persons with disabilities, and encouraged all countries to adopt these rules[iii].

Rule 6 says:
"States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for their children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system."

Similarly, UNESCO issued the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994[iv]. This was a very important conference, and re-asserted children's rights to education as shown in the following excerpts:

"Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning."[v]

"Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of the characteristics and needs of children"[vi].

"Those with 'special educational needs' must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs"[vii].

Interestingly for South Africa, the Salamanca Statement also commented that "inclusive schools combat discriminatory attitudes and build an inclusive society in the most cost-effective way". [viii]
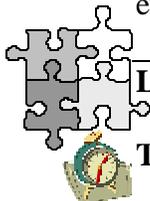
Learning Activity 2

Time Needed: 30 minutes

Work in small groups.
1. Read the following Case Study of Xoliswa:

Xoliswa used to live with both her parents in the Eastern Cape. Both her parents are living with HIV. However, when her parents separated, her mother moved to Cape Town. Xoliswa now lives there with her mother in a very poor and densely populated suburb. Xoliswa's father still lives in the Eastern Cape and rarely sees his daughter. Her mother has a sleep-in job as a domestic worker. She rents a small room in the back yard of

relative strangers. Xoliswa stays alone in this room during the week. Her mother has arranged for her meals to be provided by the landlord. Her mother returns home at the weekends.

Xoliswa attends the school around the corner from her home. She is in Grade 4. At 11 years, she is a little old for her grade. This school has about 750 learners and 22 staff members. The teacher/learner ratio ranges from 30 – 50 learners per teacher. Staff are struggling to cope with the many learning and developmental needs of their learners, especially since they have so many learners in their classes. Many learners are poor and come from communities with high unemployment. Many of the teachers consider that certain children have disabilities of some kind, and do not consider it their job to help these particular children.

Xoliswa misses her friends and father, and finds it very hard to integrate and feel at home in this new school. She did not do very well at her last school either, but at least she had a few friends there. Her teachers think she has intellectual problems, and tend to not bother with her much in class, especially since she rarely does class work or homework. What little work she does seems to suggest that she does not read or write well. Her classmates pick up on the teachers' attitudes, and tend to ignore her, or even abuse her verbally. Xoliswa is demotivated and quiet. This behaviour also contributes to the way her teachers ignore her.

2. Now in small groups answer the following questions.
   a. How are Xoliswa's human rights being violated at school. Identify particular rights that are being dishonoured.
   b. How does this link to Xoliswa being seen as a 'problem' child and not 'normal'.
   c. How do you think Xoliswa might be labeled by her teacher?
   d. How do you think Xoliswa is feeling?
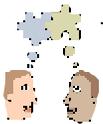
Reflection
This activity described a situation that many of you are probably well aware of. Perhaps you identified that Xoliswa's right to protection is being violated, since she is staying alone at home each week. She is not respected by her teachers, and is even abused emotionally. Xoliswa is clearly one of those children whom the teachers regard as 'having disabilities' and treat as different. They probably label her as a 'problem' child and a 'slow learner'. They seem not to recognize that she is in need of support. There is no doubt that Xoliswa feels excluded and worthless.

What is Inclusive Education?

Education White Paper 6 outlines Inclusion as "recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities." and "supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met…"[ix] In other words, as the Minister of Education wrote in 1999: "Our challenge is to create the conditions of learning and teaching in all our learning institutions so that all learners can be fully accommodated and can flourish and contribute effectively to the regeneration of our society, our economy and our country"[x].

a. The main principles of Inclusive Education

In Education White Paper 6, Inclusive Education is defined as[xi]:

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases.
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures.
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.
- Empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.

Stop, Discuss and Think
- How are these principles of Inclusive Education different from or the same as special needs education?
- Think about Xoliswa in relation to these principles.

b. Making sense of Inclusive Education

Theories that explain development in children help everyone involved in education to make sense of what they are doing. There have been changes in theories of development and changes in thinking about human rights that have informed policy on Inclusive Education.

The Medical Model

In South Africa, as in various other countries, a medical model has been used to understand many aspects of child development in the context of special needs education. This often meant that children who did not learn easily like the others were viewed as being the 'patients', as if they had a disease that needed accurate diagnosis and treatment. Such diagnosis and treatment was usually given by a professional such as a doctor, a psychologist, a speech and hearing therapist, an occupational therapist and so on. This thinking led to the idea that 'children with special needs', i.e. those who are not learning in the system as other children, need to be educated separately from the rest. In addition, the perceived 'problem' children were segregated from each other, as special schools and special classes were set up to cater for different kinds of learning and developmental delays. So children were categorized and often placed in schools specializing in that category of special needs, such as schools for children with intellectual disability, and so on. Even then, not all children had access to the system of special needs diagnosis and education.

Because the emphasis has been on the medical needs of people with disabilities, there has been a corresponding neglect of their wider social needs. This has resulted in severe isolation for people with disabilities and their families. [xii]

Perhaps you can see how this model could affect Xoliswa. The teacher assumed that Xoliswa had intellectual problems, and did not regard Xoliswa as her responsibility, nor did she think she had the skills to manage Xoliswa. But we can think about Xoliswa in a different way.

The Social Model

Over the past two decades, disabled people's organizations all over the world have tried to push for society to see disability as a human rights issue. The argument is that if society cannot cater for people with disabilities, it is society that must change. The goal must be the right of people with disabilities to play a full, participatory role in society – this view is captured in South Africa's *Integrated National Disability Strategy* (1997).[xiii]

Disability is not only the result of individual impairment. It is also the result of interaction between individuals and the environment that is not intended or designed to enable participation[xiv]. The social model suggests that social, economic and political practices and systems contribute to disablement[xv]. So the attitudes of other people, the lack of proper resources and lack of access to services, for example, could all be things which get in the way of people achieving their full educational potential.

In other words, the systems in society, such as a person's life history and circumstances, or the socio-economic system, and other attitudes of other people, create barriers to learning.

Learning Activity 3

Time Needed: 30 minutes

You have already been introduced to Xoliswa. Read her story on pages 12 and 13 again, if you need to.

In the table below the systems that affect Xoliswa are listed in the left hand column. In the middle column we have written our interpretation of Xoliswa's circumstances. In the right hand column we have made suggestions for how the systems in Xoliswa's life have affected her.

1. Read Table 1, and discuss in your group whether you agree or disagree.

Table 1: Systems in Xoliswa's Life

Systems	What we know about Xoliswa's circumstances	Effect of systems on Xoliswa
History / Life Events	• Parents separated/divorced • Moved town, home school • Both parents are HIV positive •	• Both parents being HIV positive means she worries about what will happen to her all the time which is also very stressful. • Xoliswa misses her father since the move. •
Political / socio-economic systems	• Mother has a low paying job which takes her away from Xoliswa during the week. •	• Family has to live in poor, ill-serviced neighbourhood, which does not help Xoliswa to develop or learn very well. •
School system	• Xoliswa has not adjusted well into her new school. •	• The school is over populated, under-provisioned. • There is the perception that Xoliswa is disabled, so they can't help her. •
Family system	• Xoliswa's family is poor, and living in one room. • Nutrition is poor •	• Her family is now a single income family. •
Social Support System: Home	• Her mother is more physically absent than present • Her father is absent and far away •	• Her father's absence and mother's emotional unavailability and illness make Xoliswa feel withdrawn and demotivated. •
Social Support System: School	• Is 11 years old in Grade 4. • Quality of school support is poor both in terms of emotional, social and learning support •	• This adds to Xoliswa's demotivation, isolation and low self-esteem. •
Social Support System: Peers	• Had a few friends at previous school. • Has not made new friends.	• Xoliswa misses her friends since the move. • No peer support increases the stress and

		anxiety.
	•	•
Biological System	• Considered 'slow', but did quite well at previous school.	• There is a perception of low achievement and teachers assume this is because Xoliswa is 'disabled'.
	•	•

2. Now read this additional information about Xoliswa.

> *Xoliswa misses her father considerably. She was very close to him, and they did a lot of things together. Xoliswa's mother had been close to her before the move, but since the move, she has become extremely worried about their financial situation and her responsibilities. Since she is away from Xoliswa during the week, she is often not emotionally available for Xoliswa.*

> *Xoliswa goes straight to school and straight home, and often sits for hours doing nothing. Her mother promises to buy a TV but in reality, they are too poor. Xoliswa is distressed and lonely, and often does not do her homework.*

> *At school things are not much better. Her teacher does not understand her. She considers her 'mentally retarded' and not able to read or write very well. In fact, though her reading and writing skills are not grade appropriate, they are only about one year below her grade level, and she only needs more practice to become better. This lack of understanding and acceptance increases her anxiety at school, which means she is unable to concentrate much in the class.*

> *Since she is alone, she does not bother too much with her appearance. Her hair is often unkempt and she neglects personal hygiene. Her appearance can put people off, so she has no friends yet. However, there is one girl in her class who seems to be as lonely and as unhappy as herself, and they are slowly drawn together. She does sometimes wander over to where the younger children are playing, and is starting to make friends with a couple of children.*

3. Fill in any additional points on the table, now that you have more information about Xoliswa.
4. Join another small group and compare your understandings of Xoliswa.
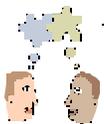
Reflection

From filling in the table in this activity, you can see how the interactions between Xoliswa and the systems in which she finds herself affect her learning and development, and how each system feeds into the next one. Many of the interactions between the systems in Xoliswa's life are causing barriers to learning. When we analyze Xoliswa's situation we can see clearly how desperate this little girl is. Support needs to be provided very rapidly, before her situation becomes even worse.

This way of understanding the social model of disability is known as an *ecosystemic framework*. This framework looks at all the different systems that influence the ability of the learner to succeed in school, and for that matter, in everyday life. The way that systems work together can either cause delays in development, or improve the quality of development and learning. Research findings indicate the following[xvi]:

System	Findings
Life History and Circumstances	• Life events such as divorce, illness and death impact negatively on learning. • Any trauma such as floods, or ongoing stress such as sexual abuse, affects development. • Moving schools, homes, towns, or countries presents difficulties.
Political System and Socio-economic System	• Legislation and the way policy is implemented affects considerably the way people develop (e.g. the value of certain groups of people was entrenched in Apartheid policy and practice, and adversely affected the development of the majority of SA's people. • Poverty undermines the full development of children.
School System	• The provisioning of schooling is often poor. • The training that teachers have received is often inadequate. • Hierarchical systems in education have disempowered teachers, parents and learners. • Curricula have been limited for many of the population.
Individual Socio-economic System	There are many individual consequences of socio-economic inequalities: • Inadequate nutrition • High indwelling density • Lack of access to social services, e.g. health care, electricity, libraries, parks, etc. • Few opportunities for new experiences, etc.
Social Support System	• The quality of the interaction between child and adult (teacher, parent, also peers) is crucial in fostering learning and development.. • Children who are valued and loved for who they are, develop very well behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively. • Children who receive mediation in the teaching and learning process develop very well cognitively
Individual Biological Systems (Impairments)	• Biological, neurological and physiological conditions present particular constraints and challenges for learning (e.g. spinal injuries, Down Syndrome, etc.)

You will notice that the social model of disability does not exclude biological systems as factors in a child's learning and development, but recognizes that they are just one small part of the bigger picture.

So instead of blaming a child for not performing well, a teacher could ask questions like "Thabo is not learning to read and write well. How can I change my teaching so he can

learn to read easily?" In this way the adults take responsibility for the learning and development of children. At the same time it preserves the child's dignity.

So a Social Model of disability helps us to see children in a context, to see what systems are causing barriers to their development and learning, and to identify support that they might need to reach their full potential. One important implication of the Social Model is that we need to change the ways in which support is provided. This means that resources have to be made available so that so-called 'ordinary' amenities and services can cater for a more diverse environment. (*Integrated National Disability Strategy*, *1997*).[xvii]

The shift from a 'special needs' approach towards an 'inclusive education' approach, as summarised on p.17 in Education White Paper 6, can be graphically represented as follows[xviii]:

The 'special needs' approach:
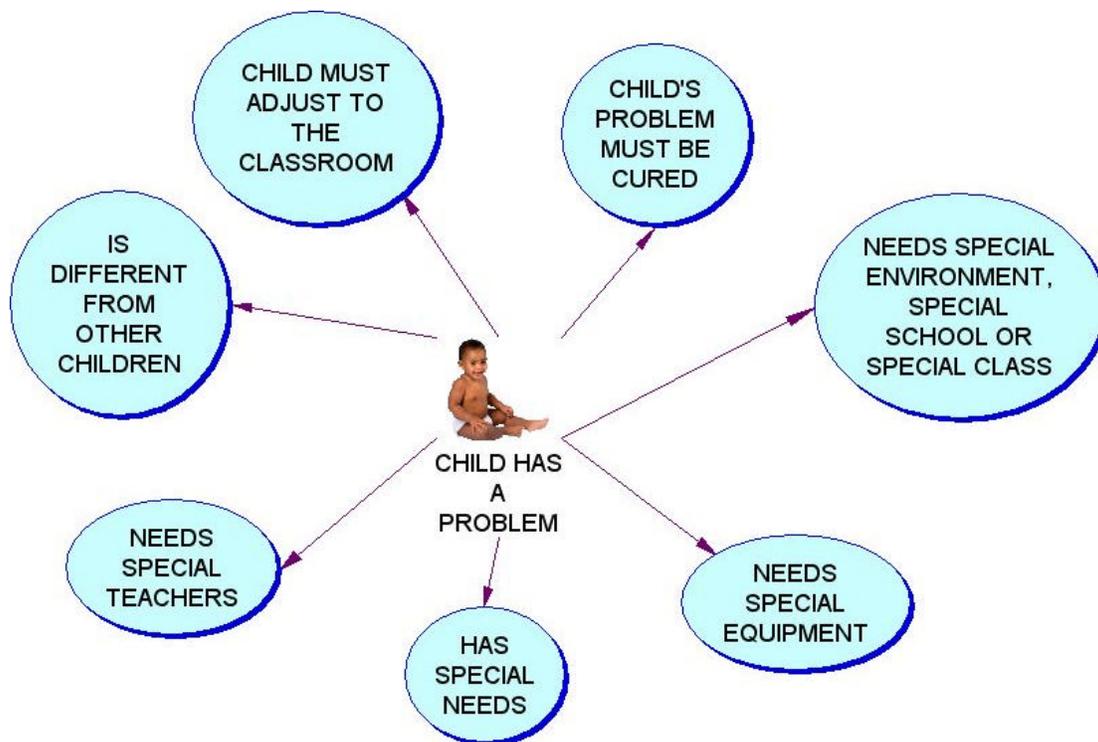
Circular diagram of a child at the centre with a 'problem'. Arrows from the child point to phrases – 'child's problem must be cures; needs special environment, special school or special class; needs special equipment; has special needs; need special teachers; is different from other children; child must adjust to the classroom.

The 'inclusive education' approach:

Diagram with Education system problems at the centre. Arrows from the education system point to phrases – 'all learners needs support'; 'teaching practices need to respond to learner diversity'; 'environment must be adjusted'; 'policies and legislation must be changed'; 'various stakeholders are equal partners in education'; 'barriers to learning emanate from factors 'within' learners and 'around' learners'; 'support is provided in all schools and classrooms'.

One factor contributing to the slow development in educational services for children with 'special needs' is the belief that it is so special. Terms such as 'special' education and 'special' teachers, have made this area so 'special' that it has been seen as a field only for highly qualified 'specialists' of whom there are very few, especially in developing countries. [xix] "There is too much mystification concerning the skills required to work with disabled children. Many of these skills - not all - can be learned comparatively quickly by families, volunteers, community workers and staff without formal qualifications. Skilled professionals are, however, needed to provide leadership, staff training and support." [xx]

From your discussions you can see that implementing an Inclusive Education system means that we need to transform every aspect of education. This needs to be done primarily so that support can be provided to all the teachers, children and other stakeholders who need it.

Such a radical transformation means that all people involved in education need to reflect on how learners should be educated. The districts that support those schools, the professionals who work with teachers and children, teachers themselves, and even parents need to re-think attitudes and behaviours.

Such a paradigm shift often causes great anxiety. When we are told we have to do things in a new way we may wonder if we can develop the new skills required. Many of us become attached to our old ways of thinking and doing things, and resist giving them up, even unconsciously. If we understand why we feel the way we do we can often change more easily. All change takes time, effort and support!

Summary

This Unit has helped us to explore some of the important and fundamental ideas about Inclusive Education.

- We have seen where it came from, how it is supported by ideas from around the world. It is also supported by legislation, and how it protects the rights of every child to learn.
- We have seen how a new understanding of 'special needs' within a social model has affected the policy of Inclusive Education in many important ways.
- We have also explored some links between an ecosystemic framework and barriers to learning. In the next Unit you will explore barriers to learning in much more detail.
- The implementation of an Inclusive Education policy means that educating a child is not only about working with children's difficulties in isolation, but also working with the broader social context that the child comes from, and what the child experiences at school. As teachers and schools communities, we now have to take very seriously what happens to children and what they experience both inside and outside of our classrooms. We have to investigate these things very closely and we have to decide whether they are barriers to learning.

Notes and References

[i] *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996.
[ii] Education White Paper 6: *Special Needs Education – Building an Inclusive Education and training system*, July 2001.
[iii] United Nations (1993). *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.* New York.
[iv] UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.* Adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994.
[v] Ibid. Cl. 2.
[vi] Ibid. Cl. 2.
[vii] Ibid. Cl. 2.
[viii] Ibid.
[ix] Education White Paper 6, op cit., p.17.
[x] Ibid.
[xi] Op. cit, pg 16.
[xii] White Paper: *The Integrated National Disability Strategy*, Office of the Deputy President, Pretoria. November 1997). Executive Summary.
[xiii] Ibid. p.4.
[xiv] Roth, W. (1983). "Disability as a social construct." *Society*, 20(3).
[xv] Oliver, M. (1990). *The Politics of Disablement*, McMillan, London.
[xvi] See Harcombe, E. J.(1993). *The interaction effects of intrapersonal, interpersonal and socio-economic variables on stress adjustment of disadvantaged children*, Unpublished Masters of Education Research Report, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

[xvii] *Integrated National Disability Strategy*, op cit.

[xviii] Diagrams adapted from EENET (1998) *Inclusive Education: Making a Difference*. pp. 4-5.

[xix] Saleh, Lena (1996) *From Inclusive Education to Inclusive Communities*. Lecture held at the University of Pretoria.

[xx] Mittler, P (1995) *Manpower development: a priority for the 90s* Paper to Conference of Asian Federation for Mental Retardation. Karachi: Pakistan.

Unit 2:

Barriers to learning and the process of Screening Identification, Assessment and Support

Unit Outcomes
By the end of this Unit, you will:
- Have a better understanding of the term 'barriers to learning' in the context of screening, identification, assessment and support.

Assessment criteria:
- Define the term barriers to learning
- Identify some barriers to learning that exist within the South African context.
- Explain the impact of these barriers on the learning, development and participation of children.
- Explain some of the benefits of Inclusive Education.

Recommended training time for this Unit:
180 minutes (3 hours)

Introduction

The *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* (2006) is a "response to the mandate given in Education White Paper 6 that one of the key levers to establishing an Inclusive Education and training system is to overhaul the process of identifying, assessing and enrolling learners in special schools and its replacement by one that acknowledges the central role played by teachers and parents in this process"[i].

The Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support provides guidelines and procedures on how to transform processes and practice, especially in relation to accessing support, for the responsible and equitable implementation of inclusion in South Africa.

In this Unit you will examine perceptions of and attitudes to the principles and practice of Inclusive Education and reflect on your own attitudes in relation to Inclusive Education.

You are well aware by now that Inclusive Education is being implemented within a new framework of understanding barriers to learning and providing support to all children to overcome those barriers.

Let's make sure that we all have the same understanding of what learning barriers are.

Barriers to Learning

a. Attitudes and Understanding of Learning and Developmental Needs

The *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* defines barriers to learning as follows:

"The notion refers to difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, the learning site and/or within the learner him/herself which prevent both the system and the learner needs from being met. When, based on objective evaluation made by an educational authority, it is ascertained that teaching and learning are hampered where such needs are not met, educationally sound methods must be applied."[ii]
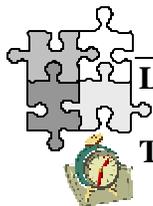
Learning Activity 4

Time Needed: 10 minutes

1. Discuss with a partner, how this quotation links with a Social Model of disability, and with an understanding of systems.
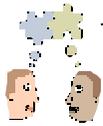
Reflection

You probably discussed the idea that the quotation is referring to the idea that the interacting systems are seen as the problem, not the child.

This is one of the most important shifts in thinking, that most often the barriers to learning are caused by factors in the child's environment, and not by something that the child 'has'. What the above quote really means is that we need to identify all the things that prevent children from learning. Most of these are external to the child, such as lack of food, having to learn in a language different from the home language, a lack of resources, or even bad planning, teaching and assessment practices. So the barriers are not really about the medical condition of the child, but rather about the systems that put barriers in the way of a child learning.

b. Systems that promote learning and development

Before we look in more depth at barriers to learning, let's examine the factors that promote learning and development. It is interesting to note that large numbers of children develop well, even those who experience many difficult situations. You have seen that there are many systems with which children interact. When these systems interact positively, children are likely to develop well in spite of adverse circumstances.

Systems that promote learning and development would include:
- legislation and policy that guarantees human rights;
- Inclusive Education that provides appropriate support;
- universal and flexible curricula;

- reasonable socio-economic levels;
- strong social support services;
- curriculum differentiation and teaching and learning strategies to suit individual interests, experience and learning styles.

Stop, Discuss and Think

Think back to the systems that affect Xoliswa's learning and development in Unit 1.
- How many, and which systems affect Xoliswa positively?
- How is Xoliswa interacting with these systems? How are all these interactions affecting her development?

Reflection

There is at least one positive system in Xoliswa's life that you could have identified, and that is the fact that her mother has arranged with the landlord to provide Xoliswa's meals. There may be others that you discussed, but you will agree that there are very few.

c. Barriers to Learning: Systems that hinder development

Now you have an idea of the positive interactions in Xoliswa's life, we will examine the negative factors that affect her development and learning.

Learning Activity 5

Time Needed: 15 minutes

Do this activity in small groups.

1. Remind yourself about Xoliswa's story again.
2. Answer the following questions and give feedback to your colleagues:
   a. What interacting systems are functioning as barriers to learning and development for Xoliswa?
   e. How do negative interacting systems affect Xoliswa's development and learning?
   f. Are the barriers identified here common in South Africa?

3. Finally, discuss how this exercise has changed your way of thinking about the barriers your learners may experience.

Reflection
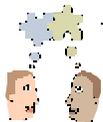
You will have identified many barriers to learning in Xoliswa's case, including historical barriers, socio-economic barriers, and barriers within her school and family. So it may make more sense to you now to think about Xoliswa from a Social Model perspective rather than a Medical one. Clearly providing her mother and her teachers with support will help Xoliswa to learn and develop better.

No-one needs to be told that these barriers are all too common in South Africa. Let's explore some of them in a bit more depth.

d. Common Barriers to Learning and Development experienced in South Africa

The following sections and activities regarding barriers to learning and development are set out as follows:
- Political Systems Barriers
- Socio-economic System Barriers
- School System Barriers
- Home System Barriers
- Biological System Barriers

Political Systems Barriers

Historically, education policy in South Africa was based on an exclusive form of education implementation. This meant that the education system was designed for the child who was perceived as normal while children who were considered 'as having special needs' were excluded from mainstream education facilities. These children were either placed in special education facilities (if such facilities were available in their community) or they were included by default in mainstream education or remained at home. Children perceived as having special needs were largely ignored and discriminated against by those in education and society in general. Various education policies and legislation were themselves a major barrier to many children's learning and development.

Stop, think and discuss

The Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support is a strategy that has emerged as a means of implementing the Inclusive Education policy as outlined in Education White Paper 6. Think about the following:
- In what ways do you think White Paper 6 is contributing to removing barriers to learning?
- In what ways do you think policies may still prove to be a barrier to learning and development?
- What do you think could be done to make sure these policies do not become a barrier to development and learning?

Reflection

The following paragraphs may help to support and guide your thinking for the above discussion:
- Education White Paper 6 outlines the Ministry of Education's commitment to providing educational opportunities for all learners, particularly previously marginalised children, or those who were prevented from accessing the system. Our South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) is the foundation on which the policy of Inclusion rests. This policy and the legislation that supports it upholds the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of

human rights and freedoms for all children, and makes provision to address all children's learning needs.

- Policy frameworks as well as programmes within existing policy for all bands of education and training are being revised and extended so that they are more in line with Education White Paper 6. This will ensure that a diverse range of learning needs in all children will be recognised by the system at all levels of education and training. Policy and legislation will therefore facilitate the learning of children with diverse learning needs.

- Many schools will need help to develop policies that encourage the school community to become more inclusive. For example, a school might not have clear policy and guidelines relating to discrimination and harassment, which are both barriers to learning for a child. A school may not demonstrate a commitment to developing a physical environment that makes it possible for all learners to participate fully in school activities, or have clear enough guidelines for fostering good school-community relations, or admission procedures for parents. The structures that are available to help with these are outlined in later units.

Socio-Economic System Barriers

There are many socio-economic factors that can create barriers to learning. Many of these factors have been caused by the implementation of previous political and economic policies.

Learning Activity 6

Time needed: 10 minutes

1. Identify some examples of socio-economic barriers to learning and development that you have seen in your own community or work.
2. Think about the various socio-economic barriers Xoliswa is experiencing. Which ones have a big impact on her learning and development?
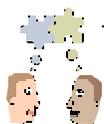
Reflection

The barriers that you identified in the first question are probably very similar to the ones that Xoliswa was experiencing.

- Xoliswa's parents do not have well-paid jobs, which means that food, clothes, books and shelter are probably inadequate.
- Resources and facilities, such as libraries, parks, cheap public transport, adequate policing, are probably not readily available to Xoliswa.
- If Xoliswa were to fall ill she would probably find it difficult to access health care.

Social Support Systems Barriers

You, like most adults, are aware of the practical things that need to be done for children, such as providing the best kind of food and shelter that is possible, and making sure they go to school. Teachers do similar things at school, too, such as preparing for their classes, being fair in the classroom, making sure learners eat something during the day, teaching the best they can and so forth.

Learning Activity 7

Time Needed: 15 minutes

Discuss the following about Xoliswa:
1. What has changed in her family circumstances?
2. How has this affected her parents' ability to offer her good social support?
3. What kind of social support is being provided at school?
4. How does the quality of social support affect her learning and development?

Reflection

You will have identified that, although her mother loves her dearly, and her father too, their circumstances have changed so that neither are able to give Xoliswa the kind of emotional attention and support that she needs. It is clear that this has affected Xoliswa's ability to concentrate at school and work at home. And she is clearly not getting any support from her teachers.

The mother, in particular, is in need of some kind of social support, and the teachers need support in working with and helping Xoliswa.

School System Barriers

There are still other factors that are extremely important to consider in relation to children's learning difficulties, and these relate directly to the education and schooling system.

Education White Paper 6[iii] identifies some of these as:
- Negative attitudes to and stereotyping of differences between children
- An inflexible curriculum
- The language of learning and teaching in the school
- If the language of the teacher and the language she uses in the class is different to that of the child entering her class
- Inappropriate communication between aspects of the school system
- Inaccessible and unsafe built environments
- Inappropriate and inadequate support services for teachers and children
- Inadequate policies and legislation within the education system
- Non-recognition and non-involvement of parents
- Inadequately and inappropriately trained teachers.

Learning Activity 8

Time needed: 15 minutes

Read the above list of barriers that Education White Paper 6 identifies, or refer to page 18 of the White Paper itself. Then answer the following questions:

1. Do you agree that these are all potential barriers that children may experience?
2. Are there any which you would want to remove from the list? Say why.
3. Are there any others that you would want to add? Why?

Reflection

You can see from this list how the way that an education system is set up can be in itself a barrier to many children's learning. You probably agreed with most of the factors on the list, but perhaps there are one or two that you find difficult.

As one example, let's look at the attitude of the teacher. A teacher who looks down on poor children, or who despises dirty children could have an attitude towards the child that makes the child feel bad about him or herself, and cause that child to not perform well in the classroom.

In addition, the way the teacher teaches children can also be a barrier to their learning. A teacher who does not take an interest in his or her work, who does not prepare lessons properly, or who does not find or develop appropriate teaching materials, is also placing a barrier in the way of many children's learning in that class.

What the teacher teaches, that is the curriculum, could also be a barrier. The word 'curriculum', as you may well know, involves much more than just what is taught, the content. It also relates to the aims and purpose of the programme in a school. It includes how the learning programme is structured, the choice of language or medium of instruction, how the classroom is organised and managed, and the methods and processes used in teaching. It also refers to the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the learning. The curriculum covers the learning materials and equipment that is used, and any extra-mural activities that are offered. Importantly also, it refers to how learning is assessed.

The curriculum is therefore not only *what* takes place in the process of educating children, but also *how* it takes place. In the previous education system, as well as in many classrooms still today, the curriculum was rigidly structured with no provision for meeting the needs of a wide range of children. There was no flexibility in terms of learning styles or different needs in children, except for learners in special schools or classes who often had a more accommodating curriculum[iv]. Curriculum barriers will be discussed in depth in Manual 2.

Biological System Barriers

Our bodies are made up of biological systems containing interactions on many levels. At the same time, the systems in our body interact with the systems around us.

Our biological systems may become impaired, through genetic inheritance, illness or physical injury. Chronic conditions that demand medical attention or another form of intervention may require diagnosis in terms of one category or another to ensure the correct treatment. It is important, however, to avoid these labels becoming barriers in themselves.

Stop, think and discuss

Cast your mind back to Xoliswa, and think about the following:

- Does she have any barriers to learning due to impairment or illness?
- What things might have been perceived as impairment, but are in fact just different?
- Is she likely to develop some barriers if she and the adults around her do not get any support?
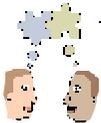
Reflection

You can see that Xoliswa does not have any impairment. In fact, she was doing quite well at her previous school. Although she is struggling she seems to be capable of looking after herself, and of making friends.

Impairments as barriers to learning

There is no doubt that children who have physical, sensory or intellectual impairments do experience many difficulties both in learning at school, and importantly also, with participating in community life. For example, a child who has lost a limb as a result of an accident, or has weakened leg muscles as a result of a disease like polio, or has been born with low muscle control because of cerebral palsy, is likely to have a range of difficulties in the classroom. Because the child cannot move around the house or neighbourhood like the other children, there are important social consequences too. For example the child may have fewer opportunities to join in community life, she can't easily go shopping or to family gatherings. She may also be ashamed of her body, and have a lack of confidence and as a result may try to avoid playing with other children.

It is also true that often the basic needs of many of these children are not met. They may not be given enough food because they cannot ask for it; their poor health is not attended to because it is presumed to be associated with their disability; and sometimes they are not shown the same love and attention because they are seen by the people around them to be 'different'.

It is time to introduce a new case study to help us think about how impairment can act as a barrier to learning, but also how the systems around a child can create unnecessary additional barriers to learning.

Dineo is a little girl who is 7 years old. She lives in rural Mpumalanga. Dineo lives with Tebogo, her older brother, who attends the local primary school, her mother and father, and her grandmother. Dineo's father works as a policeman, and her mother does not go out to work. She sometimes cooks for weddings in the community.

Dineo was born with an identified condition known as Down Syndrome. This means that she has certain physical and intellectual features that will affect her throughout her life and which mean that she will find it difficult to learn many things at school.

Dineo was born with a heart condition that may affect her general health. She may have low energy and be unable to keep up with other children on a physical level. She has regular chest and ear infections, especially during the winter months. Her ear infections will prevent her from hearing properly while the infection is present in her ears. If the infection is left untreated, then she may develop a serious hearing loss. Although there is a community clinic, it takes Dineo and her mother the whole day to get there and back for her to receive treatment. Dineo's parents have been taking her to the clinic regularly since she was born.

Dineo is able to walk, run and climb with no difficulty. She can also feed and wash herself and her mother is teaching her some simple chores such as sweeping the kitchen, and feeding the chickens.

She cannot count, and cannot go to the shop on her own because of a limited concept of money.

Dineo is a sociable child. She loves other children, and plays happily with the young children around her home.

She cannot read, but knows the words to many songs, which she loves to sing to her parents. She does speak, but people outside the family find it difficult to understand what she says.

Dineo's parents have an understanding of Down Syndrome, but her grandmother does not understand why Dineo is the way she is. She blames the father's side of the family for the fact that Dineo is 'different'. She is embarrassed about Dineo and is reluctant to go on outings with the family, as she does not want people to notice Dineo. She will not let Dineo help her around the house and does not approve of Dineo's mother teaching the child household chores. She is putting a lot of pressure on Dineo's parents not to have another child.

Dineo's parents understand Down Syndrome, and know a great deal about her difficulties. They have tried to explain what they know about Down Syndrome to the teacher, and to the other family members. They are very loving parents and do their best for her. Her father takes her to school every day on his way to work, and her mother helps when she can with the running of the school.

Dineo attends a Crèche, which is quite close to her home. Dineo's crèche teacher has never met a person like Dineo before. She finds it difficult to cope with Dineo in class. She runs the crèche on her own with support from parents. The teacher is frustrated at having Dineo in her group, and is often impatient when she cannot do the same things as the other children. Dineo sometimes refuses to do what the other children are doing and wants only to go outside and play. At these times the teacher does not want to argue with her, and lets her go outside. She tells Dineo's father that Dineo is very stubborn and that there are only a few things that she can let Dineo do, because she spends a lot of time playing.
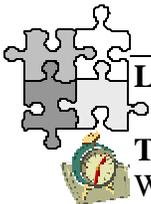
Learning Activity 9

Time Needed: 20 minutes
Work in pairs or in small groups.

Discuss the following questions and give feedback to the whole group.

1. Which systems are promoting Dineo's learning and development? Why?
2. Which biological systems act as barriers to learning for Dineo?
3. Apart from her biological systems, which systems are proving barriers to learning and development for Dineo? Why?
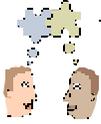
Reflection

You will have identified many systems in Dineo's life with which she is interacting positively. Dineo's mother gives her little girl much positive social support in many ways. She is loved and valued for the individual that she is, and her many good points are praised and enjoyed. For example, her good social skills are appreciated. In addition, Dineo's mother has been able to provide additional time for her little girl, by not working in the afternoon, so she can help Dineo where needed, as well as interact with the school as necessary.

On the other hand, the interaction between Dineo and the systems around her present quite a few barriers to her learning. You may have noticed the following:

- She lives far from a clinic and needs regular help with ear infections, which make it difficult for her to hear her teacher.
- She has a teacher who is frustrated with her and does not make the learning activities accessible to her.
- Her teacher has no support in her attempts to work with Dineo.
- Dineo has a speech problem, which requires professional help, and there is no speech therapist in her area.
- The attitude of Dineo's grandmother, who is unwilling to take Dineo on social outings, could lead to her being denied certain social learning experiences.

Some of these barriers are brought about by Dineo's Down Syndrome, others are not. For example, many children born with Down Syndrome have heart problems, but this can be managed with careful medical care. The attitudes of people around her add to the barriers created by the condition of Down Syndrome.

It is precisely because there are many possible barriers to children's learning that we need to shift the way we think about children away from seeing the problem as located within the child, to looking at the circumstances which may also be creating barriers to learning.

This actually means that Inclusive Education is not just about children like Dineo. It is also about making sure that all children, children with less obvious barriers to learning, are also included in the school system and in day to day teaching.

Illness as a barrier to learning

Illness also presents some barriers to optimal development for Dineo. See which barriers are likely to apply in Dineo's case:

Stop, think and discuss

Briefly discuss:
- Which illness is a possible barrier for Dineo?
- In which ways is illness a barrier?

You will remember that Dineo has a heart condition that needs to be monitored. She contracts regular ear and chest infections. Each time this happens she and her mother have to embark on a lengthy journey to the clinic, and Dineo has to miss school.

Sick children cannot learn effectively. Being very ill and not having access to proper treatment is a major barrier to children's learning.

It is not just children like Dineo who become ill. Diseases such as mumps, rubella and chicken pox affect many young children, if not treated properly. However, there are also other diseases such as ear infections and TB meningitis, which are common in many South African communities. If a child falls ill and does not receive the proper care and treatment, that child may be absent from school for periods of time.

At other times the child may be in class, but be unable to attend to lessons properly, and may not be benefiting from the classroom experience in the best possible way. For example, a child with an ear infection is unable to hear the teacher properly, and may be in pain. This may make it very difficult for the child to pay attention and to follow instructions.

A major consideration in many children's lives is that South Africa faces an epidemic that infects and affects many children in a variety of ways, and is often a barrier to children's learning. HIV and AIDS affects children themselves, it affects their parents and other family members, it affects the communities they live in, and it affects their schooling.

Children who are living with HIV, or who have AIDS, need special care and treatment both inside and outside of school. Apart from affecting the child's health directly, the child's emotional well-being and the child's general energy levels can be affected. Of course, this presents a barrier to the child's learning.

Children are also seriously affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic even if they do not suffer from the disease. Having one or both parents who are ill is a serious event in a child's life. It means that the parent(s) is not available to take care of the child, to provide support for the child, and to participate in the child's schooling. These are all themselves barriers to learning.

The number of AIDS orphans and child-headed households is increasing. A child with no parents, or a child who is trying to take care of other children in the family, cannot put energy and effort into learning at school.

A community that is affected by HIV and AIDS may have difficulty in helping to provide the resources that its children need in terms of supporting the school and school activities.

Many children live in communities that are under resourced, where access to health professionals and to medication for all diseases is a problem. This means that their basic

health care needs are not being taken care of, and illness can then become a barrier to learning.

In summary, we have examined in some detail how interacting systems can cause barriers to learning. We have explored both Xoliswa's and Dineo's particular circumstances, and found that there are a range of factors, including political, socio-economic and social support factors, causing barriers to learning.

What does change mean?

Changing perceptions and attitudes from a Medical Model to an ecosystemic Social Model has implications for how we give support, for the implementation of the curriculum and for the identification of barriers to learning and development within the context of an Inclusive Education system.

This is a big change in our thinking.

Stop, think and discuss
- List some of the changes in support, curriculum and identification of needs.
- Circle the changes that you are feeling positive about.

Reflection
We have looked in detail at the ideas that underpin Inclusive Education. We can see how these ideas are very different to the ones that have operated in our education system in the past. Change is always a challenge. If we are going to make changes successfully, then we need to understand them and feel positive about them.

Maybe some of the changes that you discussed include:
- the approach of teachers towards all the children they teach, in particular those children who are experiencing barriers to learning of a wide variety.
- the way teachers look at what they themselves are doing in classrooms.
- the ways in which whole schools understand the diversity in all children, especially those experiencing barriers to learning, and what children bring to school from their social backgrounds
- the way a school accommodates and adapts itself to the needs of all the children attending that school
- the idea that children who experience barriers to learning should be separated out from children in mainstream education. Inclusive Education believes that the best place to start working with these children is in the local school as a first option. Communities of learning are developed for all children by fostering the inclusion and participation of all children in all school and class activities. Other options can be explored if this does not prove to be meeting the child's needs in the most comprehensive way.
- the ways that district-based structures and teams, as well as therapists and other professionals offer support to schools and teachers.
- the delivery of the curriculum, as well as the materials used by teachers.

- the way schools are structured, how they function,
- the way learning environments and schools are physically constructed.
- the manner in which parents, and the wider communities become involved in education.

These are all substantial changes to the way we have traditionally conducted education.
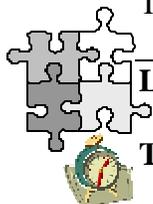
Learning Activity 10

Time needed: 10 minutes

It is easy to make a list of changes. What we need to do is to make sure that these changes are implemented in all our work with children.

1. How can we make sure that these changes happen? Choose two of the areas of change indicated above (you may also want to include one that you have come up with, and that does not appear in the summary above). Discuss how you think these might be implemented.

Reflection

A fundamental change that requires special mention is that Inclusive Education is founded on the belief that regular schools and teachers are often in the best position to identify and work with these barriers to children's learning.

This is because the school and its teachers are closest to the child and the community the child comes from. Teachers in regular classrooms can manage most challenges experienced by children in ordinary classrooms, especially when they are given appropriate support. We talk about this in detail in Unit 4.

Certainly as far as parents and the community is concerned, the local school is often the best place to start providing assistance and support for children, and in view of this broader definition of support, the local ordinary school should always remain the first place to seek help for parents and children. But this does not mean there is no role for special schools, health professionals and caregivers. What it does mean is that we need to reflect on all these roles and make appropriate changes.

Inclusive Education embraces all these changes. It is an enormous but very exciting task that lies ahead, to prepare ourselves for the challenges of Inclusive Education. It is a challenge worth taking on because we know that the many changes will all work for the benefit of all the children in our care.

Manual 2, which is about Inclusive Learning Programmes and curriculum differentiation, deals specifically with some of the changes required in the school and classroom.

Making the policy of inclusion work for the benefit of all will need time, patience and a positive attitude to make it work. Everybody in the system, from district-based officials,

to professionals and special schools to Principals and Heads of Department within schools and parents, will need to work together to implement Inclusive Education in a positive way. We can all participate, work together and learn from each other to make this happen.

One of the most critical groups of people in making Inclusive Education work is teachers. It is teachers who will be on the frontline in helping to build a culture of inclusion in their schools and classrooms, and in developing good inclusive practice.

a. The value of inclusion

Inclusive Education is not something that works only for the benefit of children experiencing barriers to learning. In the process of providing appropriate support for children experiencing these barriers, it has many benefits for everyone in the system.

Stop, think and discuss
In small groups write down the benefits of Inclusive Education for one of the following:
- teachers
- children
- the school and the community
- health professionals and caregivers
- parents
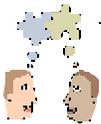
Reflection
You may have thought of a number of benefits to all the people involved in Inclusive Education, including some of the following:

Benefits for teachers
- The practice of Inclusion can help teachers to think more carefully about what they are doing in classrooms. This assists all the children in the class, and also helps the teacher to feel satisfied that she or he is doing the job well
- Inclusion also allows teachers to use their creativity much more. Because teachers will be involved in thinking about and finding solutions to barriers to learning, they are able to adapt the curriculum and teaching materials in interesting ways.
- Teachers are able to engage in a learning process themselves. Just by being in the classroom, children who experience barriers to learning teach teachers more about those barriers, and what to do about them. This information may help the teacher to work better with another child, or with a similar child the following year.
- If proper collaboration happens as regards a child who experiences barriers to learning, then teachers have a wonderful opportunity to form much closer relationships with parents. This benefits everyone in the school.

Benefits for children

It is important to state right from the beginning that the policy of Inclusion positively impacts on the learning of all children. How can Inclusion benefit every child?

- Teachers pay closer attention to the needs of every child. In order to meet the needs of every child in the class, teachers have to know all the children in the class very well. This means that teaching is more likely to meet every child's needs.
- Teachers will get to know the wide range of learning styles present in the class and accommodate all children
- Materials that suit a child who experiences a barrier to learning are likely also to suit another child in the class, and enhance his or her learning as well. For example a child with an oral language difficulty may benefit from having some instructions written down. The children sitting with that child in the group will have access to these instructions, and will be able to refer to them. The teacher can use them later with other classes, or in other teaching contexts.
- If the teacher makes the classroom quieter for a child with a hearing aid to be able to hear better, all the children in the class will benefit from a quiet, calm environment.
- Children in the class learn about caring and tolerance towards each other. If a blind child needs assistance from a classmate to find her way to her desk, the child helping her learns something about being a good assistant. If the classroom floor is cleared so that a blind child does not trip over things lying there, then the classroom is easier for everyone to walk around in.
- Materials that the teacher might make to help a child who experiences barriers to learning can be made available to other children in the class as well. For example special spelling charts, or hand-made books can be put into the classroom for use by any child in that (or even another) class.
- A teacher who brings a parent or other assistant into the classroom to help with her child, is a teacher who is then more available to the other children in the class.

We can see from these examples that even small changes made in the classroom can be of great help to a child with difficulties, and can help all the children in the class, not just those who experience barriers.

Benefits for health professionals and caregivers

- Services can be rendered more appropriately and effectively by adopting a new service delivery model of mentoring and supporting teachers and ILSTs in a consultative way, which will bring a sense of reward.
- By building the capacity of teachers to identify and address barriers to learning and assisting them to design support programmes for individual learners, they will feel that their time is used more effectively.
- There will be more time to work intensively with children experiencing barriers to learning. By working within this new service delivery model they will have more time available to work individually with severely traumatized learners who need their support.

- There will be greater opportunities to work as part of a holistic team, meeting all the needs of children.

Benefits for the school and the school community
- Some of the ways in which the environment is set up for children with difficulties may also benefit others in the school. For example a ramp built to accommodate a child in a wheelchair, is also a ramp that makes it easier for the caretaker to use a trolley to carry heavy things around the school.
- Projects that might be developed to accommodate children with particular needs can benefit everyone. For example a school that sets up a vegetable garden to help provide food for hungry children can also use the produce from the garden to sell to the community to make money for the school.
- Because teachers will understand children with difficulties better, they may be able to offer better support and clearer advice to parents about their children, and to work together on issues that arise outside of school for these children.

Summary

The system of Inclusive Education helps us to think more carefully about the children in South African schools who are not benefiting from their education.

In this Unit we have seen how Inclusive Education helps us to move away from the term 'special education needs' and to think instead about barriers to learning.

This in turn allows us to look more closely at how we are working with children, and to make the necessary changes in our schools and in our teaching practice in order to fully accommodate all learners and allow them to learn to their fullest potential. Identifying and working with barriers to learning in the way that Inclusive Education asks us to, will bring many very positive changes.

All of this is supported by the ongoing development of teachers, and of support structures to assist them. It is also supported by policy and legislation that allows all children equal access to schools.

You have had a glimpse of who the important role players are in the new system. In the rest of the manual you will explore in greater depth what the different components of the system are, who is involved, what their roles are, and how the new Inclusive Education system will work as a whole.

Portfolio Assignment 1

You should spend approximately 3 hours completing this assignment.

One of the principles that we have established in Section 1 is that all children need support of different kinds as they learn at school. Many children experience barriers to learning that we can help them overcome at various points in their lives. Part of the mindset of Inclusive Education is that we train ourselves to identify the full range of barriers to learning, and ensure that we think outside of the old box – that 'special education' was for 'abnormal learners'.

In this assignment, you will think about various learners and identify the barriers to learning that they might be experiencing at this point in their lives. Be careful that when you write this report you do not identify the children by name, or give any information that will identify the children in some way, so that you are not breaching their right to privacy. For example, you should give each child a false name.

You can do this assignment verbally if you prefer.

If you are a teacher or other education professional working in an institutional context: use a class list containing the names of children whom you teach, or with whom you work.	**If you are an educator working in a district office or similar**: arrange to do this assignment in collaboration with a teacher in an institution with which you work, using a class list from the responsible teacher or principal. Interview the teacher, and other professional staff as necessary.	**If you are a caregiver or support staff in an institution:** use a list containing the names of children with whom you work.

1. Identify the 7th, 14th and 21st name on the list. You do this in order to randomly select the learners you will focus on (i.e. each learner in the class has an equal chance of being selected). If the class has less than 21 learners, then use some other method to randomly select three learners.

2. On the basis of your work with, or your interview about, or your observations of each of the three children, answer the following questions:
   a. Does this child experience any biological barriers to learning? What are these? How do they affect this child's ability to learn?

b. Does this child experience any barriers to learning of a kind that might be health related in any way? Think here in particular of nutrition, illness and physical well-being. What are these? How do they affect this child's ability to learn?
c. Does this child experience any barriers to learning as a result of negative attitudes from others? Think here about the child's peers, and also the various personnel who work with him or her. Think also about yourself – although it might be difficult to admit, your own attitudes may be creating barriers to learning for this child. What are these? How do they affect this child's ability to learn?
d. Does this child experience any social barriers to learning? What are these? How do they affect this child's ability to learn?

3. Reflect briefly on what you think the most important learning needs are of each child.

4. Now, for each child, summarize the different kinds of support that you think this learner should receive. Specify the role that you should play in helping to provide this support to the child.

5. Reflect on how your thinking about these three learners shows a paradigm shift in relation to Inclusive Education in South Africa.

Assessment for Portfolio 1: Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

Assignment 1

Participant's name: _____

Please comment on progress under the relevant headings.

Criteria	Completed successfully	Needed support
Identifies three children on the class list, respecting confidentiality		
Identifies and describes any organic/ biological barriers to learning and their impact on learning		
Identifies and describes any health, nutrition, illness and physical well-being barriers to learning and their impact on learning		
Identifies and describes any attitudinal barriers to learning and their impact on learning		
Identifies and describes any social barriers to learning and their impact on learning		
Reflects on the most important learning needs of each child.		
Prepares an integrated summary of the different kinds of support that each of these learners should receive.		
Specifies own role in providing that support.		
Reflects on how the report shows a paradigm shift in relation to Inclusive Education in South Africa.		
Reviewer's comments		

Notes and References

[i] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, Department of Education, 2006.

[ii] Ibid. pg. 9

[iii] Education White Paper 6. *Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System.* Pretoria: Department of Education, p.18.

[iv] Donald , D., Lazarus, S. & Lolwana, P. (1997). *Educational Psychology in Social Context.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press. p.18.

Section 2:

Implementing Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education

SIAS
Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

⟷

ILP
Inclusive Learning Programmes

Admissions
Implemented by:
- SMT
- teacher
- Professional support staff

Supported by:
- Previous teachers
- ILST
- DBST

Form 1

Ongoing review and support
Implemented by:
- Teacher
- Parents
- Professional support staff
- Other support staff

Supported by:
- ILST
- DBST
- Other school structures such as SMT, LRC, SGB

Form 2
Form 3
Form 4
Word Picture

ILP
Implemented by:
- Teacher

Supported by:
- Parents
- Professional support staff
- Other support staff
- ILST
- DBST
- Other school support structures

Adapted environment

Adapted learning & teaching support materials (LTSMs)

Records of Differentiated Learning Programmes, Work Schedules, Lesson Plans and Assessment

There are two main components of Inclusive Education:
The first component is Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS). This involves gathering information about a learner for admission to school, and in an ongoing way. SIAS allows us to assess barriers to learning, the level of support needed by learners and the type of support required and available in the school.
- Admissions are implemented by the SMT, the teacher, and professional support staff; and supported by previous teachers, ILST and DBST. Form 1 is used for recording.
- Ongoing review and support and screening, identification and assessment for learners in school, is implemented by teachers, parents, professional and other support staff; and supported by ILST, DBST and other structures such as Admissions Committee, SMT, LRC, SGB. Forms 2, 3 and 4 are used to record ongoing review and support needs and provision.

The second component is teaching, assessment and support through Inclusive Learning Programmes (ILP). This helps to inform the ongoing SIAS strategy.
- It is implemented in the classroom by the teacher with the support of the parents, professional support staff, the ILST, the DBST and other school support structures.
- The environment and learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs) are adapted. Learning Programmes, Work Schedules, Lesson Plans and Assessment Strategies are differentiated and recorded.

Unit 3:
Roles and Responsibilities

Unit Outcomes
By the end of this unit you will be able to:
- Identify the structures mandated by Education White Paper 6 for the implementation of an Inclusive Education and training system
- Identify additional role players in Inclusive Education

Assessment standards
- Understand the roles and responsibilities that different role players have
- Understand the necessity for creating collaborative support networks amongst all the role players.
- Understand how Inclusive Education is structured and the relationships between schools
- Explain the change, from seeing children in terms of their category of disability, to understanding the level of support they need to reach their full potential.
- Understand the role of structures in the process of admission and preparation of support

Recommended training time for this Unit:
240 minutes (4 hours)

Introduction

The policy contained within Education White Paper 6 identifies a number of key new structures for Inclusive Education. Each of these structures has a specific role to play and specific responsibilities to take care of. There are also existing structures, systems and role players that need to be brought on board. In this Unit we look at all the structures and systems for Inclusive Education and explore the different responsibilities of the individuals involved. We introduce the idea of collaboration between the different role players when they carry out important processes within an inclusive system. In this Unit we focus on admission processes. Ultimately the system of Inclusive Education rests on the idea that all children should be educated at their local schools. The challenge is to ensure that there are ways for schools to access the support where it is needed.

Stop, think and discuss
- Discuss why you think local schools are the ideal places to educate all children
- What are some of the difficulties that local schools might have with accommodating the full range of learning needs?

Local schools are the most accessible and affordable for parents. They keep the child within familiar family and community settings and they are places where support for children, families and teachers can be provided in the most accessible way. However there is an acknowledgement within Education White Paper 6 that this can be done only through the provision of a coordinated system of support. Let us now look at what this system would entail.

The Institution Level Support Team (ILST)

The ILST is the first source of support and assistance for teachers trying to address barriers to learning. A major role of the ILST is to "assist the school community (including parents and the surrounding community) to understand what it means to build an inclusive school and then address the challenge in practical terms."[i] As with all Inclusive Education structures the ILST functions within an ecosystemic framework. You have seen that barriers to learning can arise at different levels of the system. So the ILST does not only work with individual learners but rather looks at ways of minimizing barriers within the school context. In order to achieve this, the ILST will be involved in[ii]:

- Co-ordinating all learner, educator, curriculum and institution development support in the institution. This includes linking this support team to other school-based management structures and processes, or even integrating them so as to facilitate the co-ordination of activities and avoid duplication.
- Collectively identifying institutional needs and, in particular, barriers to learning at learner, educator, curriculum and institutional levels.
- Collectively developing strategies to address these needs and barriers to learning. This should include a major focus on educator development and parent consultation and support.
- Drawing in the resources needed, from within and outside of the institution, to address these challenges.
- Monitoring and evaluating the work of the team within an 'action-reflection' framework.

The ILST has a specific role to play within the admissions process:
- Ensure that new admissions who have been referred to them by the admissions committee are fully screened in the spirit of inclusivity;
- Decide on the class where the child will be admitted and outline support measures to be implemented, together with the teacher;
- Orientate teachers in meeting these support needs;
- Inform the DBST of additional support needs in terms of training materials, equipment, etc.

Learning Activity 11

Time Needed: 15 minutes

Form into groups where at least one member of an ILST is present. Discuss the following questions:
1. Does your school or institution have an ILST?
2. Make a list of who you think should be in the ILST.
3. What do you think the ILST should be doing in your school or institution?
4. What are some of the challenges that your ILST faces?
5. Which schools and institutions should establish ILSTs?

Reflection

From your discussions you probably found that there are still some misunderstandings about the ILST and how it functions. According to Education White Paper 6 the ILST is a support team that is set up within the school. Its main purpose is to support the teaching and learning process in the implementation of an Inclusive Education system.

It is clear that the ILST cannot do everything that it is expected to do overnight, and they will need the support of the DBST at all times. All schools should establish ILSTs, and build them up over time. The ILST at any school will be concerned with increasing the capacity of the school to provide for diverse learning needs and to become more like a full service school.

The ILST is made up of a group of people who are concerned with minimizing the barriers to learning that are present within the school and its community. This would include teachers with specialized skills and knowledge teachers from the school who volunteer or who represent various phases or learning areas or who have a specific interest in or knowledge of children experiencing barriers to learning. Members of the school management team (SMT) would also need to be on the team as would appropriate and interested non-teachers who may nevertheless have an important contribution to make for example administrative or care-taking staff. Parents and co-opted community members are also people who can contribute. At senior, further and higher education levels learners themselves would also be added to the team in order to deal specifically with peer support issues.

A well organized and well run ILST can be a very powerful positive force in a school engaging with Inclusive Education.

The District Based Support Team (DBST)

Education White Paper 6 commits itself to establishing district-based support teams. These teams are seen as a very important part of the overall strengthening of Inclusive Education support services in South Africa. The core purpose of these teams is "to foster

the development of effective teaching and learning, primarily through identifying and addressing barriers to learning at all levels of the system."[iii]

"Education support personnel within district support services will be orientated to and trained in their new roles of providing support to all teachers and other educators. Training will focus on supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus will be on teaching and learning factors and emphasis will be placed on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners; on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs; and on adaptation of support systems available in the classroom"[iv]

The role of the DBST in Inclusive Education

Within the screening identification and assessment process the DBST has the following specific responsibilities[v]:

- Validating the assessment processes and recommendations of ILSTs
- Provide additional resources
- Training and mentoring for educators
- Supply of assistive devices and equipment
- Mobilization of existing community resources

Other roles of the DBST include:

- Consultation and monitoring
- Supporting teaching, learning and management capacity of schools and other education institutions;
- Evaluating programmes, review their effectiveness and suggest modifications;
- Encouraging inter-sectoral co-operation;
- Drawing on expertise from higher education institutions and local community.

Learning Activity 12

Time Needed: 15 minutes

1. Who do you think should part of the DBST and why?
2. Do you foresee any challenges in setting up this structure?
3. How do you think the ILST and the DBST need to work together?
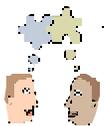
Reflection

When you think about the DBST in your area it is likely that you identified many challenges for the team. Members of the DBST team need to be able to think about the systems that create barriers, rather than focusing on the individual child. This means that they can not be seen as a referral agency that is responsible for referring 'problem' children into specialized placements. Rather their role is to facilitate changes in the learning and teaching environment that will promote learning.

The DBST will develop and support institution-level support teams and schools to provide direct specialized support to teachers and children. It has an important role to play linking ILSTs and their schools with formal and informal support systems in their communities, linking schools with one another and with community-based organizations parent groups and so on. The DBST will also connect with other government departments and co-ordinate and manage inter-sectoral collaboration aimed at addressing barriers to learning.

On another level there are practical and logistical issues that need to be sorted out. Issues such as transport can hamper the work of the DBST. The lines of accountability may change, especially in the case of the special school staff who will be part of the DBST. However, the structures of the DBST have the potential to provide wider support than was previously possible within a fragmented system. It is for this reason that we should take up the challenge in a positive way.

Compare what you discussed about composition of the DBST with the proposed structure below[vi].

Departmental affiliation	Role
Curriculum/Subject Advisory Services	Officials from Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase, Senior Phase, FET and Assessment – to see Inclusive Education as a core component of their work.
ECD and ABET	Involved in the team to monitor access to early identification, building capacity of ECD practitioners to manage diversity and give parent guidance and support, transition from school to work.
Education Management and Governance Development	The Circuit Managers/ Institutional Development and Support Officers who support the designated special and full-service schools in the Inclusive Education programme will engage in whole school development, mentoring and monitoring whether schools have inclusive cultures, policies and practices.
Administrative/Logistical/Personnel Support	Officials from Teacher Professional Development, Personnel, Planning and Provisioning of Physical and Material Resources (including IT, LTSM and assistive devices) - assigned certain duties under the umbrella of the DBST.
Inclusive Education/Psychological Services/Special Needs Education	All officials who are currently working within the existing Inclusive Education, Special Needs and Psychological Services have to become part of the DBST, as all their work needs to be coordinated within the new integrated framework of support delivery and transformed service

	delivery model.
Special Schools/Resource Centres	All professional support staff (therapists, psychologists, social workers, nurses) of designated schools will be assigned to the DBST to deliver services within their own schools as well as the wider district, starting with the full-service schools.

In addition to departmental staff the DBST is also made up of people with specific contributions to make. These include:
- Specialist child and teacher support personnel including psychologists,, therapists learning support teachers, specialists relating to specific disabilities such as ear nose and throat specialists optometrists and other health and welfare professionals
- Other people from government departments and structures can be incorporated in these teams when they are available and when their expertise is required. These include staff from the Office of the Status of Disabled Persons the Department of Health Social Development Justice Correctional Services Safety and Security Public Works Agriculture Transport Sport and Recreation Labour and Local Government Structures.

Spend a few minutes thinking about your own DBST

Stop, think and discuss
- Has a DBST been set up in your district?
- Have you worked with or as part of the DBST in your area?
- If you have an active DBST in what ways have they assisted with the implementation of Inclusive Education?
- If you do not have a DBST how has this had an impact on the implementation of Inclusive Education in your district or institution?
- What can you do to set up a DBST?

Special Schools as Resource Centres

Teaching and learning will still take place at Special Schools as Resource Centres. But, as the name implies, they will also play a new role within an Inclusive Education and training system. One of the key changes will be their participation on the DBST. Staff at the SSRC will begin to acquire new skills that will enhance their expertise on the DBST.

Other changes would include:
- Special Schools will move away from organizing services according to disability category. The emphasis now will be on the level and nature of support needed by the learner to overcome barriers to learning. Thus admissions will be decided on the basis of level of support required and not on category of disability.

- The expertise of the staff in the SSRC will be deployed at a district level through the DBST to provide support to learners in multiple sites of learning, not only the SSRC.
- Staff at the SSRC will need to allocate their time differently in order to take on new roles and this might mean that old roles will have to be dropped or moved to other parts of the system.
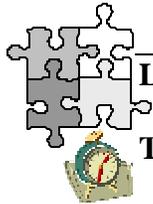
Learning Activity 13

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. How do you think that special schools can open up their services to the community?
2. What changes do you think special schools need to make in order to fulfil their new role?
3. What role do you think special schools as resource centres can play within the DBST?
4. What support would they need from the department in order to be able to play this role effectively?

Reflection

Hopefully you realize that teachers and other staff have invaluable knowledge and experience. Teachers, therapists and other staff working at Special Schools have learned a great deal about specific kinds of disability. An Inclusive Education system will put these and other resources at the service of the whole school community rather than concentrated in one school only so that resources and the expertise of staff can be passed on to other teachers through training.

Staff from special schools are expected to participate in the DBST in a supportive role. However it is true that all members of the team will be on a learning curve. Some of the skills that they need to acquire are:

- Understanding and working with the process of change;
- Understanding the level and nature of support needed;
- Knowing what support is available within education and other government departments and within local communities;
- Understanding the concept of Inclusive Education including the attitude changes that this requires;
- Understanding what the barriers to learning and development are within a systemic understanding of problems and solutions;
- Adult education skills to pursue the various training roles required at this level;
- Networking skills and learning to 'work together' through team effectiveness training and ongoing support;
- Developing knowledge and skills to address barriers to learning at the level of the learner the educator and the institution;
- Basic management and leadership development including project management skills.

Once empowered with such skills teachers at Resource Centres can offer support in a great many practical ways such as by:

- assisting in careful observation in classrooms
- giving teachers further ideas as to what to look for in children and their behaviour and helping teachers and the ILST to understand both formal and informal assessment skills
- planning realistic programmes for children and assisting teachers with practical suggestions in order to help all children benefit from their classroom experiences
- assisting with the development of multi-level teaching and monitoring techniques
- making or finding materials for children that are suitable to use in the classroom
- sharing ideas on the management of classroom behaviour and discipline
- providing moral support for teachers and giving them the opportunity to talk over difficulties discuss ideas and get a second opinion.

(These lists of skills and associated forms of support are adapted from the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*[vii]*).*

You will note that all of these activities will require consultation with the teacher. Just as specialized staff need to acquire new skills, so classroom teachers will also need to learn more about offering support within the curriculum. There is very little room within the system for assessment and therapy for individual learners.

Within the Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support some specific roles for the SSRC can be identified:

- Early intervention and home programmes in conjunction with NGO's and parents
- Assisting learners who come through these programmes to access formal schooling
- Ensuring that learners who have attended the early intervention programme do not automatically gain admission to the SSRC but rather go through the same process of accessing support through the DBST

It is important to note that in terms of the Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support no learner is allowed to apply directly to a special school.

Full-service Schools

Within Education White Paper 6 full service schools are defined as: "schools and colleges that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all our learners."[viii] In this context the emphasis will be on the development of flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of support to learners and educators.[ix]

Let's look at some more practical aspects of Inclusive Education.

One of the forms that has to be completed in the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support process is FORM 3: ONGOING ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF SUPPORT NEEDS AND PROVISIONING.[x] This form is filled in for a learner who has additional support needs. It must be filled in by the current school and the Early Childhood Development Centre, in consultation with the parents/caregivers. It is then given to the District-based Support Team via the ILST.

As you fill in Section B of Form 3, you will see that it gives you a good idea of what capacity the school has in order to offer that learner support.

Learning Activity 14

Time Needed: 30 minutes

1. In your groups, fill in Form 3, Section B, about the full service school in your district.

SECTION B: SURVEY ON SCHOOL'S CAPACITY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

2.	SCHOOL TYPE		2. LANGUAGE	
Primary			Language of Teaching and Learning (LOLT)	
Secondary			Home Language of Learners	
Full Service			Afrikaans	
Special School/Resource Centre			IsiNdebele	
ECD/ Grade R			IsiXhosa	
Residential School			IsiZulu	
Reform School			Tshivenda	
School of Industry			Sepedi	
Urban			Xitsonga	
Township			IsiSwati	
Rural school			English	
Farm school			Sesotho	
			Setswana	
			South African Sign Language	

3. PERSONNEL AND STAFFING:		
Average Teacher/Learner ratio for school	1: _____	
Teacher/Learner ratio (in grade which learner is)	1: _____	
Access to specialist staff		
	At school	From district
• Physiotherapist		
• Speech Therapist		
• Occupational Therapist		
• Nurse		
• Social worker		
• Psychologist		
• Learning Support teacher		
• Technicians for assistive devices		
• Staff development		
• Ongoing staff development strategy		

Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2005)   103

•	Availability of specialized competences:		
•	Management of an ILST		
•	Remedial education		
•	Multi-lingualism		
•	Sign language		
•	Mobility and orientation		

4.	BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

Accessibility and safety of the building:	YES	NO	SUGGES-TIONS FOR IMPROVE-MENT
The school environment and building is rather accessible and safe.			
Some parts of the school are not easily accessible.			
The school has made efforts in improving accessibility			
School has workshop facilities			
Braille signage			
All areas in the school are accessible to wheel chairs via ramps			
School is on one level only			
All areas outside the school building such as sports fields and playgrounds are accessible to wheelchairs			

The learner will have access to:			OPTIONS AVAILABLE/ ALTERNATIVE ARRANGE-MENTS
Rooms for the application of adaptive methods of assessment (e.g. reader)			
Workshops when he/she has to demonstrate competence towards achieving learning outcomes			
A Room/s for receiving therapy			

5. LEARNING AND TEACHING MATERIAL (LTSM):		Yes	No
1. Audio Visual Equipment	Audio Cassette Recorders,		
	Video Machines,		
	Powerpoint Projectors,		
	Monitors,		
	Overhead Projectors,		
	Radios,		
	Stereo Players,		
	CCTV cameras)		
2. Writing boards	Blackboard		
	Whiteboard		

	Elecronic whiteboard		
3. Devices for Braille/embossed printing	Embosser/printer		
	Typewriter		
	Braille translation software		
	graphics embosser/printer		
4. Reading devices for learners with vision barriers	Optical Corrector Recognition software		
	PC with text reader and voice synthesiser software		
	tactile graphics designing software		
	touch screen computers		
	zoomtext/magnification software		
5. Computers	Computer hardware		
	Scanners		
	computer software		
6. Devices for learners with physical disability	Crutches		
	Wheelchairs		
	walking frames		
7. Devices for learners with hearing loss (Including Hearing Aids, Head phones, Earphones, FM system with voice amplifier)	hearing aids		
	head phones		
	Earphones		
	FM systems with voice amplifiers		
8. Printers:	Fixed		
	Portable		
9. Electrical equipment	extension cables		
	white board lights		
10. Photocopiers (with size enlargement)			
11. Hydro-therapy pool			
12. Rooms	multi-sensory		
	sound proof		
	soft play		

6. DEVELOPMENTAL STEPS TAKEN BY SCHOOL TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	
Staff Development and Systems in place:	
Functioning of Institution Level Support Team (ILST)	Describe steps taken:

58

Development of capacity of ILST	Describe developmental programme:
District is providing ongoing development support to ILST	Describe:
Developmental programme of SGB to support inclusive education	Describe:

7. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:		
	Strengths	Recommendations for Support
Human Relations and School Ethos	• Policy of inclusivity/ multi-lingualism/ safety/HIV Aids/ Health Promotion embraced (underline)	
	• Generally accepting attitude towards difference/ Diversity (gender, race, language, disability)	
	• Does the school have an induction programme for learners, new staff and parent/care givers? (underline)	
	• Morale amongst staff and students is high. This reflected through team planning and teaching, classroom observation and peer evaluation.	
Organisation of support	• There is an attempt to avoid labelling learners as 'having special educational needs' such as being 'slow learners', 'dyslexic', 'hyper-active', etc.	
	• Learners who are categorised as 'having special educational needs' are seen as individuals	

	with differing interests, knowledge and skills and not as a homogeneous LSEN group	
	• Teachers see the attempts to remove barriers to learning and participation of one learner as part of a process which will benefit all learners in the class	
	• There an understanding that it is less important to diagnose the exact nature of the impairments/learning difficulties than to actually plan educational support for learners	
	• All staff development activities help teachers to understand diversity and reduce barriers to learning and participation?	
	• There is a recognition that learners whose home language is different from the language of teaching and learning need support in a co-ordinated and ongoing way?	
Learning Space	• Organisation of learning space shows creativity and enables all learners to productively engaged in individual and cooperative learning.	
	• Learners participate actively and are encouraged to be creative and exchange ideas with confidence.	
	• Educator uses inclusive strategies and promotes respect for individuality and diversity (learning styles, language, race/ethnic, disability)	
Discipline	• Learners are motivated and self disciplined.	
	• Learners accept discipline without feeling threatened.	
	• Learners know who to see when they have a problem?	
	• Responses to concerns about behaviour of learners tend to focus on education and rehabilitation rather than on retribution?	

2. When you have completed this discuss the following questions:
   a. How well is the full service school equipped to provide for the full range of learning needs?
   b. What are the steps that the school needs to take to improve its capacity?
   c. What support will the school need to make these improvements?
   d. What are the existing structures within the school that will drive this process?
   e. How was filling in the form helpful in assessing the capacity of the full-service school to meet the full range of learning needs?

Reflection
There are many things that full-service schools will need to consider in order to implement Inclusive Education. From Form 3 you can see that this includes language, personnel and support staff, the built and natural environment, learning and teaching support materials and equipment, support structures, and a learner friendly environment. You have probably realized that the goal of Inclusive Education is complex, and will not be achieved overnight.

The *Guidelines for Full Service Schools* describe such a school as follows:[xi]

A full service school:
- provides for a broad range of learning needs.
- allows everyone there to learn and participate fully
- transforms the whole school by capacity building
- aims at inclusion by critically examining what can be done to increase learning and participation in curriculum, communities and cultures, and to address and remove various barriers that hamper learning.
- makes efforts to ensure that all children of school-going age in the locality attend the school
- ensures that the school is accessible.
- acts as a beacon of the transformation process in education by developing cultures, policies and practices that celebrate diversity, respect difference and value innovation and problem-solving.
- creates a safe and supportive environment where educators are motivated and supported in their work, where learners feel a sense of belonging and are able to engage in the learning process, and where caregivers are valued and involved in the life of the school community.
- has an empowered, representative governing body that has been equipped to facilitate the development of a culture of learning, teaching and service.
- works in collaboration with, and provides assistance and support to, other schools in the area so that a range of learning needs can be addressed mainly in learners' neighbourhood schools
- welcomes in educators from schools in the area to learn new skills and ideas and may admit learners from neighbourhood schools for short periods of time for intensive training in specialised areas, such as Braille, mobility or Sign Language.

There will be many role players involved and they will need to work together. It is a big challenge that should build on your existing strengths. Let's look more closely at the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders within a full-service school.

Learning Activity 15

Time Needed: 30 minutes

In small groups allocate the roles of the
- School Governing Body
- Principal
- School Management Team
- Learners and Learner Representative Councils

Then do the following:

1. Each person reads the relevant section below, and describes their role in Inclusive Education to the other role players in the group.
2. Once all the roles have been described the whole group debates and adds to the roles.

Reflection

The Role of the School Governing Body (SGB)

The SGB in any school is responsible for developing inclusive policies cultures and practices at schools. The SGB can play an important part in supporting Inclusive Education. They can do this through:

- Developing school vision and mission statements that support inclusion
- Establishing and maintaining a sub-committee on Inclusive Education headed by one of their members.
- Informing parents about their rights in terms of accessing support and acting as advocates for children experiencing barriers to learning.
- Investigating and addressing any barriers within the school context ethos and practices which may in turn become barriers to children.
- Facilitate the allocation and/or raising of funds to allow for the inclusion of specific children in the school through the building of ramps appointment of class assistants and so on.
- Acknowledging of the diversity of children in the school and the necessity to make specific provision for example employing isiXhosa assistants where the LOLT of the school is English or SASL interpreters to meet the needs of the Deaf.

As representatives of the interests of all parents within the school community the SGB will not support a policy or a practice of exclusion of children who may be experiencing barriers to learning. They are also not in a position to veto or approve a decision on admissions as this role belongs exclusively to the DBST.

The School Principal

As a day-to-day manager of the school the principal's general responsibilities are clearly outlined in the South African Schools Act. With specific reference to Inclusive Education, the principal ensures that all policies in the school are implemented correctly. The success of Inclusive Education the assessment procedures the support offered to children teachers and parents depends critically on the efforts and co-operation of the principal and administration staff. The principal thus acts as a facilitator for the process of helping a school to become inclusive and as a role model to everyone in the school. His or her more specific role in Inclusive Education includes:

- To support Inclusive Education policies and practices in practical terms such as the functioning of the ILST links with the DBST.
- To ensure that the school develops policies such as admission policies that are in line with the overall policy of Inclusive Education
- To disseminate Inclusive Education policies and procedure information passed in SGB, SMT and ILST sessions to the school staff children and parents
- To ensure that the assessment and identification of children experiencing learning barriers and intervention is done according to the procedures outlined in the National Inclusive Education Policy and according to the school policies that have been developed.
- To work with the ILST the parents and the SGB to facilitate the accommodation of children experiencing barriers to learning.
- To ensure that Inclusive Education activities take into account the full range of diversity of children and does not exclude for example talented children
- To ensure that all learning diversity is accommodated.
- To ensure that the parents and the child are consulted and are informed about every stage of the support process.

The School Management Team (SMT)

The School Management Team plays an important role in the management of the curriculum and implementing school-based policies to support the culture of Inclusive Education. This would include:

- ensuring that anything in the school curriculum and its systems that might be barriers to children's learning development and participation are removed or minimized by, for example, making innovative time table adjustments, encouraging collaboration between teachers and acknowledging and using strengths of both learners and staff;
- supporting teachers in their efforts to remove or minimize barriers to learning;
- promoting parental involvement and partnership building – a cornerstone of any effective school working towards maximum support for all the children in their community.

The responsibilities of the SMT are to:

- Investigate how the school can make resources available to support inclusion of children
- Strengthen monitor and support the ILST's functioning and decisions
- Submit documentation to the DBST and follow up on their response to ensure swift action
- Implement all interventions recommended by the DBST and communicate these to the parents/caregivers
- Ensure smooth admission of children with identified barriers to learning in Grade R and Grade 1
- Put in place measures to access additional equipment training consultative support part time therapist intervention facilities or materials.
- Guide and monitor the functioning of the SGB to ensure their understanding and implementation of inclusive strategies.

Learners and Learner Representative Councils (LRC)

The learners are often overlooked as part of the support system but they can play a vital role. We do not always immediately see the role that they can play or acknowledge their role. They can offer peer support to learners experiencing mobility or sensory barriers. Peer support can also be used as a learning and teaching strategy.

Some schools have Learner Representative Councils. Especially at the Senior Phase they can play an important part in:
- Identifying and communicating the needs of children to the staff at the school. Class representatives can report if they see classmates are going through a difficult period.
- Taking initiatives to support children. For example they can organise children from the neighbourhood and class to walk with a particular child to school to assist with homework and to invite the child to their homes to combat loneliness or isolation.

Community-based Organisations

Education White Paper 6 calls for an alternate model of community-based support, which will enable all resources in the community to be used in a collaborative way to develop and support the provision of appropriate education to all the children. Each community has resources and people and organizations that can offer assistance, no matter how limited. Inclusive Education will need to draw on existing support systems in communities so that the best possible use can be made of existing resources.
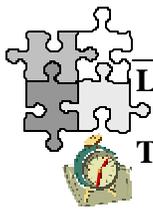
Learning Activity 16

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. Read through the following school scenario:

The ILST of a small farm school in a wine farm district near Cape Town has a high percentage of children experiencing barriers to learning. Poverty and alcohol abuse are serious problems in this area and many children appear to have symptoms of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. Most of the children have never been to preschool. A teacher working at the school realized that the barriers experienced by these children needed to be addressed as comprehensively as possible and on many levels. The ILST of the school decided to explore all possibilities for support that might exist in the community. The first thing they did was to identify different role-players in their community. This is a list they made:

- Farmers
- Local church
- Small businesses and shops
- FET college in neighbouring town
- Nearby University
- Special School as resource centre in neighbouring town.

2. Briefly discuss and list the roles that each of the community role-players could play. Use your imagination.
3. Include additional role-players that you think might exist.
4. Draw a diagram which maps out the support that is available to this farm school. You may choose to do this in a small group once each of you ahs completed your notes.

Reflection

The ILST of this farm school has some really good ideas about how to get help from the broader community. This is the diagram they drew for themselves. In addition they made sure to allocate different tasks to different members of the ILST and staff to make sure that each task would be done.
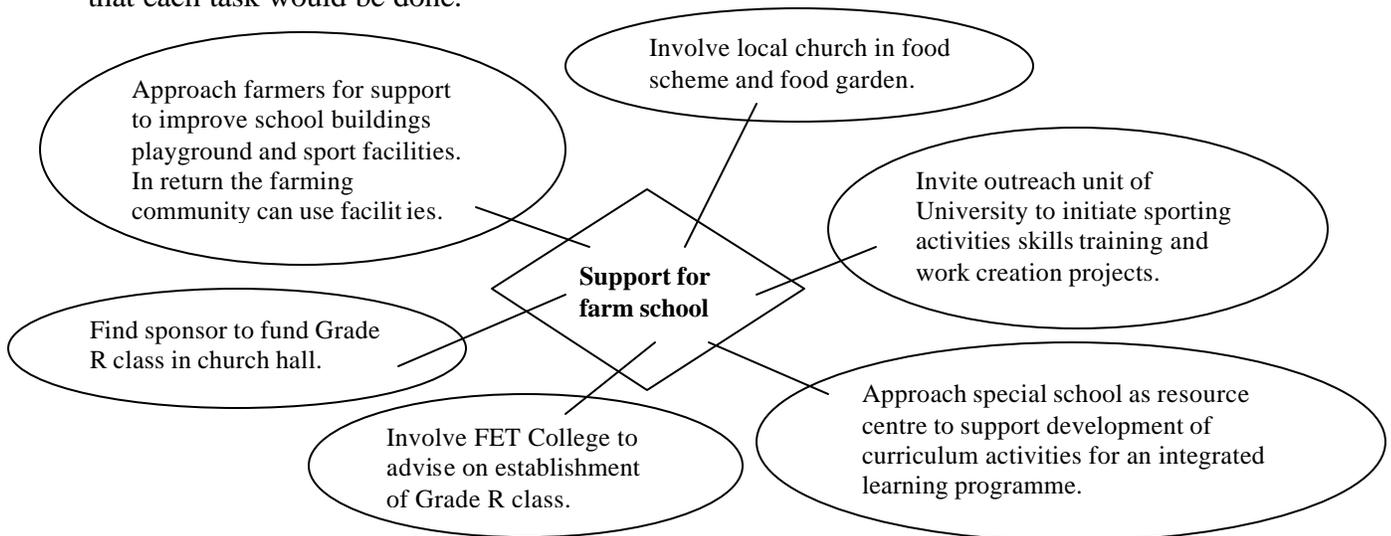
You might be surprised at what is available if you think about your community in this way. You might discover that there are resources that you could explore further such as income generating groups (to whom you could refer parents for skills training etc.); special schools; churches/religious centres; community centres; hospitals and clinics with

specialized staff therapists social workers; volunteer groups and senior citizens; sources of funding from the commercial world; police stations; NGO's; a recreation centre; a swimming pool; other schools; the taxi associations; Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs); traditional leaders; traditional/indigenous healers and so on. Your contact with these organizations can be facilitated and developed by the DBST and the ILST.

By working with the community in this way the school is really trying to build 'safety nets' of facilitative support for children and their families and for the teachers and staff members at the school.

This exercise can be very exciting because of all the resources potentially available in your community. The need to research these resources to find out how and when you can use them is an important part of Inclusive Education.

Parents and the School

In Inclusive Education parents are considered to be an integral part of the team responsible for ensuring that children of school age receive an appropriate education.

There are many varied ways in which parents can make constructive contributions to a school. Parents may need to be encouraged to do this because of the way they were previously excluded. Teachers and schools can benefit from embracing all families into the school community and can use strategies that help families of every description to become involved with the school.

Stop, think and discuss
- In what ways do you think the parents of your school could make a general contribution to the life of the school? Think as broadly as possible and share your ideas with your group.
- Think of a barrier to learning in your classroom or learning site. In which specific ways would you like the parents to be involved with you in the education of their children in addressing this barrier?
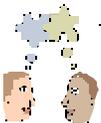
Reflection
The first major contribution by parents is making sure that the home conditions are good for learning working together with teachers, the ILST and the DBST.

Parents can also help to create and maintain a two-way channel for school-to-home communication by responding promptly to memos, notices, newsletters, reports, meetings and phone calls.

Parents can volunteer their time and talents for classroom and school activities. This would free up the teacher teachers to work more closely with those children who need more individual attention.

Parents can play a role in helping their children with homework but teachers should be sensitive to parents who are illiterate or not educated themselves. Most parents are good role models and can instill a good attitude towards schoolwork in their children.

Help with the maintenance of equipment and school facilities by parents can be a very useful and practical contribution and many parents have skills that schools could use if they develop good relationships with the parent body.

Parents play a very important part in helping teachers to build small successes into the child's life in every possible way. When teachers and parents acknowledge their children's successes with praise and little rewards children begin to take more control and more responsibility which in turn helps them to feel more confident about themselves and about life in general.

In inclusive schools teachers strive to create a climate where families are welcomed and regarded as real partners in the teaching and learning process.

We have seen so far that Inclusive Education involves a great number of people and involves those people in a multitude of different ways. Inclusive Education is the responsibility of whole schools and whole communities and not simply the teacher in the classroom.

The network of people involved is very wide and schools can be very creative about extending this network as and when the need arises. Different children will present schools with different challenges and schools can meet those challenges by looking at the network of people who could be involved.

Roles and Responsibilities in Admission of Learners

Admitting learners into schools is really the first step in Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support. Let's use Dineo's situation to explore how structures and systems can support admissions in Inclusive Education.

Dineo has now completed her pre-school years at her Crèche. Some members of the community have told her parents that they should send her away to a special school because she has an intellectual disability. This school is about 150 km away from their home and they do not want to send her so far from home. They have heard from their neighbour who is a member of the SGB at the local school that the school policy of Inclusive Education means that parents should take their children to the local school where they will welcome all children regardless of the barriers to learning.

In order to admit children into local schools, there needs to be a process of admission that is quite different from before. If we look at the story of Dineo we can gain some understanding of how the process can work. The roles of the different structures in Inclusive Education will be to support an inclusive admissions process. Let's look at the different elements of the system and see how they would do this.

The first thing that Dineo's new school will need is information about Dineo. They will use FORM 1: REVIEW OF LEARNER ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS [xii] to get this information.

Learning Activity 17

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. Read this information about Dineo.

    After Dineo was born the clinic sister identified that she had Down Syndrome. She knew that this syndrome can cause developmental delay and therefore she arranged for regular visits to the clinic by the mother. She recorded all her findings about Dineo on the Road to Health card and kept a record of the support offered to her. This included periodic consultations with the doctor about her heart condition and medication and treatment for ear infections as well as visits by the community based rehabilitation worker to help with her physical and intellectual development. At the age of three the community rehabilitation worker suggests that Dineo go to the local crèche. The health care worker shares all her information with the crèche teacher. When Dineo is six years old (in the year before Dineo starts Grade 1) the crèche teacher needs to inform the local school that she has identified developmental delays and other barriers experienced by Dineo. She invites the parents to an interview where she completes the Department of Education Form1: Review of Learner Additional Support Needs.

2. Look through Form 1 quickly to get an idea of what it looks like.
3. In pairs conduct a role play where one of you is the crèche teacher and the other is Dineo's mother or father. Complete Section B of Form 1 based on what you know about Dineo's family.

SECTION B: DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY OF LEARNER

1.   Parent / caregiver input:

1.1 What have been your experiences of your child since birth?
1.2 What are your observations about his strengths and weaknesses?
1.3 What are your aspirations for him/her?

FAMILY DYNAMICS	
Temporary family turbulence due to separation process, death, etc.	
Family experiencing pressures due to chronic illness of family member, etc.	
Learner experiences serious family trauma because of loss of parent/s and limited support	
Learner experiences severe family trauma because of loss of both parents and limited support	
SOCIO-ECONOMIC HOME CONDITIONS	
One/both parents are employed.	
Family income is +R1000 a month.	
Family dependent on welfare grant.	
Family has no stable source of income.	
Family living in squatter conditions.	
Family living in brick and mortar dwelling	
Child Headed family	

4. EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDER INPUT

(attach all available records, reports and record cards)

4.1 Early Intervention programmes in which the child has participated

Age 0 – 18 mths
Nature of programme/s
Successes of the programme/s
Age 18mths – 3years
Nature of programme/s
Successes of the programme/s
Age 3 – 5 years

Nature of programme/s
Successes of the programme/s
Gr. R
Nature of programme/s
Successes of the programme/s

4. Now in your group answer these questions:
    a. Did this form help you to gain an idea of Dineo's background and possible support needs?
    b. How do you think this interview would work in your school?
    c. How do you think that parents will respond to the interview?
    d. Have a look at the rest of Form 1 on page 90 of the Draft National Strategy *for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*. You will notice that there is also a Section A which asks for the personal and contact details of the family, and the remainder of Section B which includes:
        4.2 Recommendations for future support programmes
        4.3 Information on assistive devices
        4.4 Information on medical needs of child
        4.5 Role which early intervention provider can continue to play in the future support of the learner

Reflection

This form of record keeping ensures that there is continuity for the child and family during the change from early childhood education to primary school. This is often a difficult transition for children who experience barriers to learning. The teacher is often the most important support for a child in this process. The information from the ECD service provider and other sources will help the new teacher to assess:

*   Whether or not the same barriers to learning are still hampering the child's development
*   Whether the barriers have changed in any way
*   Whether further barriers have arisen as a result of the change in learning environment
*   Whether further barriers have arisen in the child's life circumstances

The support structures that were in place previously can be continued and the new teacher can make sure that the child's new learning environment supports the child in the same way. This facilitates the adjustment process for the child (and the parents) to the new learning environment.

Once Form 1 is completed it will be forwarded to the local school which will begin the process of admission of Dineo into the Inclusive Education system. Let us look briefly at the parts of the structure and then consider their role in admissions:

Stop, think and discuss

- What is the role of each of these structures in the admission of Dineo to the local full-service school?

a. the parents
b. the health worker and the community rehabilitation worker
c. the admissions committee
d. the ILST
e. the SSRC
f. the full-service school

Think about the discussion that we have had about all the role players and apply this to Dineo.

Reflection

A possible scenario for Dineo could be the following:

Dineo's parents are responsible for providing her with the love and care that she needs to grow and develop. Her medical condition and intellectual disability means that they have had to remain in contact with the health services and they have also focused on teaching her acceptable behaviour and facilitating her learning. Once they decided to take her to the local school, they went to the school and followed the correct procedure by filling out the Form 1 with the crèche teacher in the year before her admission.

The crèche teacher assisted the parents in filling in the form and included her own observations of the child. She contacted the health and community rehabilitation workers and they made their records available for her to include in Dineo's portfolio. The crèche teacher and health workers took the form to the school. They arranged to meet with the admissions committee to pass on the information and to offer their ongoing support.

The admissions committee reviewed Dineo's portfolio and agreed that they would be happy to have her in the school but they felt that they needed some more information about Dineo in order to be sure that she was welcomed into the school. They passed on the information to the ILST who then arranged to meet with Dineo and her parents. They then identified an educator whose class Dineo would join and introduced her to the family. The teacher and mother agreed to meet at a later date. At this interview, the mother also reports that she is active in the local Down Syndrome Association branch and that this group has a support person working in the area who would be willing to help the teacher when necessary.

While they are discussing Dineo's case the ILST wonders whether there are any other children in the school who might have an intellectual disability. They decide to find out more about this. They contact the DBST for help with this. The DBST in turn links them up with the local SSRC which was set up to assist learners with intellectual disability. They arrange that the psychologist and an experienced teacher should visit the school to assist the staff at the full service school.

The ILST is also concerned about dealing with Dineo's heart condition. They ask the DBST to get information about how to deal with the condition, and how to recognise when there might be a problem. The DBST agrees to approach a health worker experienced in these matters to visit the school.

By the time Dineo starts school the teacher has the following in place:
- A good working relationship with the parents
- Background information on what has worked with Dineo and what barriers prevent her from learning
- Continued support from the health services
- A growing awareness in the school about issues associated with intellectual disability
- Input on the heart condition
- Contact with SSRC and input from a psychologist and teacher knowledgeable about the field of intellectual disability

It is easy to see that this support will not only benefit Dineo but will also impact on the school and its learners in many ways. It is possible that as they become better able to deal with the barriers that they have identified they will be able to accommodate a wider range of learning needs without too much additional support.
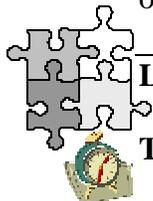
Learning Activity 18

Time Needed: 15 minutes

With a partner from your school and/or a DBST member discuss:
1. What changes would need to be made to the admission procedures for your school?
2. What are some of the difficulties that could arise?
3. Who would need to be involved to address these difficulties?

Reflection
From what you have learned so far it should be clear that education policy in South Africa utilizes all the relevant sources to understand and address barriers to learning and development. At its heart is a community-based approach which focuses on drawing on local and indigenous resources, both specialized and otherwise, in the process of fully understanding barriers and providing support to the child, his or her parents, teachers, the ILST, the DBST and community-based structures which may become involved.

While Education White Paper 6 provides for formalized structures to support Inclusive Education in the form of the ILST, DBST and SSRC. It also highlights the important role of parents, volunteers, non-government organizations, and other community resources in providing support to schools and other sites of learning. Sharing human and material resources between schools and other sites of learning is crucial in reducing barriers to learning.

Summary

We have seen how the implementation of Inclusive Education relies heavily on the full participation of many different role players in the system, including:

- The ILST
- The DBST
- Special Schools as Resource Centres
- Full-service Schools
- The school governing body, principal, school management team, learner representative councils, learners.
- Community Based Organisations
- Parents

We have also explored some of the practical issues around admissions such as completing Form 1 to get initial information about the learner.

In the next unit, Unit 4, we will explore in much more depth the different roles in relation to ongoing screening, identification, assessment and support of learners who experience barriers to learning.

Portfolio Assignment 2

You should spend approximately 2 hours completing this assignment.

You can do this assignment whether you are a teacher, a caregiver, a parent, a member of your SGB, a member of a DBST or a professional support provider. You can choose, in fact, to do the assignment in a group consisting of some or all of these role players.

You will do a brief research exercise on your own immediate community. This might be the community in which your school or institution is located or it might be the district in which you work as an official of the Department.

Create a 'resource map' of available community resources writing down everything that you can identify that exists and that might in some way be a resource for your school and/or DBST. Use at least the following categories:
   a.   Human resources
   b.   Financial resources
   c.   Material resources

Indicate which resources are already being used by your institution and are already making a contribution to your work in whatever way.

Now look at those community structures and services that are not being used by your school. Specify next to each one of them ways that you think they could be involved in supporting your work as an educator right now.

Finally, consider how your school (full-service school, special school as resource centre or school in your district) could set up admissions procedures to work with available community resources and ensure that no child is out of school in your area.

Assessment for Portfolio 1: Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

Assignment 2

Participant's name: _____

Please comment on progress under the relevant headings.

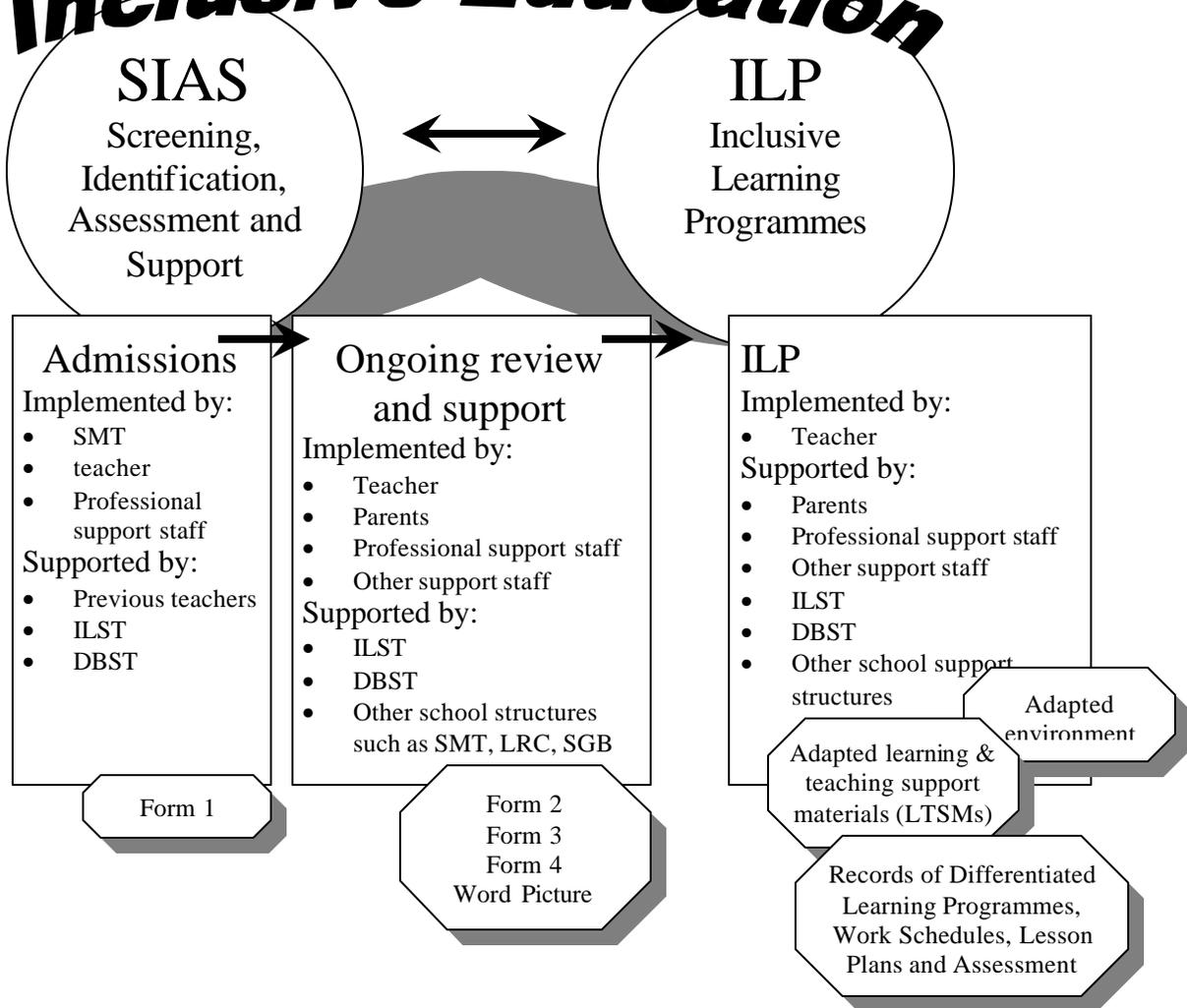| Criteria	Completed successfully	Needed support
Creates a resource map of available resources including human resources, financial resources and material resources		
Indicates which resources are being used by the school or institution		
Lists the resources which are not being used by the school or institution and specifies ways in which they could be involved		
Reflects on and describes ways in which the admissions procedures of the school or institution can ensure that every child in the community has a place at school.		
Reviewer's comments		

Notes and References:

[i] Engelbrecht P. Green L. Naicker S. & Engelbrecht L. (1999). *Inclusive Education in South Africa.* Pretoria: van Schaik. pp. 53-54.

[ii] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, February 2006, pg 63.

[iii] *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-Based Support Teams*, June 2005, p.21.

[iv] Education White Paper 6, p.19.

[v] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, Feb 2006, p. 60.

[vi] *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-based Support Teams* Department of Education (June 2005)

[vii] Ibid.

[viii] Education White Paper 6, p. 22.

[ix] *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: Full-service Schools.* Department of Education (June 2005).

[x] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, February 2006, pg 102.

[xi] Ibid. pp. 10-11.

[xii] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, February 2006, pg 90.

Section 3:

Screening, Identification and Assessment

Inclusive Education

SIAS
Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

⟷

ILP
Inclusive Learning Programmes

Admissions

Implemented by:
- SMT
- teacher
- Professional support staff

Supported by:
- Previous teachers
- ILST
- DBST

Form 1

Ongoing review and support

Implemented by:
- Teacher
- Parents
- Professional support staff
- Other support staff

Supported by:
- ILST
- DBST
- Other school structures such as SMT, LRC, SGB

Form 2
Form 3
Form 4
Word Picture

ILP

Implemented by:
- Teacher

Supported by:
- Parents
- Professional support staff
- Other support staff
- ILST
- DBST
- Other school support structures

Adapted environment

Adapted learning & teaching support materials (LTSMs)

Records of Differentiated Learning Programmes, Work Schedules, Lesson Plans and Assessment

---

There are two main components of Inclusive Education:

The first component is Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS). This involves gathering information about a learner for admission to school, and in an ongoing way. SIAS allows us to assess barriers to learning, the level of support needed by learners and the type of support required and available in the school.

- Admissions are implemented by the SMT, the teacher, and professional support staff; and supported by previous teachers, ILST and DBST. Form 1 is used for recording.
- Ongoing review and support and screening, identification and assessment for learners in school, is implemented by teachers, parents, professional and other support staff; and supported by ILST, DBST and other structures such as Admissions Committee, SMT, LRC, SGB. Forms 2, 3 and 4 are used to record ongoing review and support needs and provision.

The second component is teaching, assessment and support through Inclusive Learning Programmes (ILP). This helps to inform the ongoing SIAS strategy.

- It is implemented in the classroom by the teacher with the support of the parents, professional support staff, the ILST, the DBST and other school support structures.
- The environment and learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs) are adapted. Learning Programmes, Work Schedules, Lesson Plans and Assessment Strategies are differentiated and recorded.

Unit 4:

Beginning the process of Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

Unit Outcome:
By the end of the unit participants will:
- understand the central role of teachers in the Screening and Identification strategy.

Assessment standards
- be able to reflect upon the principles of screening and assessment
- have a better understanding of screening procedures such as observation, self-reflection, parent and learner interviews and home visits
- have a better understanding of screening procedures and be able to use process tools, such as the Word Picture, to record information, identify gaps in information and question further.

Recommended training time for this Unit:
180 minutes (3 hours)

Introduction

In Unit Three we looked at roles and responsibilities that different role players have in Inclusive Education. We emphasized the roles played in admissions procedures and introduced Form 1 as a tool for recording information gathered.

In this Unit we emphasize the central role of the teacher and look closely at how teachers can begin to identify the barriers to learning in their school and classrooms, with the support of others, such as professional and other support staff, the ILST and the DBST. This is another step towards meeting children's learning needs and accessing additional resources and support. We look at approaches and tools that we can use to help us find out more about our children's learning and development.

Let's look briefly at how the approach to identification and assessment has changed in Inclusive Education, and what assessment means in the context of screening, identification and assessment.

Identification and Screening

You will remember that in Unit 1 we spoke about two models of understanding disability.

a. A traditional approach

In the Medical Model the child was identified as having a difficulty, a 'fault', or a 'deficit' of some sort. In addition to this, the child was often assessed in isolation from the daily life he or she was living. After being assessed, the child might have been referred outside the school to specialists and/or special schools for treatment and education. In some select cases services were made available to enable the child to become as functional as possible.

Factors such as language of instruction, an abusive home environment, poverty, illness and malnutrition, methods and materials used by the teacher, and the curriculum were in some instances overlooked.

b. A new approach

In Inclusive Education, identification and assessment starts by looking at the learner's strengths and aspirations and examines the extent to which the learner's family, learning environment and community are contributing to or hindering his or her learning and development in school. It is important that these factors are taken into account when teachers try to understand the successes and/or challenges experienced by their learners and that these factors are monitored constantly in order to ensure that the support delivered is appropriate and continues to meet the needs of particular learners.

You now know that in Inclusive Education, screening and identification cannot be separated from the teaching and learning process itself. We have said that the classroom is the best place to offer support for a child experiencing barriers to learning. It is also a good place to begin identifying the factors that might present barriers to learning and to investigate what those barriers might be.

Teachers are the key players in the ongoing screening, identification and assessment process at school. However, teachers do not have to 'go it alone'. As we saw in Unit 3, Inclusive Education has put systems in place to provide teachers with the necessary support and extra assistance. This support includes encouraging teachers to become reflective about their own and their school's attitudes and practices in collaborative problem solving exercises within the ILST.

The place where identification, screening and assessment begins is with the teacher. You have seen that even in the admissions procedure the teacher's participation is crucial, since she or he will be the person working directly with the child. If the child is in a residential situation then the other support care workers are also crucial in understanding and supporting the child. The teacher and support staff are also crucial in taking the process of identification, assessment and support further. In the next section we will explore what that means in a bit more depth.

Principles of Identification and Screening

Four basic principles of identification and screening are:

- early intervention
- collaboration
- seeing identification and screening as processes over time, and
- determining the level and nature of support needed by individual learners.

a. Early identification

It is clear that we have a much better chance of providing learners with what is needed to facilitate learning, if we can identify barriers to learning early in a child's life and as early in the school year as possible.

If barriers to learning are identified early in the school year, then the teacher has the rest of the year to understand the barriers better and to provide the support needed by learners.

b. Identification is often a collaborative process

However, it is not always easy for a teacher to go through the process of identifying barriers to learning. Mostly it is not even possible to do this alone. Collaboration with other people is needed.

Stop, think and discuss
- Think about who the important people are in the early identification of barriers to learning.
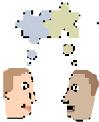
Reflection
In the past the responsibility of early identification was given to health professionals and other specialists. And of course, we will still rely on them for their expertise. But there are many people who have a wealth of information about the child which can help in the screening and identification process.

Other teachers and other support staff

A teacher may not be the only one teaching the child. Information from other teachers about their experience with a child and their views concerning that child may be very useful. For example the teacher who takes the child for sports practice may know or notice something that is helpful to the class teacher trying to identify the child's barrier to learning. A learner who is in a boarding situation, or perhaps in a youth care centre, will interact with many people throughout the day. All these people will take note of behaviour, moods, strengths and weaknesses in a child. All this information is vital in building up a whole picture of the child, and the kind of support that will be helpful.

Parents

The parent or caretaker of the child knows the child very well and may be able to offer important information to the teacher.

Health Professional Staff in the case of Special Schools as Resource Centres

Professionals such as therapists may be involved in the identification process or may already be working with the child, and may have valuable information to share with teachers. They also have particular skills to offer in this process.

Community structures

The community health clinic or social welfare for example may know something about the child that can assist the school and the teacher in identifying a barrier to learning.

ECD sector role players

A teacher from the child's pre-school can provide the new teacher with very important information. Communication between these two people can give the school teacher useful information in order to help the child settle in to the new school, and to assist the teacher in monitoring identified barriers to learning.

Our little girl Dineo has now entered Grade One in her local school, the same school that her brother attends. Dineo's mother and father are quite anxious about this move, as they know that it is a big change for Dineo, and they are not sure how she will adapt. They are concerned that the new teacher may not know anything about Down Syndrome, let alone how to work with her. They want to make the change as easy as possible for Dineo, and as positive as possible for her new teacher.

The new teacher has spent time looking at the recommendations that her previous teacher made for future support programmes, in the completed Form 1, and has noted that Dineo needs support in expressive and receptive communication and in some activities of daily living. She has also spent the first few weeks of term observing Dineo in the classroom and playground. She has requested a meeting with the ILST to help her plan for Dineo and her parent's needs. She has asked for Dineo's crèche teacher to be present at the meeting.
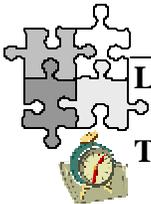
Learning Activity 19

Time needed: 30 minutes

Get into groups of 6. You are all members of the ILST. You are meeting to discuss what you collectively know about Dineo, what support can be given within the school according to Dineo's identified needs. Play out the following roles:
1. You are one of Dineo's parents. You are concerned about Dineo's adjustment to school and whether the school can meet her needs.
2. You are Dineo's new teacher. You are anxious about understanding her and getting support to help extend Dineo's receptive and expressive language.
3. You are Dineo's crèche teacher. You filled in Form 1 for Dineo's admission to Grade 1. You have understood more about Dineo in this process.

4. You are the ILST co-ordinator. You need to use this opportunity to develop your own facilitation skills and contribute to the development of collaborative problem solving skills of the ILST.
5. You are a teacher who is the scribe of the ILST for this meeting. You need to make sure that the meeting is recorded accurately, that the recommendations for support are clearly stated, understood by all and that there is a mechanism for following up whether the recommendations have been attempted.

Reflection

Collaborative problem solving as a group is a process which needs constant work. ILST meetings need to have a structure which will allow all present to participate and feel part of a joint decision making process which has definite outcomes and produces realistic recommendations and ensures procedures for follow up.

Learning Activity 20

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. Think about the ILST meeting that you have just been involved in.
2. Look at the following table and rate this ILST on a scale from 1-3 where 1 is not competent (or non-existent), 2 is competent but could still improve, and 3 is competent fully functioning.
3. In the last column in the table suggest what improvements could be made to this ILST.

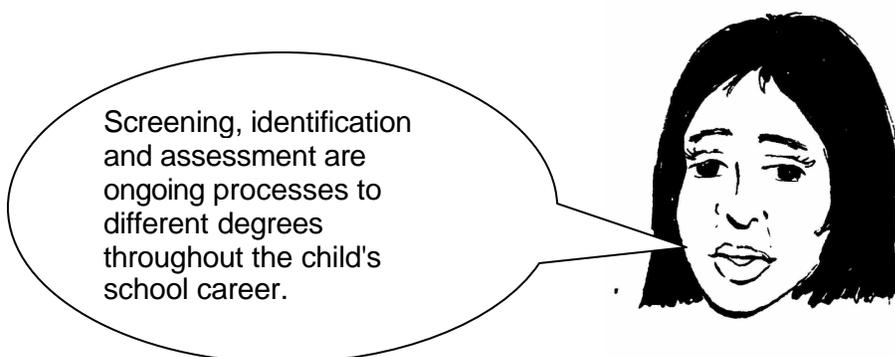| The Institutional-level Support Team	Grading 1-3	Suggestions for improvement
1. included all the members of the team mentioned above		
2. studied and evaluated the teachers' reports on Dineo with regard to identified barriers, support provided and the impact of teacher and other interventions		
3. planned to coordinate different types of support for Dineo		
4. identified barriers to learning at classroom, school and community levels		
5. assessed further support needed for Dineo and her teacher		

You can use this activity to reflect on the ILST in your own school. If you do not yet have an ILST, then reflect upon the lessons you have learned in participating in this ILST meeting. You know this will not be the last meeting for Dineo. So you will have time to improve the ways in which these meetings are conducted.

## c. Identification, screening and assessment takes place over time

Getting to know a child better, and gaining an understanding of the factors that exist in a child's life that may be presenting barriers to learning, is a process. This means that it has to take place over a period of time. Although it is important that barriers to learning are identified as early as possible, it is also important that they are properly understood. The process of identification and screening should be completed quickly so as to offer the correct support as fast as possible, but it is also important that it is done thoroughly and with care.

Screening, identification and assessment are ongoing processes to different degrees throughout the child's school career.

Stop, think and discuss

We know already that Dineo has Down syndrome, and that this will affect her learning throughout her life. Her new teacher knows this too. But understanding Dineo as a child who is learning and developing, and her learning needs is an ongoing process, and does not stop with simply knowing that she has Down syndrome.

- Write down some of the things that you think Dineo's teacher will need to assess on an ongoing basis.
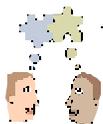
Reflection

We know that Dineo has a problem with her counting and her reading, and people find it difficult to understand her speech. These are the most obvious things which need to be continuously monitored because they will change over time.

But we have identified other barriers to learning which Dineo experiences, including her ear infections and heart condition, and her Granny's attitude. These will also need to be monitored over time.

d. Levels of support needed

To identify barriers to learning accurately you may need to consider a number of different methods, such as, observation of various kinds in the classroom, teacher reflection, home visits, interviews with parents, discussions with other professionals, conversations with the child, experiments with different learning tasks and materials.

The process of screening, identification and assessment is designed to provide support for children and to assist teachers in determining the level and nature of support needed by the children in their classrooms. These levels give a broad indication of how well the child is able to participate in regular learning activities, and whether or not the child needs support to participate. They indicate in which learning areas the child's needs are greatest, and whether or not any adaptation of the learning programme, learning materials and other forms of support is required.

These levels are set out below. Read the levels and discuss them with a partner if necessary.

INDICATORS TO DETERMINE THE INTENSITY OF SUPPORT NEEDED [i]

Level One
Full participation
- No requirement for additional learning and teaching support
- No additional adaptation required

Level Two
Modified full participation
- Requires some additional support to maximize learning outcomes
- Adaptation planned and managed at the grade or phase level

Level Three
Participation in all aspects with occasional assistance
- Requires additional support in a number of areas to maximize learning outcomes
- Adaptation planned and managed with the intervention of the ILST

Level Four
Participation in only some activities
- Requires additional specialized support in many areas including monitoring to facilitate participation to maximize learning outcomes
- Adaptation planned and managed with assistance from DBST

Level Five
Participation extremely limited in certain areas
- Requires specialized learning programme planning and/or high level support
- Adaptation and continuous monitoring needed in all areas

We will look at these levels in relation to the children that we are working with in this manual as we go along.

Screening

Screening is a process of asking questions in order to construct a holistic picture of a child's learning and development. Screening is a way of getting to know the children in a class better and understanding the nature of the barriers to learning within the school environment, within the school and within the class.

Screening can take place when a teacher first meets a group of children. She or he observes and interacts with them closely in order to identify those factors that may be promoting and/or hindering learning and development.

Learners display particular strengths and needs when they interact with the curriculum. It is the teacher's role through his or her contact with the learners to collect information about the learner's strengths, and the systems that are interfering with their learning. This will help the teacher to decide on the level of support that is needed. Screening is not designed to isolate or label learners, or to exclude them from activities, or to pass on the responsibility for his or her learning to someone else.

Stop, think and discuss
Answer these questions with a partner:

- What kind of screening processes do you use at your school or within your district?
- How do you think these screening processes could be improved?
- Why do we do screening?
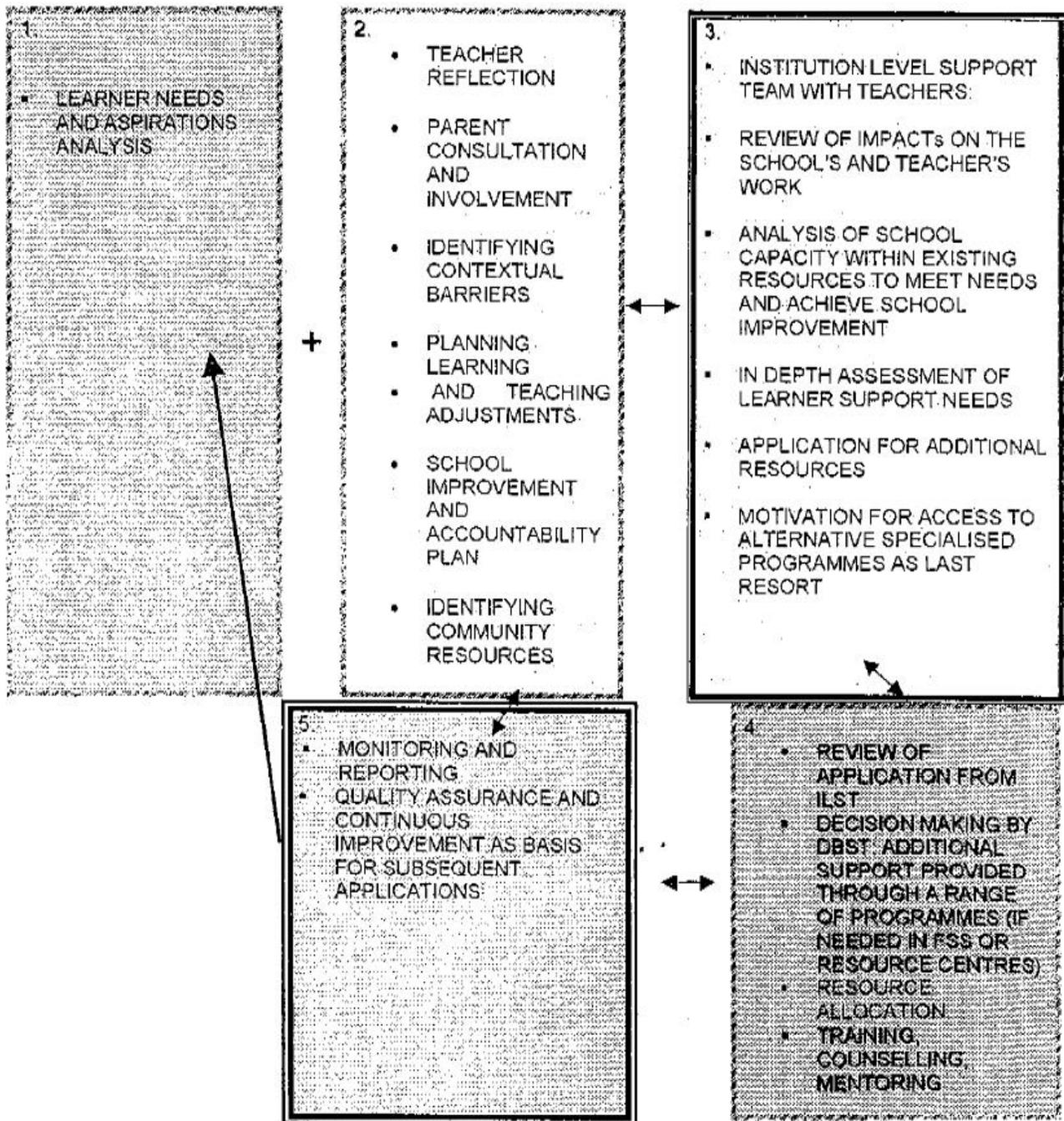- What information do we need from screening?

Reflection
You probably have some experience of screening, even though you may not have called it that.
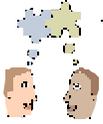
As with all screening and assessment processes it is important not to make assumptions, but to probe further and ask questions as to the true nature of the barrier to learning. It is often easy to think that barriers are immediately obvious, such as a wheelchair, or a hearing aid, or a very thin and emaciated child. Think about this – is it the wheelchair which is a barrier or is it a lack of physical access or the school's attitude towards wheelchair users that is the barrier? A child using a hearing aid may learner now have adequate hearing but might have a developmental delay in language due to late identification of hearing loss.

Stop, think and discuss
Look at the flow chart that has been reproduced below[ii]. Identify where in the flow chart the process of screening the learning environment, curriculum, teaching and materials fits.

1.		2.		3.
- LEARNER NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS ANALYSIS	+	- TEACHER REFLECTION - PARENT CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT - IDENTIFYING CONTEXTUAL BARRIERS - PLANNING LEARNING - AND TEACHING ADJUSTMENTS - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN - IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY RESOURCES	←→	- INSTITUTION LEVEL SUPPORT TEAM WITH TEACHERS: - REVIEW OF IMPACTs ON THE SCHOOL'S AND TEACHER'S WORK - ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL CAPACITY WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES TO MEET NEEDS AND ACHIEVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - IN DEPTH ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER SUPPORT NEEDS - APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES - MOTIVATION FOR ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE SPECIALISED PROGRAMMES AS LAST RESORT

5.		4.
- MONITORING AND REPORTING - QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AS BASIS FOR SUBSEQUENT APPLICATIONS	←→	- REVIEW OF APPLICATION FROM ILST - DECISION MAKING BY DBST. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED THROUGH A RANGE OF PROGRAMMES (IF NEEDED IN FSS OR RESOURCE CENTRES) - RESOURCE ALLOCATION - TRAINING, COUNSELLING, MENTORING

You can see that block 2 on the flow chart indicates how screening takes place through teacher reflection, parent consultation, identifying contextual barriers. In the next few activities you will be able to identify other aspects of the process.

So, screening is about gathering information about children in many different ways, including:

- detailed observation
- ongoing teacher reflection,
- parent interviews
- child interviews
- home visits.

Now we meet another child, Nomvula.

Nomvula is a little girl in Grade Two. When she started school, she was a chatty, outgoing and active child with many friends. Her work was satisfactory and she fitted into the school context well. However, she has had an extremely traumatic year because both her parents died within months of each other. She was given into the care of her extended family and has spent the last year moving from one household to another, as her extended family were unable to support her.

She now stays with her grandmother who is a pensioner, and does not have a good relationship with her granddaughter. Because she has been moved around such a lot, Nomvula has no constant friends and is very lonely.

Nomvula has stopped speaking. She no longer enjoys the easy, boisterous relationships she used to have with her peers. The other girls have told the teacher that they feel awkward with this quiet, withdrawn person who refuses to participate in their games. Her schoolwork has definitely suffered. Her teacher loses patience with her and often shouts at her in frustration, as she remembers how Nomvula used to respond with enthusiasm and joy. Nomvula comes to school clean and neatly dressed, but she often does not bring a snack, and gets very tired towards the end of the day.

Nomvula's story will help us explore ways of gaining information.

a. Ongoing teacher self-reflection

There is another important consideration. You remember that we looked at the teaching and learning environment, including the curriculum, and at teaching itself as possible barriers to a child's learning. The process of screening also applies to these factors. We could say that part of screening is examining carefully what happens in the classroom, and the teaching approaches and materials that are being used. This will help the teacher to identify those factors in the curriculum, and in her own teaching, which may unintentionally be presenting barriers to learning for some children.

In order to become self-reflective we need to make observations about ourselves, both in terms of our strengths and our challenges. These relate to the barriers to learning that can arise out of what happens in the classroom. It is important to become aware and make note of the way in which you interact with the children in your class or with whom you are working, and whether this could be a barrier to the child's learning. You should also make careful notes about ways that you may have assisted the child up to this point.
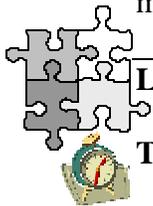
Learning Activity 21

Time needed: 15 minutes

1. Nomvula's teacher has noticed two things about Nomvula.

   'When I tell her to hurry up and complete a task she panics and starts to cry.'

   'Nomvula loves the number game that we play first thing on a Tuesday morning. She seems to settle down to her work much better after this.'

2. Think about whether Nomvula's teacher is presenting a barrier to Nomvula. What would you encourage Nomvula's teacher to reflect on in her own teaching practice? What advice would you give her?

Reflection

Perhaps you advised Nomvula's teacher to think about whether she is adding stress to Nomvula by hurrying her. It is possible that Nomvula's teacher could manage her teaching in such a way so as to allow Nomvula more time to finish her tasks, and to give her more time to talk about her feelings. Over time she could be encouraged to work more quickly.

We may also be doing things that are supporting the children in their learning. It is important to understand these as well, so that we can repeat them or reinforce them. A good example of this is the number game that Nomvula's teacher plays with the class first thing on Tuesday mornings.

Observing oneself as a teacher, being aware of our own behaviour in the class, and how the child responds, is just as important as observing the learners. It is not an easy thing to do. Questions like these might help:

- What is my attitude towards this child?
- Is my attitude negative?
- Does the child notice my attitude?
- Does my behaviour affect the child's learning or performance in any way?
- Does my attitude make me treat the child differently to the other children in the class?
- Does my attitude make me behave negatively towards the child?

b. Observation of the child.

Observation is an extremely powerful tool. Observation involves carefully and systematically watching children go about the daily tasks of the classroom and within the school environment. It needs to be done with a clear aim, to be carried out regularly and recorded properly.

Word Picture

The word picture[iii] is a very simple but useful instrument that can help teachers and support staff gain a more holistic picture of a learner through a convenient arrangement of their observations. You can add to a Word Picture as more information becomes available. A word picture records what you know about a child from observations and discussions. It helps you to see what you do not yet know, and helps you to think about questions that you still have.

Here is a Word Picture that we have begun to complete for Nomvula.

Nomvula

Date of Birth: Age: School:

Teacher: Grade: Date of Word Picture:

THINKING SKILLS	PHYSICAL
Struggles to concentrate. Hungry? Good at number work.	Clean and neatly dressed Sometimes no snack. Why?
SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL	**COMMUNICATION**
Traumatic year caused behaviour change. Behaviour seems worse on a Monday, but improves as the week goes by. When I tell her to hurry up and complete a task she panics and starts to cry.	Stopped speaking

OTHER INFORMATION

Both parents have died within months of each other. Given in care to extended family – moving between households. Now stays with grandmother.

Nomvula loves the number game that we play first thing on a Tuesday morning. She seems to settle down to her work much better after this.

Learning Activity 22

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. In groups of 4 - 6 look at the information we have filled in on the Word picture about Nomvula. Discuss what you see.
2. Read about Nomvula again, if necessary, and fill in more details.

Reflection

You might find that you disagree which blocks to place certain information in. For example does the observation about the number game fit into 'Other Information' or in the Thinking Skills block? These doubts are good as they prompt us to ask more questions and to probe deeper. As we gather more information things on the word picture may change.

Asking questions, such as 'Why does she sometimes have no snack?' can force us into action – we don't know, so we have to find out. Let's look at the observation that her behaviour is worse on a Monday, it may be that certain learning areas and programmes are covered on a Monday, and she finds these difficult. It may be that she is having trouble adjusting to the new class in general and Mondays are a particular challenge for her. By the end of the week she has made the adjustment. It may alert you to the possibility that something is happening at home that might be related to Nomvula's behaviour. It may be that she is not well fed over the weekends, and comes to school hungry. It may be that she experiences something over the weekend that is troubling her.

We may come up with a number of possible answers to the question 'why?'. It is important to note that we cannot guess the answer. We have to find out. One way would be to talk to the granny about Nomvula's snacks. When we know the answer we can add it to the word picture.

A word picture also helps us to see things in relation to each other. For example, we can see that Nomvula struggles on a Monday, but begins to settle on Tuesday after the number game. Maybe Nomvula's teacher could shift the number game to Monday mornings, and see if that is helpful for Nomvula.

You can then take this process forward and begin to observe Nomvula more closely, or to use some of the other tools discussed below.

Remember that the aim of Inclusive Education is to help all children learn to their full potential. This means that it is very important that you observe the child's strengths as well. For example, you might write, "Nomvula performs very well on numeracy tasks. She also has good coordination, and is very good at ball games."

Collect information from observations that you make outside the classroom as well. For example observing a child during break, or before school, or if you meet the child outside

in the community, can all provide useful information which may help you to identify what the true nature of the barrier to learning is. House mothers, care workers, all the people who work with the learners in different ways, all notice things about the learners that they work with. Their information adds to your Word Picture.

Bear in mind that you will not have to complete a Word Picture for each and every child. It is intended a tool to gain a deeper understanding of barriers to learning.

Stop, think and discuss

Imagine that you are Nomvula's teacher and you are on playground duty that week. You notice Nomvula standing by herself in a section of the playground. You see a small group of girls approach Nomvula, and it is clear that they are asking her to come and play with them. She does not want to talk to them and when they try and pull her along to join in with them, she shouts and runs away.

Ask yourself some questions about what you have observed in the playground. Write them down and compare them with a partner.
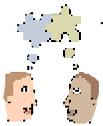
Reflection

We are often confronted with situations where we have a suspicion that a learner's behaviour is a sign which points to factors within their environment that need to be urgently addressed. We may be afraid to ask more questions. But questions about the learner's situation can help us to investigate further and understand the factors which are causing this behaviour. In Nomvula's case we could ask questions such as:

- Why does Nomvula stand alone in the playground?
- Why did she not want to talk to the other children?
- Is she feeling angry or sad? Does she ever talk to or play with anyone in the playground?

Instead of assuming a child is 'abused' or 'poor' we can ask questions about behavioural signs like the following:

- Could the behaviour be a sign that the child is being abused?
- Is there any indication that the child is not being properly fed?
- Is this a warning sign that the child may be experiencing emotional distress?
- Does the behaviour indicate that the child is not properly taken care of?
- Could these be signs that the child is carrying a heavy work load at home?

Once you as a teacher or support person have made your initial observations about the learners in your class, recorded the observations and thought about your own behaviour and attitudes within the class and school environment, there are a number of further steps to be taken.

The first step is to collect as much other information to support your observations as possible. This will help to confirm that what you have observed are not assumptions.
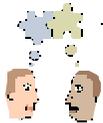
c. Other sources of information.

The source of information will be guided by the kind of information that you need.

Stop, think and discuss

- Discuss and write down what kind of information you think Nomvula's teacher could be collecting.

Reflection

It is possible that Nomvula has been ill, and this caused the sudden change in her behaviour. The most obvious person to ask is Nomvula's granny. She will no doubt be able to give a lot of additional information about Nomvula. So, the first step may be an interview with the granny. Of course this would have to be done very sensitively, and a teacher may prefer to get a member of the ILST, or a DBST specialist such as a social worker or psychologist, to assist. We talk more about this a little later.

With the granny's permission, the clinic may also be able to provide information related to Nomvula's family history.

You may decide to assess Nomvula further in class in order to get more information about Nomvula's strengths and weaknesses. We will discuss this in detail in Unit 5.

You may decide to take the information that you have collected about Nomvula to the ILST as you feel that she is a learner who needs to be assessed for additional support needs and provision. If so, then Form 2 will help you to record the information and present it to the ILST.

Stop, think and discuss

- Think about 3 things that you can do immediately to support Nomvula. While you are arranging a parent interview, or a visit to the home

Reflection

The trick here is to be creative about thinking through the effect the barrier is having on the child, and about making a change, however small, that will have a positive benefit for her.
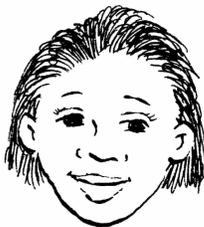
We know certain things about Nomvula from the observations that were made about her behaviour that will allow her teacher to try and make some small changes in class for Nomvula. For example, you can make sure that she is specifically welcomed into the class on a Monday morning. Perhaps moving the number game to Monday morning will help Nomvula and the other children to settle in. We know that Nomvula is

good at numbers, so this game might help her to feel positive about being at school. A good benefit for the other children is that you will also help them to be settling in, and giving them practice at numbers.

You could also make sure that she gets time to work with Lebo, her special friend every day. You could give her a task in the class that makes her feel special. You could make sure that you greet Nomvula, and the rest of the class, to her to let her know that she is recognized by you and that you are supporting her. This will benefit the whole class.

In many instances, such as in Nomvula's case where we think she is suffering emotional trauma, we cannot wait before we take action. The courses of action that teachers choose may help to address the barrier to learning while you are still in the process of understanding the extent of the barrier. It also gives you the opportunity of noting Nomvula's response to the changes that you make. You can record those responses as additional evidence to help you make your decision about what the barriers to Nomvula's learning may be.

d. Parent Interview

Many parents/caregivers feel unsure of themselves in relation to school, and find it difficult to approach the school to discuss difficulties that they and/or their child may be experiencing at home.

Stop, think and discuss

- With a partner, jot down some ways in which you think an interview with a parent may assist the teacher in identifying barriers to their child's learning.
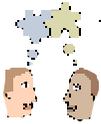
Reflection

An interview is often a good way to get to know the parent better, to build positive working relationships with a parent, and to gain access to valuable information about the environment of the child.

Teachers should also see the process of working with parents as a two-way process. It is also helpful to provide the parent with information that the teacher has gathered in working with the child. This will assist the parent in making some helpful changes at home. It will also help the parent to cooperate with requests that the teacher may make.

Nomvula's teacher interviewed her grandmother one afternoon after school, and discovered that she is very worried about her granddaughter. She can see that she is unhappy but does

not know what to do about it. She is relying on the school to help her. She told the teacher that she does not feel comfortable in a school because she cannot read or write. She feels that it is the teacher's job to 'make Nomvula learn'. She feels that Nomvula is still very sad about her parents' deaths; they came as a big shock to the little girl, and she does not understand why they died. She also tells you that Nomvula often does not speak to her. She was particularly close to her mother and her grandmother has noticed her looking at a photograph that she has of her mother. Nomvula's grandmother is also worried that Nomvula is growing quickly and that soon she will not be able to handle her at home. She is also very worried about what will happen to Nomvula when she dies, as she is very old now, and "no-one else wants her". The grandmother is angry that Nomvula's aunts and uncles will have nothing to do with her. They will not even give her a little money to help look after Nomvula. She says that she is struggling financially at the moment, as she does not receive any support, and her pension is too little.

An informal discussion between parent and teacher on a one-to-one basis is often the best way to begin. A more formal interview with the Principal or other support teams may be conducted at a later stage.

Some guidelines for conducting a parent interview:
- Talk with the parents in a place where your conversation cannot be overheard by anyone else. Some of the information you may be asking for is very personal, and always private and confidential. There is always a quiet corner somewhere where an interview can be held.
- Interview the parents without the child in the beginning. You may want to talk to the parents and child together later to clarify certain things, but initially the parent needs a private space with you alone.
- Remember that all the information that you obtain is confidential and you should treat it with great respect.
- Give the parents a chance to talk about their child and to share their concerns about the child's learning and development. Often this opportunity can be a relief for them as many parents are aware of the difficulties faced by their child, and it is possible that they may have been concerned for some time. They may also feel relieved at being able to discuss it with someone who cares.
- Try and help parents to see that you really want to work with them, that you understand that they are doing their best for their child, and that you are not judging them. Often parents are not to blame for the problems experienced by the child. If parents are made to feel guilty, it will make it difficult to create a partnership with them, and they may be reluctant to talk to you in future.

- Recognise that parents may have expertise that you as the teacher can benefit from. Remember that parents are the primary experts on their children.
- Make notes as you talk so that you do not forget anything of importance. However, make sure that you are talking and paying attention to the parents. Keep these notes in a safe and private place, so that you can refer to them later.
- Put the parent at ease and talk quietly and calmly, asking questions that are related to what you want to know.
- Give the parent an opportunity to tell you things that you may not have thought of as being relevant. This can happen if the parents realises that you are open and compassionate.

Stop, think and discuss

Imagine you are Nomvula's teacher, and you are going to interview her granny.
- In pairs, decide on some questions that you might ask during the interview.
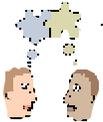
Reflection

Some people find it hard to conduct interviews, especially if you anticipate that there may be difficult issues to discuss. It always helps to think about what you might say. It is also good to spend time thinking about the kind of information you need, so that you use the time well.

The kind of information that a teacher may be looking for includes:
- Who lives at home and what are these people's relationships to the child?
- Is there a primary caretaker?
- What is the extended family and how do they relate to the child?
- What is the family's attitude to the child?
- How do people assist the child at home?
- Is the family involved in the community, and if so how?
- Who works at home and is the income sufficient?
- Are all the family's basic physical needs met, for example housing, food, access to water, and so on?
- Are the family's safety needs met?
- Does the family receive support from anywhere? What resources does the family have access to?

These are some basic questions, but you will add more questions of your own, based on your knowledge of and interaction with the child.

e. Home visit

A home visit can give the teacher or therapist invaluable information about the child's living circumstances, and may be one of the best ways of gaining information related to the socio-economic or ecological barriers to learning spoken about in Unit One.
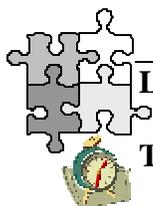
Learning Activity 23

Time Needed: 15 minutes

1. What information do you think you could obtain from a home visit?
2. Why is that information helpful?
3. Where can you record this information?

Reflection

Home visits are time consuming and they also need to be handled with great sensitivity, but they can be very helpful for a teacher.

> *Nomvula's granny did not want her teacher to visit her home. She and Nomvula were staying in a two-roomed shack in the backyard of a relative while waiting for a new place to stay.*

This information was useful in itself, as it told the teacher something about Nomvula's living circumstances which added to her understanding of the barriers that she may be experiencing. A child who has no fixed home, and who moves about a lot has to cope with the stress of change and adjustment a lot of the time. This takes physical and emotional energy, which the child is then not able to put into learning.

So a home visit, or even the request for a home visit, can give you information which helps you to make decisions about barriers to learning.

Some guidelines for a home visit include:
- Make an appointment with the parent(s) at a time most convenient for them. Do not arrive unannounced, it is disrespectful, and may be seen as an invasion of privacy by the people in the home.
- Make careful observations, and take note of what you see, hear and notice about the physical arrangement as well as the people in the child's home and what they are doing. For example, is there enough space for a wheelchair to move into the toilet area, or does the child need to be carried? There is a grandmother in this home. What role does she play in the child's life? Is it a supportive role, or does the child have to spend time taking care of her?
- It may be a good idea not to take notes at the time, as this may seem rude and invasive. Sit down immediately after your visit and make notes. These can be worked with at a later stage.
- If you cannot visit the home try and ask questions about the home in the next interview.

It is very important to respect the confidentiality of the information that you obtain. The observations that you make are not to be shared with anyone who does not have direct need of them. You can record information by hand, and file it. There may be some information that you want to include in your word picture.

- Think about how you would react if you were told that your child was experiencing a barrier to learning. Think about your feelings.
- Discuss some of the ways that parents may react during an interview or home visit, and some of the things teachers can do to help parents with this information.

Reflection

Many teachers worry about communicating with parents, particularly when a difficult issue has to be discussed. It is certainly not always an easy thing to do, but it is important for many reasons. Sometimes parents react badly to what teachers tell them about their child, and many parents feel defensive or guilty or angry. The following guidelines may help:

- Give parents information that you are sure about, and that you think helps them to understand the barriers to their child's learning.
- It is helpful to point out to parents their child's strengths and what you like about their child, as well as what you see as the challenges for the child.
- Develop a good relationship with the parents. Help them to understand that you are genuinely interested in their child's well being and because of that you are interested in them as parents, the family as a whole and how the family functions.
- It may help you to realise that parents are not personally attacking you if they become defensive and angry when you discuss barriers with them. It is helpful not to rush parents. Sometimes they need more time to think about what they have been told and what you have asked them. They may need time to come and talk to you again at a later stage.
- It may be necessary to repeat your concerns a few times. If parents are upset and sad they do not really hear what you are saying. Perhaps their confusion and sadness stops them from understanding what they have heard.
- Be positive and practical. Suggest ways that you can work together to help the child (remember, the emphasis is now on improving the context of the child, and not on focusing on the child alone). Give specific ideas for home programmes.
- Make sure that they understand the importance of supporting the child as soon as possible.
- If the family is experiencing other difficulties that might make it hard to accommodate the child's needs, help them find sources of assistance. Other parents from your class may be able to help them. Collect contact numbers of sources of adult training or advice for times like this. You cannot make a diagnosis. You can only inform parents that you are concerned about the child's development and think further investigation and possibly intervention is necessary.

f. Interview with the child

Sometimes it can be very helpful for the teacher or therapist to have a private discussion with the child in order to learn more about a possible barrier to learning. The guidelines to this kind of interview are similar to those involved with interviewing a parent:

- Talk with the child in a quiet corner somewhere.
- Do not talk with the child in front of other children, or the whole class. This can be very embarrassing for the child. The child needs a private space with you alone.
- Remember that all the information that you obtain is confidential and you should treat it with great respect.
- Make notes as you talk so that you do not forget anything of importance. However, make sure that the child does not think that you are marking him or her in some way. Keep these notes in a safe and private place, so that you can refer to them later.
- Put the child at ease and talk quietly and calmly, asking questions that are related to what you want to know.
- Give the child an opportunity to tell you things that you may not have thought of as being relevant.

During an interview with Nomvula, her teacher realized that she is a very sad little girl. She wishes that her mother were still alive to be with her. She is in tears as she tells her teacher this, and says that she does not know what to do.

Stop, think and discuss

- Discuss in a small group what you would do next if you were Nomvula's teacher.

Reflection

Clearly this is a little girl who is in mourning, and does not have the chance to talk about her sorrow to anyone else. Perhaps her behaviour in class is telling the teacher that she needs help and needs an adult outside of her family to talk to.

Providing Nomvula with a chance to talk can be a start in removing this barrier to her learning. One idea is to set aside a few minutes a day to talk to Nomvula, before school, during break, after school or just to ask her in a lesson if she is feeling alright. This can make the world of difference to a lonely and sad little girl. This behaviour on the part of the teacher also models compassionate and respectful behaviour to the other children in the class, who might then be better able to approach Nomvula and help her in their own way.

If you feel that this is a serious emotional difficulty, the next step would be to arrange for Nomvula to see a social worker or counselor through the ILST to the DBST. However, this would be a last resort, because you as the teacher can be a very effective form of emotional support to a child like Nomvula.

In addition to adding relevant information to the word picture, some of the information that you gather can be entered directly into Form 2, SECTION B "Screening of Current Learner Needs"[iv].

Learning Activity 24

Time Needed: 20 minutes

1. Look through Form 2 of the Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support: ASSESSMENT FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS AND PROVISION.
2. In pairs decide which parts of the form can be completed about Nomvula now.
3. Discuss whether this form is useful in determining the levels of support for Nomvula.
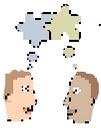
Reflection

Go back to the flow chart that you were introduced to on page 89 of this Unit. You will see that it summarizes the Screening, Identification and Support procedures that we have worked through thus far in the following way:

- Through the case studies we have emphasized that we need to start by seeing all learners as unique individuals who have strengths, needs, experiences and circumstances which can promote or hinder their learning and development.
- As professionals involved in the education of children we need to look for learners' strengths, be cautious about making assumptions, ask questions and record answers which deepen and review our observations over time.
- These observations are further strengthened if we observe and examine our own attitudes and behaviour, and the ways in which the learners are interacting with all aspects of the curriculum. We can invite others, and particularly the parents and/or caregivers of children, to become part of the observation and problem solving process. Through a process of consultation, particularly involving the ILST in our schools, we are able to get a clearer indication of where further assessment is necessary and where interventions and support will be most effective.

Summary

So now you have begun the practical process of Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support. You explored the principles of Identification and Screening within a systemic approach to inclusive education. You also examined various ways of gathering information about a child and his or her circumstances, and recording that information on a Word Picture.

You have seen the crucial role that the teacher plays, and you will see that she does not do it alone. In fact, she cannot do it alone. She herself is part of a system that cannot function without all its component parts. In the next Unit you will extend this role and begin to see more of the process, and how others are involved.

Notes and References:

[i] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.* Pretoria: Department of Education. February 2006. pp.14-15.

[ii] Ibid. p. 20

[iii] The Word Picture is reproduced here with permission of Ekin Kench, of the Cape Mental Health Society.

[iv] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.* February 2006. pg.96

Unit 5:

Assessment

Unit Outcome:
By the end of this unit you will:
- be familiar with assessment using the NCS and Section 3, Form C of the Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.

Assessment Standards:
- understanding how the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards of the NCS can be used to conduct baseline assessment
- understand that in Inclusive Education assessment determines the levels of support that communities, schools and individuals need to learn and develop further
- work through Form 3, Section 3 in order to gain a holistic picture of and start the process of giving support to two learners

Recommended training time for this Unit:
180 minutes (4 hours)

Introduction

We have seen in Unit 4 how a teacher can begin the process of identifying the needs of children through the process of screening and identification.

You have also seen how you can begin even at a very early stage to make changes in the learning environment, in the child's physical and social environment and in your own attitude and approach to teaching and the use of teaching materials. These changes can go a long way to addressing children's needs.

We know that some barriers are obvious, others are not. You have seen that we can build up a holistic picture of learners' needs through observation, discussion, consultation and collaboration. In this unit you will explore doing an initial assessment of a learner's needs by using the NCS.

Assessing for support

SIAS allows schools to assess what they have and what they need in order to support their learners and their staff in addressing barriers to learning. An important part of this process involves class teachers using the curriculum as an assessment tool to indicate where learners experience success and determining the areas where support is needed. Form 3, Section C, of the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support[i]* is an important tool for recording and analysing the level and nature of support needed in these different areas.

a. Analysis of school and district capacity to meet learners' needs

You may remember filling in Section B of Form 3, about the Full Service School in your area in Unit 3. This Section is entitled "Survey on School's Capacity to Provide Additional Support". At their last meeting the ILST of the school which both Dineo and Nomvula attend filled in the same Section B of Form 3 about their school. Nomvula's teacher presented her word picture of Nomvula to the group (you will find that word picture on page 93 of this manual). She had made sure that she had added in the extra information gained from interviews with Nomvula and Nomvula's granny. The ILST had a long discussion about how to fill in the details in the form. This is how they eventually agreed to complete the form.

Name(s) of parent(s)/caregiver(s) :	
Signature(s) of parent(s)/caregiver(s):	Date:

SECTION B: SURVEY ON SCHOOL'S CAPACITY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

2. SCHOOL TYPE		2. LANGUAGE	
Primary	☑	Language of Teaching and Learning (LOLT)	
Secondary	☐	Home Language of Learners	☑
Full Service	☐	Afrikaans	☐
Special School/Resource Centre	☐	IsiNdebele	☐
ECD/ Grade R	☐	IsiXhosa	☐
Residential School	☐	IsiZulu	☐
Reform School	☐	Tshivenda	☐
School of Industry	☐	Sepedi	☐
Urban	☐	Xitsonga	☐
Township	☑	IsiSwati	☐
Rural school	☐	English	☐
Farm school	☐	Sesotho	☐
		Setswana	☐
		South African Sign Language	☐

3. PERSONNEL AND STAFFING:		
Average Teacher/Learner ratio for school	1: 45	
Teacher/Learner ratio (in grade which learner is)	1: 43	
Access to specialist staff		

	At school	From district
• Physiotherapist	☐	☐
• Speech Therapist	☐	☐
• Occupational Therapist	☐	☐
• Nurse	☐	☑
• Social worker	☐	☐
• Psychologist	☐	☑

	YES	NO
• Learning Support teacher	☐	☐
• Technicians for assistive devices	☐	☐
• Staff development	☑	☑
• Ongoing staff development strategy	☐	☑
• Availability of specialized competences:	☐	☐
• Management of an ILST	☐	☑
• Remedial education	☐	☐
• Multi-lingualism	☑	☑
• Sign language	☐	☐
• Mobility and orientation	☐	☐

4. BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

Accessibility and safety of the building:	YES	NO	SUGGES-TIONS FOR IMPROVE-MENT
The school environment and building is rather accessible and safe.	☐	☑	Need security gates + fences
Some parts of the school are not easily accessible.	☑	☐	
The school has made efforts in improving accessibility	☑	☐	
School has workshop facilities	☐	☑	
Braille signage	☐	☑	
All areas in the school are accessible to wheel chairs via ramps	☐	☑	
School is on one level only	☐	☑	
All areas outside the school building such as sports fields and playgrounds are accessible to wheelchairs	☐	☑	

The learner will have access to:	☐	☐	OPTIONS AVAILABLE/ ALTERNATIVE ARRANGE-MENTS
Rooms for the application of adaptive methods of assessment (e.g. reader)	☐	☑	Deputy Principal's room
Workshops when he/she has to demonstrate competence towards achieving learning outcomes	☐	☑	
A Room/s for receiving therapy	☑	☐	

5. LEARNING AND TEACHING MATERIAL (LTSM):		Yes	No
1. Audio Visual Equipment	Audio Cassette Recorders,	☐	☑
	Video Machines,	☐	☑
	Powerpoint Projectors,	☐	☑
	Monitors,	☐	☑
	Overhead Projectors,	☑	☐

	Radios,	✓	
	Stereo Players,		✓
	CCTV cameras)		✓
2. Writing boards	Blackboard	✓	
	Whiteboard		✓
	Elecronic whiteboard		✓
3. Devices for Braille/embossed printing	Embosser/printer		✓
	Typewriter		✓
	Braille translation software		✓
	graphics embosser/printer		✓
4. Reading devices for learners with vision barriers	Optical Corrector Recognition software		✓
	PC with text reader and voice synthesiser software		✓
	tactile graphics designing software		✓
	touch screen computers		✓
	zoomtext/magnification software		✓
5. Computers	Computer hardware	✓	
	Scanners		✓
	computer software	✓	
6. Devices for learners with physical disability	Crutches		✓
	Wheelchairs		✓
	walking frames		✓
7. Devices for learners with hearing loss (Including Hearing Aids, Head phones, Earphones, FM system with voice amplifier)	hearing aids		✓
	head phones		✓
	Earphones		✓
	FM systems with voice amplifiers		✓
8. Printers:	Fixed	✓	
	Portable		✓
9. Electrical equipment	extension cables	✓	
	white board lights		✓
10. Photocopiers (with size enlargement)		✓	
11. Hydro-therapy pool			✓
12. Rooms	multi-sensory		✓
	sound proof		✓
	soft play		✓

6.	DEVELOPMENTAL STEPS TAKEN BY SCHOOL TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
Staff Development and Systems in place:	

Functioning of Institution Level Support Team (ILST)	Describe steps taken: ILST estabushed ILST scheduled to meet once a week
Development of capacity of ILST	Describe developmental programme: None as yet
District is providing ongoing development support to ILST	Describe: District has given one workshop and given notes on how ILST should function
Developmental programme of SGB to support inclusive education	Describe: None — the parents need to be educated about Inclusive Education first

7. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:		
	Strengths	Recommendations for Support
Human Relations and School Ethos	• Policy of inclusivity/ multi-lingualism/ safety/HIV Aids/ Health Promotion embraced (underline)	Need more training in Inclusive ed
	• Generally accepting attitude towards difference/ Diversity (gender, race, language, disability)	Need more exposure to other language and culture
	• Does the school have an induction programme for learners, new staff and parent/care givers? (underline)	Need induction programme for learners

	• Morale amongst staff and students is high. This reflected through team planning and teaching, classroom observation and peer evaluation.	Staff need support in stress management
Organisation of support	• There is an attempt to avoid labelling learners as 'having special educational needs' such as being 'slow learners', 'dyslexic', 'hyper-active', etc.	Community needs awareness on damaging effects of labelling
	• Learners who are categorised as 'having special educational needs' are seen as individuals with differing interests, knowledge and skills and not as a homogeneous LSEN group	Teachers need to be made aware of learner strengths
	• Teachers see the attempts to remove barriers to learning and participation of one learner as part of a process which will benefit all learners in the class	—
	• There an understanding that it is less important to diagnose the exact nature of the impairments/learning difficulties than to actually plan educational support for learners	Teachers need awareness training on how to plan for support
	• All staff development activities help teachers to understand diversity and reduce barriers to learning and participation?	
	• There is a recognition that learners whose home language is different from the language of teaching and learning need support in a co-ordinated and ongoing way?	
Learning Space	• Organisation of learning space shows creativity and enables all learners to productively engaged in individual and cooperative learning.	Teachers need further training
	• Learners participate actively and are encouraged to be creative and exchange ideas with confidence.	Teachers need methods of how to do this
	• Educator uses inclusive strategies and promotes respect for individuality and diversity (learning styles, language, race/ethnic, disability)	
Discipline	• Learners are motivated and self disciplined.	
	• Learners accept discipline without feeling threatened.	
	• Learners know who to see when they have a problem?	

	• Responses to concerns about behaviour of learners tend to focus on education and rehabilitation rather than on retribution?	Some teachers still use corporal punishment & need help to change

Learning Activity 25

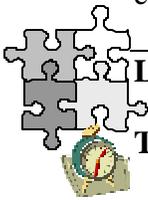**Time Needed: 20 minutes**

Look at the completed form above.
1. In a small group discuss the form and then answer the following questions:
    a. Where do think this school is on the road towards Inclusive Education?
    b. Prioritize five support needs of the school in order of importance.

Reflection

You are probably not surprised to see that there needs to be an improvement in the accessibility and safety in the school. This is the case in many schools in South Africa. Many schools will have to make the same kinds of changes that this school does, such as making ramps for wheel chairs, getting assistive devices such as crutches and FM systems, getting further training on how to plan for support, and re-thinking attitudes to practices like corporal punishment, labeling children and making assumptions, to name but a few.

Whole school development is essential for schools in transforming themselves into inclusive schools. Whole school development involves all aspects of the school as an organization and as a system. For Inclusive Education every aspect of the school, from systems and policies, to staff, to relationships, to materials, and even to buildings will be affected. This does not mean that everything about a school will change completely or immediately. Much of what is already in place will remain as it is, such as some administrative systems. Some things will be modified, such as the curriculum, and some will be transformed altogether, such as the introduction of new technology and equipment.
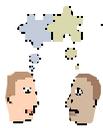
Learning Activity 26

Time needed: 15 minutes

1. Look at the categories in the first three columns of the table below. Reproduce the table and use it to help you think about your own school or institution, or one in your district.
2. Fill in 2 things under each category. In the last column write down the existing committees in your school.

Things that will remain unchanged by introducing inclusion	Things that will be modified by introducing inclusion	Things that will be almost completely changed by introducing inclusion.	Existing committees that can help in inclusion

Reflection

You may find that there is a balance of things that you have written in the first three columns. You realize that in implementing Inclusive Education some things will remain unchanged, some things will change only slightly, and others will have to change in big ways.

Perhaps one of the most important changes that Inclusive Education will bring is in the way people work together and connect with other schools.

For a school to become an effective teaching and learning environment for all children, the whole school must be a part of the implementation and monitoring process of making the school inclusive. For many South African children, school is the one place in their lives where real change can occur, where their needs can be met on a day to day basis by people who sincerely have their best interests at heart. Inclusion benefits us all, and the changes that need to be made in schools can impact positively on everyone concerned.

A process of debate and consultation has to involve all stakeholders, parents, children, teachers, and the whole community that the school serves in order to establish an approach that everyone can be part of an ongoing support process.

Schools must recognize barriers and address them quickly, by providing appropriate support. Otherwise children's situations can become rapidly worse. If the school does not act, this in itself becomes a barrier to learning for the child.

Parents, learners and the community have to develop a sense of ownership of the school. This means making sure that systems are in place in which people can participate in meaningful ways, and through which role players of all kinds can access what they need.

b. Baseline assessment using the National Curriculum Statement

Baseline assessment means finding out what your learners can do, and where further support is needed. The Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards of the National Curriculum Statement are useful tools to do a baseline assessment.

Let us go back for a moment to Dineo. Her teacher now knows more about Down syndrome from Dineo's parents and her crèche teacher. She has contacted both Dineo's previous teacher at the crèche and the local clinic where Dineo's medical records are kept.

Dineo is not a difficult child to handle in class, as she is sociable and willing to cooperate, and listens to what is asked of her. These are her strengths. Mrs. Orkney feels that if she was given work at the appropriate level Dineo could benefit from her experience in class.

Mrs. Orkney needs to get a better understanding of the level at which Dineo can experience success, and to provide her with appropriate work at that level.
Mrs. Orkney knows that Dineo cannot count, and she decides that because this learning area is very important in the Foundation Phase, she will assess this first.

Numeracy
Mrs. Orkney looks at the National Curriculum for Numeracy, Learning Outcome 1: "Numbers, Operations and Relationships". She decides to work through the Assessment Standards for Grade 1 with Dineo. She sets tasks for her so that she can assess her performance.

Assessment Standard:
"Counts to at least 34 everyday objects reliably"
> *Mrs. Orkney collects 34 little blocks from her cupboard and puts them in a pile in front of Dineo. She asks Dineo to count them for her.*
> *Dineo can only count to 8 and gets confused beyond that*

"Knows and reads number symbols from 1 to at least 100 and writes number names from 1 to at least 34"

> *Mrs. Orkney puts some number cards from 1 to 25 in front of Dineo and asks her ''show me the number 10 Dineo, the number 25, give me the number 14, put number 6 on the desk'', and so on.*
> *Dineo cannot do this task above number 6.*

Mrs. Orkney realizes that these Assessment Standards are too difficult for Dineo. She now knows that she will have to go back to the Assessment Standards for Grade R to work with Dineo.

She gets Dineo to do tasks with the Assessment Standards at the Grade R level so that she can confirm that this level is appropriate for Dineo.
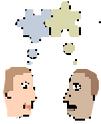
Grade R Assessment Standard:
"Counts to at least 10 everyday objects reliably"

Stop, think and discus
- How can Mrs. Orkney assess Dineo on this Grade R Assessment Standard?

Reflection
You will know from your own experience that this fairly simple skill can be assessed in a number of different ways. This is how Mrs. Orkney decided to do it.

"Counts to at least 10 everyday objects reliably"

> *Mrs. Orkney collects pencils from around the room and puts them in a pile in front of Dineo. She asks Dineo to count them for her.*
> *Dineo can still only count to 8 and gets confused beyond that.*

She also assessed Dineo on some other Assessment Standards:

"Knows the number names and symbols for 1 to 10".

> *Mrs. Orkney puts the numbers 1 to 10 on little cards in front of Dineo, and asks her to "show me the number 4 Dineo, the number 2, give me the number 5, put number 1 on the floor", and so on. Dineo copes well with this task. She can recognize numbers 1 to 6 consistently.*

"Orders and compares collections of objects using the words 'more', 'less' and 'equal'."

> *Mrs. Orkney puts a pile of 2 bottle tops in front of Dineo, and then a pile of 10 bottle tops in front of herself. She asks Dineo*

> *"show me who has more bottle tops, you or me". Then Mrs. Orkney asks "show me who has less bottle tops, you or me". Then she gives herself and Dineo both 5 bottle tops and asks "do we have an equal number of bottle tops Dineo?"*
> *Dineo is able to show Mrs. Orkney who has more and less, but does not understand the word 'equal'.*

Mrs. Orkney now knows which tasks to work on with Dineo in a small group in her class. She knows that Dineo has a very basic number concept, and she will need to work with her at the Grade R level even though she is in her Grade One class. Mrs. Orkney also knows that there are five other learners who will benefit from the activities she will use for Dineo.

She feels from working with Dineo in this way, that she will be able to adapt the Grade 1 and Grade R activities and materials in many ways to make them more accessible to Dineo and other children in the group.

She also knows that Dineo has language difficulty with some of the words used in mathematics, such as 'equal'. She will target these in her work with Dineo. She may need further advice from another teacher on how to improve Dineo's understanding of words and concepts.

Mrs. Orkney uses the Assessment Standards for the learning areas Literacy and Life Orientation in the same way in order to better understand what levels Dineo is achieving, and what kind of work to do with her in class. She can use this kind of task to assess Dineo, and she can use other ways of assessing Dineo using the same Assessment Standards. She can set Dineo assignments to do related to her level. Because Dineo's parents are very involved and her mother does not work full time, she might send some of these assignments home as homework.

She will watch Dineo carefully in class and make adjustments based on what she sees in Dineo's progress. In this way, she is building up a portfolio of Dineo's work, which will be a good record of Dineo's progress. It will also be helpful if and when she requests to discuss Dineo at another ILST meeting.

It is important that Mrs. Orkney also includes the positive aspects of Dineo's progress in this portfolio. Remember that in Inclusive Education we are looking at the whole child, and trying to see beyond what is immediately obvious in Dineo, which is her Down syndrome. Therefore Mrs. Orkney will record what Dineo enjoys doing, what she does well in class and what positive steps she has made.

Nomvula has very different needs from Dineo.

Let us have a look at Nomvula and how her Grade 2 teacher can use the Assessment Standards to understand her needs and begin to provide support for her.

Since Nomvula's primary needs seems to be in the area of behaviour and emotions, her teacher decides to begin understanding her better using the Life Orientation learning area. She is also very aware that her behaviour and emotions are impacting on her ability to work in the class and that she cannot isolate the one area from the other.

She decides, however, that as a start Learning Outcome 3: "Personal Development" is the most appropriate point to begin her assessment. She selects the Assessment Standard:

"Describes what to do to treat own body well".

Stop, think and discuss
- What can Nomvula's teacher do to work with this Assessment Standard? Think of a way with your partner, and then feed back to your group. See what ideas your group came up with.
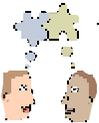
Reflection
You probably found that different ideas emerge from your discussion. You know that often there is more than one way to assess a child on a given Assessment Standard.

Nomvula's teacher begins by asking her questions about her body. She asks her what she and her grandmother do to take care of themselves every day. She knows that Nomvula might not be eating well, so she is sensitive to this in her conversation with the child. Nomvula responds to this conversation without any difficulty at all.

She moves on to the other Assessment Standards:

"Demonstrates and discusses emotions in various situations".

Nomvula's teacher gets her to draw a picture of herself, and to tell her all about it, describing the drawing's physical as well as emotional features, for example "is Nomvula happy today in this picture?" and "does Nomvula ever feel sad?"

Nomvula draws a picture of herself and her mother, but the picture of her mother is very small. Nomvula is able to describe all her own physical features in detail

without any difficulty. Nomvula tells her teacher tells that she is very sad that she does not have a mother and father. She says that she wishes that her mother were living with her, because it is hard to live without her mother. She is also sad that she is living with her grandmother and has no friends to play with at home. She wishes that she could be like other children with their mothers and fathers. She starts to cry in this discussion.

"Demonstrates appropriate behaviour in conflict situations".

Nomvula's teacher reminds her of an incident that occurred in class last week, when a group of her friends tried to ask her to play with them at break and Nomvula shouted at them and told them to go away and leave her alone. The teacher asks her to tell her about what happened at that time.

It becomes clear in the discussion that Nomvula does not know how to tell other children that she is feeling bad and needs to be on her own.

Nomvula's teacher has learned from this assessment that Nomvula is a little girl who can grasp the facts of a situation, but who needs support in dealing with the emotional side of her life. She realizes that she will have to pay close attention to the way other children relate to Nomvula, especially those girls that she used to be close to, and that she will need to work on group dynamics in the classroom. She decides that she will make dealing with bad feelings the focus of her work with the class as a whole, and this will address the issue of helping Nomvula to express her feelings to her friends.

Because Nomvula is a little older, her teacher may also ask her to begin to think about her own learning and behaviour, a simple form of self-assessment.

For example the teacher may ask her to write down what makes her sad in school and angry with her friends. She may ask her to write what she does when she feels sad and gets angry with other children.
*Even though these questions are not easy for Nomvula to answer, her teacher may get a little more insight into the emotional barrier that Nomvula is experiencing in this way.*

We will return to Nomvula in the next section.

c. Recording Assessment

We know that recording observations is important. It is useful to have a tool such as the Word Picture that can reflect that your observations are ongoing, that you need to ask questions and that your observations may change. You also need to record your assessments. Section C of Form 3 provides you with the tool to record your assessments for learners who may be in need of additional support. This form is a working document that the teacher and the ILST use to record assessments of learners and the school over a period of time in order to determine the levels of support needed.

Let's have a closer look at Section C of this form.
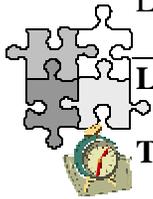
**Learning Activity 27**

Time Needed: 50 minutes

Turn to pg.108 of the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* document. You will notice that the Rubrics for the Indicators for Levels 1 - 5 which we referred to in Unit 4 are displayed across the top. On the left hand side of the page you will see the word "factors". The factors represent the areas which can help us determine the levels of support needed. The factors are grouped into Learning Factors, Behavioural Factors, Physical Factors, Socio-Economic Factors and Factors in the School and Learning Environment. Notice that the Learning Factors are further divided into Communication Factors and Cognitive Skills.

Together with a partner look carefully through Section C.

1. Discuss why you think that each section starts with looking at the learner's strengths.
2. What kind of questions does each section end with?
3. Do you think that we can fill in all of Section C for Dineo? If not, what further information would you need and how will you go about finding this out?

Now look carefully through the Expressive Communication Section of this form.
4. Decide what Dineo's strengths in this area are. Remember to think broadly about these strengths as they will help you to construct a support programme for Dineo.
5. Decide which column you will tick concerning Dineo's current expressive language ability.
6. What support do you think is needed for Dineo in this area?
7. On the basis of the information you have about Dineo, decide which column you would tick regarding her receptive communication.
8. Look at the completed form B of this Form about Dineo's school (pg. 112 above) and decide what support the school might need to provide for Dineo's needs.
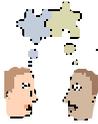
It may have taken you some time to think about Dineo and make a decision about how to complete the relevant parts of the form. That is good, because when you fill in these forms on behalf of learners you need to give a true reflection. Of course, over time it will become easier and quicker.

Let's see what Dineo' teacher decided to do. You may want to complete the form on behalf of Mrs. Orkney as you read through what she thought.

> *Mrs. Orkney looks through all of Section C. She knows that the Language of Learning and Teaching in the Foundation Phase of her school is Dineo's first language and therefore ticks column 1. She then takes some time looking at the sections on Expressive Communication and Receptive Communication as these are areas in which she is certain extra support is needed.*
>
> *Dineo's teacher then moves to "Cognitive Skills" (pg. 113). In terms of Dineo's Task Behaviour she decides that her current knowledge of working with Dineo and her experience of using Assessment Standards to gain baseline information in all learning areas, seems to indicate that Dineo is currently working at Level 3 in this area. She makes a tick here, but places a question mark next to the tick to remind herself to be more aware of Dineo's task behaviour in the future. Mrs. Orkney feels that she does not yet know enough about Dineo's language processing abilities and needs the help of the ILST to complete this section.*
>
> *Still looking at Cognitive Skills she moves to "Numeracy Skills" (pg. 114). Under Numeracy Skills Mrs. Orkney ticks column 5, which corresponds to Level 5 – "Has little or no numeracy."*
>
> *Mrs. Orkney then writes a comment in the column "Support needed by learner" that Dineo "needs to work with concrete objects and number cards, needs games for her to practice counting."*

Look at how she has done this:

	Requires occasional assistance in understanding mathematical concepts and their relationship to day-to-day experiences.	Sometimes requires assistance/adaptations in order to progress in skills acquisition.	Requires pictures, objects, and other cues in order to access mathematical concepts and formulas.	Encounters difficulties in formulating concrete tasks to mathematical concepts and in problem solving.	Has no or little understanding of mathematical concepts and numeracy.
Support needed by learner	*needs to work with concrete objects and number cards, needs games for her to practice counting*				✓
Support needed by learner					
B. BEHAVIOURAL FACTORS:	Behaviour that interferes with participation in learning and requires a coordinated approach across home, school and other agencies				
Social conventions: Following social conventions, rules	Narrative Description of Strengths of learner:				
	Shows good relationship with his/her peers, behaviour is age appropriate.	Social background differs from school ethos, school and learner need a period of acclimatisation	Occasional inappropriate behaviour that disrupts the learning process for short periods	Frequent display of inappropriate behaviour that requires a structured and focussed intervention to facilitate inclusion in group activities.	Learning process broken down due to persistent display of inappropriate behaviour and limited response to support provided.
Socio-emotional factors	Narrative Description of Strengths of learner:				

Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2005)

115

It is important for Mrs. Orkney to look at where Dineo might fall in terms of these levels with all the factors, so that the correct support can be offered within the classroom and school and ultimately that an overall placement with a level or range of levels is possible so that further support can be accessed.

If we look at "Behavioural Factors" Dineo's need for support at this stage is not indicated. However assessment is ongoing, and this might change over time. The level on which a

child is placed will differ from learning area to learning area at different points in time. Dineo might need more support in Numeracy, and less in Life Orientation. However, Mrs. Orkney needs to indicate where Dineo falls on these levels in order to take the process further.

Stop, think and discuss
- In pairs discuss where you think Mrs. Orkney might place Dineo in terms of all the Physical Factors. Pay particular attention to the area of Self Care. Do you think that you have enough information to fill all these sections?

Reflection
You may have decided that there was sufficient information to fill in some of the form, but not all. You would need to get additional information from other sources, such as talking to the parents.

Mrs. Orkney filled in the section on Medical Condition with Dineo's parents as she was not sure whether she knew enough about Down Syndrome. They informed her that Dineo has chronic illness involving both her heart and her ears and that it would be best to mark column 2 "Needs supervision by teacher" and fill in the block as follows:

Medical condition: as it impacts on learning and development	1 Under control and does not need support	2 Needs supervision by teacher	3 Needs regular supervision by teacher or external provider	4 Can interfere with attendance	5 Needs constant medical care
Medicine					
Chronic Illness		Heart and ears ✓			
Surgery Undergone					
Allergies					
Other medical conditions					

We have now moved through a process of completing Form 3 of the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* for Dineo.
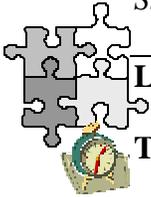
Learning Activity 28

Time Needed: 20 minutes

On pages 14 and 15 of the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* you will see the rubrics for the levels of support needed. You also looked at these in Unit 4.

1. In small groups decide what overall level of support Dineo falls into according to these rubrics.
2. When each small group has decided on a level, give feedback to the larger group. It is of critical importance that you motivate this decision. and then compare your decisions of other groups.
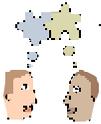
Reflection

You may have found this a difficult exercise because it seems as if you are being asked to make a final judgement on Dineo. Some of you may feel very strongly that Dineo needs specialist intervention to support her language development or to investigate more fully her ongoing chronic ear and eye conditions. Others may feel that in terms of the resources at her school, she can be well supported without extra help. You may have found that it is difficult to decide on a level and that you will need extra information to do this.

Let's return to Nomvula.

Nomvula's teacher has made her first priority the assessment of her emotional needs. However we know that it is essential to look at the whole child. Section C of Form 3 of the <u>Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support</u> *helps us to do this. Her teacher feels confident to fill in some information on "Behavioural Factors". Mrs. Kotwal ticks column 3 (Level 3) under "socio-economic factors". She realizes that Nomvula probably falls under the category "emotional crisis …". However she is reminded by reading this section that Nomvula's emotions are interfering with her learning activities and takes her assessment further by using Assessment Standards in the Literacy and Numeracy Learning Programmes to gain more information about where Nomvula is currently placed in all of the factors. She makes an appointment with the ILST to discuss Nomvula's progress and the level of support she needs.*
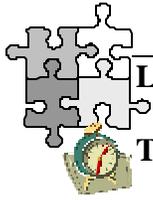
Learning Activity 29

Time needed: 15 minutes

1. Imagine that you are Nomvula's teacher. What issues would you want to discuss at the ILST meeting. Write these down.
2. To what extent do you think the DBST could play a role in supporting Nomvula's school, her teacher and Nomvula herself?
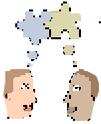
Reflection

You will have identified that Nomvula needs urgent help with her emotional crisis. You know that it was helpful for Nomvula when her teacher spent time chatting with her, and she can continue to do that while the ILST and the DBST arrange for a psychologist to come and visit Nomvula. While class teachers are waiting for support from the ILST and the DBST they can continue teaching at the child's level and keep a record of their work. The idea is to build up a portfolio of the results of these assessments and to develop a portfolio for the child which can be used as evidence to motivate for additional support needs for the child.

Tools such as the word picture are useful for observing the child in class on an ongoing basis, and help us to understand and monitor the child's performance in learning tasks. This is critical in the development of positive self-esteem, to confirm what learners can do and to identify skills that need further development. Parent and child interviews are also important on an ongoing basis. Together with home visits they help to provide further insight and to engage the parents in their child's education.

Teachers may need other opinions, or other input in providing appropriate support for the child. This is when collaborative problem solving can be supportive.

Summary

Screening, identification and assessment helps you to understand the level and nature of support that children who experience barriers to learning need.

- Form 3 helps a school to evaluate what support it can give and what help may be needed.
- The NCS helps you to find out additional information about what a learner is able to do and what additional support he or she may need. This serves as a base line assessment from which to plan additional support in the classroom.

Information is recorded on forms and assessment records to support recommendations for additional support. The ILST and DBST use that information to access support in various ways.

In the next unit you will examine more carefully how the Inclusive Education system can ensure that teachers, learners and parents get the support they need.

Portfolio Assignment 3

You should spend approximately 5 hours completing this assignment.

This assignment requires you to work as part of a team. This team should consist of the following:

- One member of a DBST who works in a District Office;
- At least one specialised support services professional;
- At least two teachers who work in a classroom context in a Full Service School or a Special School;
- A careworker, house parent or other support staff

All members of the team will, of course, be participants in Inclusive Education training workshops. The group will together carry out the following tasks, and write them up in a comprehensive report:

1. Each member of the team should present to an initial meeting a case of a particular learner whom they have identified as being in need of special support. They can use the Word Picture as a tool to record their observations and assessments.

2. As a group, discuss each of the cases and define the nature, types and level of support needed by each learner. Here, the group should fill in Form 3 to record their observations, and include this as part of their overall assignment submission.

3. Now, the groups should select the learner whom they feel needs the highest of level of support, and prepare an overall plan of action to ensure that this learner receives full support. As part of this process, the team needs to:
   - Spell out the screening and identification procedures that have been carried out in relation to this learner, and note their outcomes.
   - Engage rigorously with all written records of the learner.
   - Identify which people are best placed to provide the necessary support, at classroom, institutional, district and community levels.
   - Define the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.
   - Ensure that the roles and needs of family are taken into account.

Assessment for Portfolio 1: Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

Assignment 3

Participant's name:

Please comment on progress under the relevant headings.

Criteria	Completed successfully	Needed support
Participates co-operatively as a member of a selected team		
Records observations and assessment using an appropriate tool		
Presents a case of a learner identified as being in need of special support		
Defines the nature, types and level of support needed by each learner whose case is presented		
Records observations on Form 3		
Identifies the learner needing the highest level of support		
Describes screening and identification procedures used in relation to learner and notes outcomes		
Identifies the people best placed to provide support		
Defines the roles and responsibilities of all parties		
Includes roles and needs of the family in overall plan of action		
Reviewer's comments		

Notes and References
[i] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.* February 2006. pg.108

Section 4:

Systems of support

Unit 6:

Intervention and Support

Unit Outcome:
By the end of this unit you will:
- know about the ways in which the different parts of the education system work together to ensure support for learners, educators, learning sites and curriculum delivery in addressing barriers to learning

Assessment standards
- Understand what support means in Inclusive Education
- Understand the different kinds of support operating in Inclusive Education
- Know about intervention and support that can be offered to children in classrooms
- Know about processes that will be used to offer support for children
- Understand how collaboration within the system will support new roles
- Discuss the capacity of the school to support children experiencing barriers to learning

Recommended training time for this Unit:
240 minutes (4 hours)

Introduction

In Unit 5, we looked at assessing a child and understanding barriers to learning and levels of support in more depth within the framework of the National Curriculum Statement. This assessment is done within a context of support systems available in the whole school.

Teachers can continue to support the child as a full member of the classroom through curriculum adaptation and differentiation, with support from the ILST and others. Now that you have a clearer idea of the system, look back at the diagram in Unit 3, on page 46. You can see the link between SIAS and ILP. Implementing Inclusive Learning Programmes is dealt with in more depth in Manual 2.

In the diagram you can also see that at every step of the way support systems need to be in place. In this unit look more at where support may be needed and how to get that support.

Learning Activity 30

Time Needed: 15 minutes

At the end of the school year, the principal calls a meeting of staff to meet with the representatives of the DBST. During the meeting you learn that your school is making steps toward becoming a fully inclusive school. This means that there will be a serious effort to address the barriers within the school that prevent all children from participating. It also means that there will be a campaign for getting out of school youth to come back to school.

In small groups discuss the following:
1. What are the strengths within your school that will help to facilitate Inclusive Education?
2. From your perspective in the school or district, what kinds of support do you think that you will need?

Reflection

You know that the process of support begins with teachers. You may have identified that within your school there are many strengths which can help you to move towards Inclusive Education. You may feel that observing, identifying barriers to learning attempting to address these barriers is something you can adapt to quite easily.

However, there may come a time in the process where you will need to access further support, either because you feel that the barriers falls outside of your area of expertise or because they arise from complex social situations and require a team approach. We think you will agree that an Inclusive Education system, by its very nature, must provide structures and processes for support. It is these structures and processes that we will discuss in this unit.

Look at this definition of support:[i]

Support could be defined as all activities which increase the capacity of a school to respond to diversity. Providing support to individuals is only one way of attempting to make learning contexts and lessons accessible to all learners. Support is also provided, for example, when schools review their cultures, policies and practices to determine how supportive these are of the individual educator, parent and learner needs.
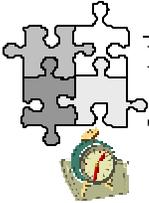
Learning Activity 31

Time needed: 10 minutes

1. Write down or discuss some thoughts that come to mind when you read this definition.
2. What might 'activities' mean in this definition?
3. Make a list of the kinds of activities that you think might support children in school who are experiencing barriers to learning, and their teachers.

Reflection

This is not a simple definition. But it is comprehensive. You can see that the notion of support includes the notion we are all familiar with – whole school development.

You may have identified activities such as:
- ensuring that children have the learning materials they need
- obtaining assistive devices such as a wheel chair or a Braille machine
- ensuring that the curriculum has been made accessible to the child through curriculum adaptation
- participating in whole school initiatives that address diversity issues e.g. celebrating the use of different languages in the school
- collaborating with community and government structures to ensure that children have been fed at school and at home,
- developing better relationships with the parents of your learners
- ensuring that information is available to the parent community that might go some way towards preventing neglect and abuse of children in the community
- ensuring that the inclusive ethos of the school permeates through all the school cultures and practices

You probably have many others on your list. Some of these activities will apply to all teachers and schools, but other might be very specific to your own school.

Stop, think and discuss
- To what extent do you think that teachers should get involved in community issues such as lack of water? How should they respond?

Reflection

We need to be aware of and responsive to community needs that create barriers to learning if they are not addressed. For example, the lack of water supply in a village might mean that some children are missing out on schooling time because they have to go to fetch water for their families. It might also mean that there are health issues in the community that prevent children from benefiting from school.

Now let's look at the different kinds of support that we need to develop within an Inclusive Education system.

Support for the child in the classroom

When teachers work with minimizing barriers to learning they are in effect intervening in the situation on behalf of the child. Intervention is a kind of support. In the field of child development intervention means 'coming between' any negative, or further disabling effects that a developmental delay or disability might have on the developmental process in general. We could apply this to the situation of other barriers to learning. The teacher and the school try and 'come between' the barrier and the child's learning. At the same time the teacher attempts to create a positive learning environment that will prevent barriers from arising.

Let's go back to the example of Dineo. In Unit 1 we saw that Dineo is experiencing many barriers to her learning. When you look back at Unit 1 you will see that they included:
- A minor heart defect and ear infections
- Speech and language difficulties
- Intellectual disability causing difficulties with certain learning tasks in certain learning areas.
- The crèche teacher not involving Dineo in suitable learning activities
- The attitude of Dineo's granny to taking her on family outings

Stop, think and discuss
- Suggest ways in which Mrs. Orkney can intervene in relation to Dineo's heart condition and ear infections.
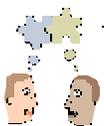
Reflection
There are at least two things that Mrs. Orkney can do quite easily in terms of Dineo's heart condition and ear infections. She may also alert the DBST through her school's ILST that it is difficult for the family to get to the clinic, and that Dineo needs medical monitoring.

Another way that Mrs. Orkney can intervene is to report to the parents and discuss with the ILST whenever she notices any change in Dineo's behaviour that may indicate that her heart condition affects her. For example, Dineo becomes very short of breath when running for too long. She may also alert them to any discharge from Dineo's ears which may indicate an infection, or when Dineo does not appear to be able to hear well. During these times she may also change Dineo's position in class so that she is closer to the teacher, and she may let Dineo work with a partner, to make sure that she has understood the task. When the ear infection has been properly treated, she may let Dineo work in other parts of the classroom and let Dineo do more work on her own. She will however constantly monitor Dineo's ability to listen in class.

Stop, think and discuss
- What can Mrs. Orkney do to intervene with Dineo's speech and language difficulties?

134

Reflection

Maybe you identified a few simple things that Mrs. Orkney can do. She can make sure that she speaks to her clearly and listens to her trying to understand what she says. She might ask the family to come and help her to understand as they are able to understand her at home. She might also feel that she will need further help from a speech and language therapist but before doing this she decides she will observe carefully so that she will be able to give a helpful report to the ILST.

Stop, think and discuss

- Suggest ways in which Dineo's teacher Mrs. Orkney can intervene in relation to Dineo's intellectual disability.
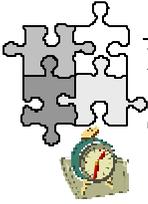
Reflection

We know that Down Syndrome cannot be cured, and Dineo's intellectual disability will be with her for the rest of her life. However, Mrs. Orkney can make sure that she gets all the information that she can about intellectual disability and the effects of Down syndrome on learning, so that she is fully informed about Dineo. The ILST can assist her with this if they keep a small resource centre in the school relating to disability and other barriers to learning. Armed with this knowledge, she will be better able to adapt the curriculum to meet Dineo's learning needs if and when Dineo experiences failure.

She can make sure that she does not put barriers in Dineo's path of learning and development. If she needs further support she can consult the ILST and complete Form 3.

This means that when Mrs. Orkney she needs further support there will be clear documentation outlining what kind of support she needs and why. This process will be discussed further below.

In the meantime the teaching and learning process continues and Mrs. Orkney offers learning support through the curriculum. When Mrs. Orkney assessed Dineo for her Grade in the relevant learning areas, it became clear that Dineo requires a great deal of support in those learning areas, and that she needs to work at the Grade R level even though she is in Grade 1. Mrs. Orkney needs to adapt her teaching activities and materials to meet Dineo's specific learning needs. This area is dealt with in detail in Manual Two, so we will leave Dineo for the moment. Let us now move on to looking at support at an institutional level of the school.

Support to build the capacity of the school to become more inclusive

Learning Activity 32

Time Needed: 10 minutes

1. How do teachers support each other in your school?
2. What systems, structures and teams are there for teachers to call upon?

Reflection

You may have put a lot of effort into building support teams within your school, institution and district. The implementation of Inclusive Education depends to a large extent on the smooth operation of different teams, the ILST and the DBST as well as other school structures, such as the SMT or the SGB. The success of inclusion therefore depends on the quality of team work within the school.

Sometimes teachers who feel threatened, or anxious about their work, or feel that they are not able to do a good job, but don't know how to change their teaching, may not be comfortable sharing with others. Perhaps the way the school functions, or the systems in the school do not facilitate team work and co-operation. In these schools there is still work to do to create a culture of acceptance and teamwork. In some schools this type of support is so important that sharing and support forums and structures are well established.

Let us take the example of Nomvula to explore more in depth how the ILST can operate.

The following barriers were felt to be preventing Nomvula's learning and development:
- Feeling emotionally fragile, being sad at school and not being able to handle other children very well.
- Living with her grandmother who does not have good financial resources
- Not having a stable place to stay
- Her grandmother's inability to read and write, which will mean that Nomvula does not have anyone to assist her with homework.

a. Institution Level Support Team

Learning Activity 33

Time Needed: 20 minutes

In Unit 4, you simulated an ILST meeting. Now you will role play an ILST meeting at the request of Nomvula's teacher.

1. Allocate the following roles to people in the group:
   - Nomvula's teacher
   - ILST coordinator
   - ILST scribe
   - Members of the problem solving team (other interested educators)
2. As a group, decide which single barrier has the greatest impact on Nomvula.
3. Make a suggestion of how this barrier can be addressed. Make sure that each member of the group suggests one solution. Write these suggestions up on newsprint.
4. As a group decide which of these suggestions you will follow. You may choose more than one suggestion.

Reflection

It may be that your ILST meeting felt that until Nomvula was feeling a little less sad and better able to deal with other children, little other progress could be made, and therefore this is the barrier that needs initial attention.

Your group might have suggested that if Nomvula's grandmother received greater financial support, perhaps in the form of a childcare grant, this would give greater security and support to Nomvula. You may have suggested that finding someone who could help Nomvula with her schoolwork at home could immediately be addressed, and a change in this would help Nomvula to feel more supported and cared for. On the other hand, you might have suggested that since Nomvula is not the only child in the school who is an orphan, it might be useful to link up with the local NGO that is working with orphans and vulnerable children in the area and offer to assist them in providing support through school structures e.g. using classrooms for meetings, providing a data base of learners who are affected etc.

Stop, think and discuss
   - Did you find the process of prioritizing a barrier useful?
   - Did everyone in the group have an opportunity suggest possible solutions?
   - Was it difficult to choose which solutions to take up and which to let go? What criteria did you use to make these decisions?

Reflection

We think that this process of identifying barrier and solutions can be useful in your ILST. Let us unpack this a little more based on Porter's [ii] discussion of teachers helping teachers.

The concerned teacher - this is the teacher who has identified that a support need exists and who seeks the help of the ILST in addressing this need. The teacher should not try to hand over all responsibility to the ILST but rather they will adapt their teaching strategies, talk with parents, observe the learner and consult informally with other educators. The teacher will keep a record of what is observed and the strategies attempted using the learner profile. This information will be used in the ILST.

The ILST co-ordinator is mandated by the principal or the SMT to co-ordinate the ILST and to convene meetings. Many schools find it useful to have a regular meeting time, possibly once a week. The co-ordinator can then slot in the concern of the teacher into the programme of the ILST. The co-ordinator of the ILST should have expertise in working with barriers to learning or be committed to developing this expertise. They should arrange for effective chairing and record keeping of ILST meetings.

The problem solving team – this team can be made up of a core of educators who are committed to addressing barriers to learning. However, it is wise to keep the composition of the team flexible to engage with a range of problems. For example, where the issue is one that relates to parent involvement, it will be necessary to include parents in the problem solving team. Learners can also be invited to participate if appropriate. The flexibility of the team is important, but we should not make the team too large (over 7 people) or too small (less than 5)[iii]. The referring teacher should feel comfortable with the team members. All members of the team should respect the confidentiality of what is discussed during the meeting.

The team facilitator - this person should be able to run a relaxed meeting and to encourage participation of all team members. He or she should be able to deal with sensitive matters in a tactful way and avoid situations where educators or other members of the team might feel that they are being criticised or blamed. They should focus on:
- Clarifying and summarising the essential issues;
- Keeping the discussion focused on the matter at hand;
- Moving the discussion forward in a relaxed manner;
- Working to develop practical action plans;
- Ensuring that all team members understand the action plan and their roles in it;
- Wrapping up the meetings in the allotted time frame.
- Setting a date for a follow up meeting where progress will be reviewed

The scribe – this person has the responsibility of recording accurately the key ideas that emerge during the meeting. This person should listen carefully and summarise carefully what has been said.

It is very important that this process should be kept short, run efficiently and be recorded. In this case we have focused the discussion of barriers around a specific child but it is possible that the cause of concern could be a systemic barrier, such as an outbreak of scabies or the presence of dangerous weapons in the school grounds. In many cases there might be a need to call in outside people or members of the DBST. The ILST must also ensure that all decisions taken by the team are followed up. Thus the meeting structure must allow for time to get feedback on decisions that have been taken previously and to review the effectiveness of these activities.

We see from this, that it is not always easy to work out which barriers require the most immediate attention. It is also not easy to work out which of those barriers the teacher is best able to intervene in. The ILST process described above will help teachers to make choices based on the understanding of barriers to learning, experience in working with

these kinds of barriers, and his/her capacity and that of the school to intervene in the particular barriers concerned.

It is important to bear in mind that the ILST does not only have the job of supporting individual teachers and learners. It is also a major driver in building the capacity of the school to cater or the full range of learning needs. As such it is striving toward the longer term goal of becoming a full service school. You will remember in Units 3 and 4 we looked at Section B of Form 3 to assess the capacity of the school to respond to barriers to learning. Let's now look at the role of the full service school in Inclusive Education support structures.
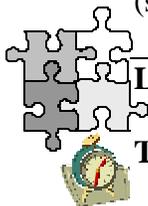
b. Full-service school

We have discussed the full service school in Unit 3. We will now look a bit more clearly at how it can function within the support system.

The role of full-service schools

'Full-service schools' are part of the strategy to build an Inclusive Education and training system. In line with the principles of Inclusive Education and training, it is acknowledged that all learners can learn and need support temporarily or permanently. Full-service schools and institutions have a specific role in catering for learners who require more moderate levels of support. The essential feature of the support within the full-service school is that it should be site-based. Full-service schools are encouraged to develop resource centres for use by educators and learners.

Full-service schools might also designate a 'learning support educator' who could be a competent and experienced educator with collaborative and facilitating skills. A learning support educator's task could include consulting and working with other educators and staff, parents and various outside agencies to make sure that learners succeed. This teacher might also co-ordinate the work of the ILST and liaise with different stakeholders, as well as support educators' personal growth and professional development. In addition to professional support, support can be provided by non-educators also, like the SGB, caregivers, families and peers. Support is not only about 'services' but also about assistance that educators can offer to one another, or caregivers and families through support groups. Learner support can be developed through peer support in classes and peer counseling ('buddy groups') and out of classroom activities (sports, hobbies, etc.).[iv]
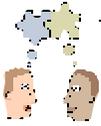
Learning Activity 34

Time Needed: 15 minutes

There are high expectations of full service schools.
1. How does this make you feel as a teacher in a full-service school, a special school or as a district person?
2. How does the change to a full service school change your role in the system?

Reflection

In many ways, full-service schools are the central feature of an Inclusive Education system as this is almost an ideal of what schools should be like to accommodate all learning needs. You will also realize that schools will not change to this degree overnight. The important thing to note is that this is a developmental process. As schools begin to tackle barriers to learning, they begin to increase their capacity to respond to a wider range of learning needs. Let us recap the support process:

- Intervention starts when the barriers are first identified on the most basic and superficial level. Teachers do not need to wait for a full in-depth assessment before beginning to offer the child support for learning. Any intervention, no matter how small, may be very helpful to the child and his or her family at this stage.
- Intervention also provides the teacher with an opportunity to observe the child further, and to assess the possible barriers that she or he is setting up for the child through his or her teaching style or learning materials and so on.
- Choices can be made about which barriers are the most urgently in need of attention and intervention for the child.
- Support offered is based on assessment, and always includes assessment of possible contextual socio-economic barriers as well.
- Support is offered at the school level first in consultation with the ILST.
- Where necessary, the ILST will then make an application to the DBST for further support.
- The DBST will access a wide range of programmes which will include special schools as resource centres, districts based health professionals, youth care centres, etc.
- Throughout this process parents and the best interests of child, play a central role in decision making and implementation of support

We have seen something of how support can be identified and accessed by looking at Dineo and Nomvula. A new child, Bashir, gives us the opportunity to look further at principles of providing intervention and support.

Bashir is a boy who has been in school for one year, and who is making less and less progress as the work gets more challenging. At the beginning of this year in Grade 2 his parents expressed great concern about him to his teacher. They feel that at this stage, and at 8 years old he should be doing better, and they are worried that something is not right.

His previous teachers report that he seems to be a clever little boy, but that it is clear there are many days when Bashir does not seem to be following what is happening in class. He has not done well on his assessments, but has been promoted because he is obviously capable, and is underachieving.

When his Grade 2 teacher consulted his Grade1 teacher about him, that teacher reported that he does much better when he is sitting at or near the front of the class, and when he has a clear view of the teacher. She reported that he is very visually aware, and notices even little things that happen in the classroom very quickly.

Bashir's previous teacher noted that he has great difficulty reading. His current teacher Mrs. Kotwal has noted that sometimes he does not seem to hear what people are saying. His speech is difficult to understand, and his voice has a strange quality to it. His vocabulary is not as good as his peers, and his sentences are limited in length.

Mrs. Kotwal notices that Bashir watches her closely all the time, and loses interest when she works on the chalkboard. He often tries to imitate what she says to him, but does this quite poorly. She notices that when the class works with pictures and diagrams, Bashir responds more positively. Working visually is one of Bashir's strengths.

Mrs. Kotwal suspects that he might have a hearing problem which is having an impact on his learning. She discusses her concern with the parents and they meet with the ILST. At this meeting Bashir's mother is requested to take him for a hearing test at the local hospital and they provide her with a letter which gives detailed observations of his behaviour at school. The audiologist gives the results of this hearing test to Mrs. Kotwal. The tests show that Bashir has a moderate hearing loss in both ears, which is having a profound effect on his speech and language development, and his functioning in the learning environment. It takes two months from the time of referral to the audiologist to the time when the hearing aid is fitted.

Stop, think and discuss

- In groups discuss what Mrs. Kotwal and the ILST could do during the time from when Bashir first goes to the audiologist and when his hearing aids are fitted.
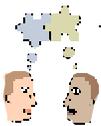
Reflection

You may have decided that the classroom teacher would continue by observing Bashir more closely and beginning to make adaptations to the curriculum to assist him. The ILST would help Mrs. Kotwal to do this. This could include simple things, such as

acknowledging Bashir often, making sure he can always see her and, of course developing a word picture about Bashir.

By the time that Bashir was fitted with his hearing aids, Mrs. Kotwal was ready with the following information.

She noticed during her classroom observations that Bashir loves drawing and he pays attention to detail. He enjoys concrete work with numbers. He can copy well from the board or another book, but does not enjoy writing on his own, and cannot write sentences that make sense. In a group he often works with another child, and seems to get clues from other children as to what to do. He tries very hard to do everything, but does at times get extremely frustrated when he does not understand.
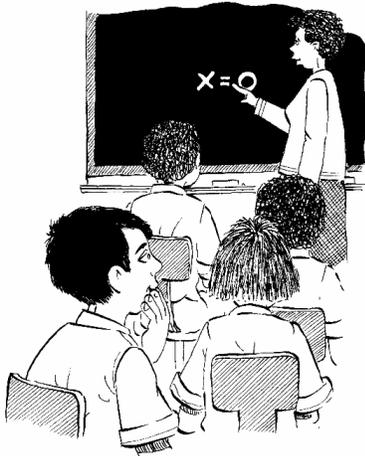
As part of her screening process, Mrs. Kotwal collected information from other sources. She read all his previous reports and portfolios of work, and comments that his teachers had made. She asked the parents to bring her any information that they had got from the doctors that they had taken Bashir to. She read there that Bashir had achieved all his motor milestones as a baby and a toddler, but that his speech and language development had been delayed. Otherwise he had been in general good health.

In an interview with his parents, Mrs. Kotwal got to know that Bashir is the middle child of 3, and that his siblings were very good with him. His mother said that they often understood him when she or his father didn't, and would help him when they all played together.

A home visit revealed that Bashir's family is much loved and very well cared for. The extended family in the form of his grandmother and aunts live with him and his immediate family, and they share his parents concern about his poor progress at school. His grandmother thinks that he is 'lazy or stupid' and says that he gets it from his father's family. She is short tempered with him when she supervises homework, but knows that he is a clever boy. Bashir is not given any responsibilities at home; everyone else in the family does things for him. He loves television, but never listens to music.

An interview with Bashir helped the teacher to understand that Bashir really hates reading, but that art is his favourite learning area. He told her that he loves his mother and father and that he plays a lot with his sisters. The conversation also confirmed for the teacher that his speech and language is not at the same level of his peers in the class.

Learning Activity 35

Time Needed: 25 minutes

1. In groups discuss what Mrs. Kotwal could do at this point in order to offer Bashir support in the classroom.
2. Complete the word picture that you learned about in Unit 4 to help you understand what additional support do you think will be needed for Bashir?
3. Discuss where the school can get this support.

Bashir
Date of Birth: March 1998 Age: 7 yrs.   School: Sign Post Primary School
Teacher: Mrs. Kotwal   Grade 2   Date of Word Picture: March 2006

| THINKING SKILLS	PHYSICAL
SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL	**COMMUNICATION**
OTHER INFORMATION	

Reflection

You will have discussed that although an important step has been made toward understanding the barriers to learning, there is still a long way to go to ensure that Bashir gets the right kind of support to fully participate in the learning process. He will probably need further support in hearing and communication. Let us see how the DBST can help with accessing this support.

c. District-Based Support Team

The DBST has a crucial role to play in providing support to Bashir's school and his teacher. To do this they need the information that is recorded on Form 3 (page 102 in the *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*[v].)
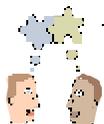
DBST members at a meeting
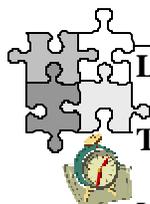
Learning Activity 36

Time Needed: 15 minutes

You have seen how Form 3 was completed for Nomvula in Unit 5 (page 107-112).
1. Discuss how the ILST might complete Section B of this form for Bashir.
2. Discuss how the DBST will use this information to complete Form 4 and set things in motion to support Bashir.

Reflection

This form allows an ILST to identify and access additional resources and support for particular learners.

In this case the ILST completes Form 3 in consultation with the DBST and identifies additional support needs in "Personnel and Staffing" in Section B. This is because Bashir requires the services of a speech therapist and audiologist, and possibly some remedial education. In the section "Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM)", number 5, it would be important to know whether the school had the capacity to provide Bashir with hearing aids and help him to use and maintain them.

The DBST in Bashir's area accepts the documentation submitted by the ILST, and assesses the resources that they have in the district to provide this support. There is a special school as resource centre (SSRC) in the district which provides support to learners who are deaf and hard of hearing. There is a speech therapist and audiologist working in the SSRC and the DBST feel that this is the service that he needs.

The DBST uses FORM 4: REVIEW OF LEARNER ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS FOR RESOURCING AND MONITORING PURPOSES[vi] to record important information about Bashir. Information from the teacher, the parents, the ILST and from Form 3 is recorded on Form 4. The DBST keeps this as a record and uses it to get access to the resources that Bashir's school needs. The DBST arranges for the speech therapist and audiologist to visit the school.

Before we move on with our story let's look more closely at the role of the SSRC.

d. Special Schools as Resource Centres

Stop, think and discuss
- What do you know about special schools?
- Have you visited or worked in these schools?
- What are some of the strengths of these schools and what challenges do they face?

Reflection
Overall you would probably agree that special schools are places where children who have a specific kind of impairment e.g. are deaf or blind, or have an intellectual or physical disability are taught together. The intention of special schools is to provide expert tuition and support to learners who have specific learning needs. Such learners are taught apart form other kinds of learners with the aim of providing an intensive and carefully directed learning and teaching programme.

From the discussions on the shift in the way that support is delivered you have already discussed how this is a role that needs to change. The Guidelines for Special Schools as Resource Centers[vii] illustrates how this needs to happen:

Shifting from Special Education to Inclusive Education

Theory	Special Education Theory	Inclusive Education Theory
Assumptions	- Pathological - Deficits within the child - Categories	- Barriers to learning - Barriers in the system and environment - Levels of support needed, e.g. high, moderate and low levels of support
Practices	Segregation of learners into special facilities	Includes all learners and reorganises support
Tools	Standardised tests	- Criterion referenced tests - Teacher produced tests - Assessing the potential to learn

| Model	• Special Education Act	• The South African Schools Act
Pedagogy	• Limited pedagogical possibilities	• Pedagogy of possibility, taking into consideration barriers to learning, multiple styles of intelligences and learning • High expectations, expanded learning opportunities

You discussed the role of Special Schools as Resource Centres in Unit 3. Let's summarize it here briefly. You can see that the three main roles of the SSRC overlap considerably:

1. The SSRC will provide education for learners with diverse needs, who require high levels of support. There are many learners in special schools currently who need low levels of support and the aim of the SSRC will be to reduce the number of these learners and direct their resources toward providing higher levels of support. This will have an impact on the use of existing physical and human resources and it needs to be carefully planned for.

2. The SSRC will provide support for the full service and ordinary schools in the district as a resource centre. Here the role will be to assist in the development of learning materials for learners experiencing barriers to learning in mainstream schools and to act as a resource to the district in terms of skills, assistive devices, and other information etc. In support of this activity, they will develop a data base of educational resources in the community to make them useful for educators in mainstream and full-service schools. The specialised knowledge of the staff at the SSRC will be used to provide curriculum support, including assessment, specialised teaching methodologies and use of specialised equipment. The experience of the SSRC staff will also be used to assist with life-skills training and programme-to-work linkages. It is clear that it will take a lot of planning to use staff in the SSRC to support learners and educators in ordinary schools.

3. The SSRC will form part of the DBST. As part of the district-based support team, the SSRC will coordinate and organise professional development activities for educators, school management, and other staff in mainstream schools, full-service and ordinary schools. Among other things, the SSRC will be deployed by the DBST to provide therapeutic and other support to learners in mainstream schools and to build a network of support at district level. The achievement of these goals will depend on working collaboratively with other sectors including Health, Social Development (Welfare), Labour, Justice, Correctional Services, Transport, Safety and Security etc. as well as drawing on the expertise and resources of community organisations and structures including disabled people's organisations, parent organisations, teacher unions, NGOs.

Stop, think and discuss

- Have you worked as (or with) a therapist, psychologist or other health professional in your school?
- What has your experience been?
- How do you think that the role has changed, or will change, within an Inclusive Education system?
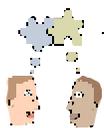
Reflection

Health Professionals will have more flexible roles than they had in the previous education system and will be incorporated into the DBST. Therapists for example will no longer only working in special schools on a one-to-one basis with a child. They will be much more involved with observing and assessing and even intervening in the classroom. They will meet with teachers and parents more regularly, and guide them more closely in their work with each child. Let us quickly remind ourselves of the changes that a shift to Inclusive Education involves:

- A shift from a medical approach to an ecosystemic approach.
- Services are organised according to levels of need and support.
- The admissions process views learners in the context of their community and the capacity of the school to meet their needs.
- The criteria for admission and provision of further support are predominantly based on teacher-produced, curriculum based assessment tools rather than standardized tests.

… and see how these might affect the work of the Health Professionals and staff in Special Schools as Resource Centres. They will:

- Become assessors of needs and barriers at individual, organisational and broader systems levels.
- Become researchers/evaluators who identify all available resources and monitor programmes in and outside of schools and other education institutions.
- Become learning support facilitators who assist teachers to develop responsive learning programmes. This role requires that therapists, psychologists etc. will work in a consultative fashion with parents and teachers.

Learning Activity 37

Time needed: 15 mins

Now that you have developed a better understanding of how the system works, discuss in small groups:

1. What are the practical realities of how learning support personnel from the district and from the SSRC can work with schools to address barriers to learning?
2. How will the way in which the DBST offers support impact on your daily work in schools/districts?

You have probably identified many challenges for the DBST! Let's hope that you have also found some solutions to these as well. We need to acknowledge that the shift from individually based support toward systemic support is not an easy one to make.

One of the challenges is the appropriate training of staff to carry out their new functions. As a teacher presently employed by Special Schools you may need support yourself in adjusting to a new role. This could include attending in-service courses and training initiatives and involving yourself in the training programmes of the district-based support teams aimed at mainstream teachers.[viii]

Those teachers who become learning support specialists may need training in the skills of adult education so that they can work with teachers in mainstream schools. They will need to learn how to resolve conflicts and to solve problems.

Collaboration

We will follow the story of Bashir in his district to see how collaboration between the SSRC and full service school could work.

> *The speech therapist/audiologist, Miss Ndlovu, visits Bashir's school and gets a full report on the child from the ILST, teacher and parents. She then spends time with the child and observes him in the classroom. She reviews his school work and gains an idea of his family situation. She also gives him some tasks to do that will tell her more about his language abilities. From this process she concludes, amongst other things, that:*
> - *Bashir need to get used to wearing his hearing aids*
> - *He needs to learn how to look after them properly*
> - *He needs a language enrichment programme*
> - *He needs learning support to catch up with his reading*
> - *The classroom environment needs to be changed so that it is less noisy and he needs to be positioned in a certain way*
> - *His parents and teacher need to know how to speak to him clearly*

Stop, think and discuss
Look back at the Word Picture that you did for Bashir. Compare this to what the therapist has come up with and answer the following questions:
- Do you think that Bashir's teacher will be able to provide all this support for him in the classroom?
- How do you think that the speech therapist can help her?

- Can you think of other ways that SSRC can be of assistance?
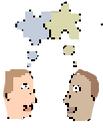
Reflection

You will probably have noted that there are aspects that will be quite new to Mrs. Kotwal, and where she will need ongoing support from the therapist. It could also be very helpful if the SSRC can provide her with information from their resource centre about hearing impairments. Perhaps a teacher from the SSRC could come to her school and advise her on how to rearrange her classroom to make it easier for Bashir to hear.

However, support may change as he changes. For example he will get used to wearing hearing aids and listening through them better. As he gets more used to them, his teacher will remind him less that he should wear them, spend less time drawing his attention to what is happening in discussions and so on. Gradually he will be able to take more control over his own situation, with the encouragement from the teacher. However, she will need to monitor this on an ongoing basis. She will need to check that there are always batteries for his hearing aid in the class in case the ones he is using run out. Mrs. Kotwal might spend a day in a classroom at the SSRC to learn more about these technical skills. She could also invite the teacher from the SSRC to visit her school.

Stop, think and discuss
- What do you think that teachers from the SSRC could learn form visiting a full-service school?

Reflection

You might have thought of some of the following points that the teacher from the SSRC could learn:
- How to work with large classes
- What kinds of difficulty children with hearing impairment might have in a regular classroom and how this can be addressed. This would enable them to better prepare the learners in the SSRC for inclusion into full service schools.

There are many other things that she could learn. The point is that we are moving away from seeing teachers in SSRC as experts in everything. They, too, can learn from their colleagues in the full service schools in the spirit of collaboration.

In addition to support from the SSRC through the DBST, there may be others who can offer support. For example Bashir's grandmother and extended family all have a role to play. So do even Bashir's siblings and friends at home and at school. The teacher needs to bear this in mind as she works with him on an ongoing basis.
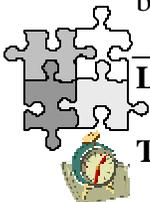
Learning Activity 38

Time needed: 15 minutes

Think about Bashir's teacher, the audiologist, the parents, the ILST, the DBST and the other children.

1. Use the following table to record things which you think they learned from each other during the process of assisting Bashir. We have filled in one example.

	Teacher	Audiologist	Parents	Children	Specialist Support Teacher	Circuit Manager
Things learned from teacher						
Things learned from audiologist	how to cut down noise in the classroom to help Bashir					
Things learned from parents						
Things learned from other children						
Things learned from Specialist Support Teacher						
Things learned from Circuit Manager						
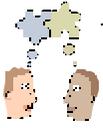
Reflection

From this table we can easily see the value of working as a team of inclusion specialists. The learning that has been gained from this process will not only benefit Bashir but also other children in the school. Bashir's teacher will learn some of the specialized knowledge that Miss Ndlovu has by seeing how she works with Bashir in the classroom, and by trying out suggestions. For example, the teacher will learn to observe whether she is being understood and to repeat or change her message when she a child has difficulty understanding her. Other children in Bashir's class or even in other classes will benefit as the teacher learns more about different methods of working with children. When the teacher follows the audiologist's suggestion of putting bits of carpet under the feet of the chairs to reduce extra noise levels for Bashir, every child in the class will benefit from the quietness.

Health professionals in turn will learn from teachers about the kind of teaching techniques that can help the child to progress in certain learning areas. The teacher from the SSRC can gain a better idea of what the facilities can be like in a full-service school and consider which of the learners in the SSRC might be better placed within this school. In this way dealing with a barrier that one child is experiencing becomes a process of whole-school and community building, to meet the full range of learning needs.

The further principles that Bashir's situation and support team has taught us about intervention and support are:

1. Intervention and support are ongoing, and may change over time.
2. Support is monitored on an ongoing basis. The quality of the support must be maintained across time, across different teachers working with the child, across phases of education, and as the child's circumstances change.
3. Intervention and support is a collaborative exercise between teachers, parents, ILSTs, DBSTs, special school personnel, professionals and community-based organizations.
4. The level or type of need determines that level and type of support.

Stop, think and discuss

- With a partner, share with your feelings about your changing role.
- Share with your partner the ways in which you think you will be able to support each other

Reflection

The changing roles can be confusing and can create anxiety. We should not be too hard on ourselves and expect things to change overnight but at least work toward achieving a better learning environment for all learners.

A partner that we should not forget in the process is the parents. Bear in mind that:

- Parents have the right to be fully informed about and involved in the education of their child.
- Parents are an important source of information for the teacher.
- Informed parents can be an important source of support for the child and for the teacher and others who are attempting to work with the barriers that the child is experiencing.

Let us take the scenario with Bashir a little bit further.

Miss Ndlovu notices when visiting the school that many teachers are coming to her with problems related to hearing in their classrooms. When she follows up on these she finds that there are many children with chronic middle ear infections and that this is contributing significantly to barriers to learning in the school. She takes this information back to the DBST, asking them how they can address these barriers.

Stop, think and discuss
- Think in your group of ways in which the DBST could begin to tackle this issue.
- What process do you think the speech therapist would follow in reporting this problem?
- Which members of the DBST would be involved in responding to the issue and would need to be brought in?
- What resources would be needed to address this problem?
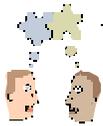
Reflection
It probably emerged from your discussion that the speech therapist has a role here not only in reporting the problem but also in assisting in finding solutions for how this barrier can be addressed. Lets' have a look at how this could be done.

The speech therapist prepares a report on the barriers that she has identified in the school, taking into account contextual factors of the school as well as the hearing problems. She presents this to a meeting of the DBST and some suggestions are made. They come up with the following plan:

- *The DBST invites a representative from the Department of Health to work with them on this issue. Together they work with the ILST of the school to set a date for school wide screening.*
- *Together they draft a letter informing parents that their children will have a hearing screening on a certain date and explain why this is being done. Parents who feel that their child might have a problem are encouraged to alert the school before this date.*

- *The Health Department allocates a health worker to come to the school with them to examine children for ear infections. They also arrange for the clinic to have the capacity to deal with a large number of referrals for ear infections.*


Health worker visiting the school

- *The speech therapist works with the SSRC to ensure that they will be able to screen hearing at the school using noisemakers of different frequencies and that they will carry out diagnostic hearing tests with learners identified for further hearing testing*

Stop, think and discuss

Once again, consider how this will work practically.

- What are some of the challenges that might face the DBST in carrying out the screening?
- For every challenge, suggest a possible solution.
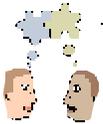
Reflection

From a practical point of view, you could have identified many challenges to be faced. But you have also discussed how the potential of this approach to address barriers to learning is enormous because it looks at systemic factors that impact on large numbers of learners.

Let's go back to Miss Ndlovu and Bashir. As a result of the screening process, Miss Ndlovu reported the following outcomes to the DBST:

"As a result of hearing screening conducted at Signpost Primary on 15 February 2006, 85 learners out of 457 learners at the school were identified as being in need of further identification.

50 of these children had indications of ear infections according to the screening done by the health workers which included an ear examination. All of these children were sent home with a letter to the parents asking them to take the child to the clinic for further

examination and treatment if necessary. At the time of writing this report 37 of these children have been to the clinic. Teachers have been asked to follow up and remind the parents of the other 13 to do so. At the clinic treatment was prescribed for those with ear infections and a return date set. The teachers have also been notified about the treatment and they have been asked to look out for signs of recurring ear infections as well as possible hearing loss.

35 children did not respond satisfactorily when tested by the speech therapist/ audiologist and her assistants (some of whom were teachers from the school that were willing to help and be trained). They were all sent home with a letter requesting their parents to bring them to the SSRC on a certain date. The teachers at the full service school worked with the parents in arranging transport. All of these children had an ear examination by the visiting ear, nose and throat specialist as well as a full hearing test by the audiologist. 12 children were identified as not having a significant hearing loss, 14 had a mild hearing loss, 7 had a moderate hearing loss and 2 were identified as having a severe hearing loss. Where children had an ear infection they were treated and a return date set. Those children with a mild hearing loss will be observed at school and those with moderate and severe hearing losses will be assessed for hearing aids."
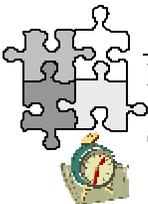
Learning Activity 39

Time Needed: 25 minutes

1. Imagine you are Miss Ndlovu. What recommendations would you make on the basis of this report to:
    *   The teachers
    *   The ILST at the school
    *   The SSRC
    *   The DBST
    *   The health department
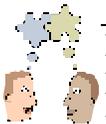
Reflection

By doing this activity in a group you can immediately see the value of discussing support needs with a team of people. Perhaps you came up with ideas like:
    *   Miss Ndlovu might ask the ILST if she could run a training session with the teachers on how to identify when a child might have a hearing problem and when they should be referred for a hearing test. She might also give them some tips on how to cope with hearing loss in the classroom and ask Mrs. Kotwal Bashir's teacher to share some of her successes.

- Miss Ndlovu might ask the ILST to set up a data base of children picked up in the screening and to monitor their progress with her assistance. She might also ask them to approach the SMT or SGB to set up a fund to help purchase and maintain hearing aids for those who cannot afford to do this for themselves.
- Miss Ndlovu might arrange for regular visits by educators from the SSRC to support learners with hearing loss in the school. She might encourage the SSRC to develop a programme of screening and intervention in the local community so that the chances of a child like Bashir not being helped become less likely.
- Miss Ndlovu could report back to the DBST on the progress of this programme and motivate for a screening programme to take place in other schools within the district. She could share with other professionals such as the occupational therapist, her approach to working with the full service school and help them in setting up similar programmes.

You have probably thought of a whole lot of other ideas as well. What becomes clear is that what started with an intervention for one child, Bashir, has had an enormous impact on many children because of the support systems that are available. It is also possible that by addressing one barrier to learning, other barriers may be exposed. For example, visiting the clinic could reveal other illnesses that had not been picked up previously.

Let's look at another scenario together:
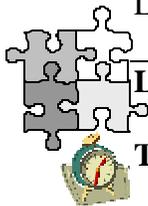
Learning Activity 40

Time Needed: 25 minutes

Read this scenario carefully:

> *Mrs. Du Toit is very distressed because one of her Grade 7 learners, Jan, has been picked up by the police for vandalism. His single mother has been notified and has come to Mrs. Du Toit in tears. She does not know what to do about Jan. As a result of this interview, Mrs Du Toit observes Jan closely. She gives him a little extra time in the day and ask him to help out after school. When he is alone he shows signs of enthusiasm and intelligence. As soon as other children are around he becomes quiet and sullen. He does not seem to have friends and is prone to aggressive outbursts. Mrs. Du Toit becomes especially worried when Jan has a fight on the playground one day and it seems that he would have really hurt the other child badly if he had not been pulled off. She decides that she needs more help and asks to present her concerns to the ILST. She invites the mother when the meeting takes place. The ILST decides that they need further support with this issue and approach the DBST with their concerns. The DBST draws in the expertise of the psychologist, Mr Nel, from the district youth care centre who comes to visit the school.*

1. What recommendations would you make to Mr. Nel based on your experience and your own role in the Inclusive Education system? Use the following questions to guide you.
   a. What should he do when he first comes to the school?
   b. How could he involve the youth care centre?
   c. What would be the role of the DBST?
   d. What other programmes in the district do you think he could link up with?

Reflection

You can see from the case study itself that Mrs du Toit, and Jan's mother, immediately has somewhere to turn to for help, the ILST. In turn the ILST has a place that it can go to, the DBST, for specialist help in the form of a psychologist, Mr Nel. There are a number of ways in which Jan, his mother, and Mrs du Toit may need help. The ILST and the DBST will be better equipped to find solutions, than Mrs du Toit would be on her own. And it is more likely that Jan will find a way out of a potentially destructive situation.

Ways in which Inclusive Education operates within a school or a district can vary substantially. The people in the system determine whether it will work or not. Positive attitudes, a problem solving approach and enthusiasm amongst team members goes a long way to making Inclusive Education successful.

Summary

You have seen that there are many levels of support in Inclusive Education. All forms of support in Inclusive Education have one overall aim: to initiate, enhance, maintain and monitor the support given to children in the classrooms to enable them to overcome barriers to learning and to access the curriculum in positive and constructive ways.

- Teachers help one another to work with children who experience barriers to learning.
- The principal, with the SMT and the SGB, supports teachers by making sure that the cultures, policies and practices of the whole school environment support inclusion. Progressively, this approach will ensure that schools build their capacity to respond to diversity.
- The ILST makes sure that teachers have support for assessment and intervention, and that they have what they need in the classroom. Their role is to increase the capacity of the school to cater for the full range of learning needs.
- The DBST supports the Principal and the ILST. They bring the full range of support skills and resources in the district to bear on addressing barriers to learning and participation.
- The SSRCs and the special youth care centres (reform schools) will focus on supporting learners with high support needs. Their skills will be made available to the district through the DBST.

Simply put, Inclusive Education provides a multi-layered support system for best teaching practice in addressing barriers to learning.

Portfolio Assignment 4

You should spend approximately 4 hours completing this assignment.

The overall aim of this assignment is to investigate how ready schools are to receive children experiencing barriers to learning. It requires you to produce an essay of approximately 3000 words (approximately 10 pages).

You will need to read the case study of Germaine.

> *Germaine Cloete (6) had a traumatic experience at the age of 4. A primus stove set his mother's shack on fire and he was burnt badly. He had to stay in hospital for a long time and to return on several occasions. He experienced severe pain and underwent several operations to deal with the damage to his face and hands. Eventually the doctors had done everything they could to help the little boy went home. However, his face is still scarred and his little fingers are curled on both hands, making it difficult for him to use them properly. He still has to go regularly to the hospital for check-ups and treatment. Ms Cloete, who is a single mother, was also traumatized by the incident and felt very guilty as she felt responsible. She tried to hide Germaine away from the people in the local community, because of his scarring, and because she did not want people to be talking about her and Germaine. However, the social worker at the hospital encouraged her to get him enrolled in school because he needed to begin learning and developing. Mrs. Cloete took a long time to gather the courage to do this, but she eventually began looking for a school for him. She had to visit a number of schools before she succeeded in getting him admitted.*

Pathos Elementary School
> *The principal was sympathetic and felt sorry for this child who had had such a tragic accident. However, he explained that it would really not be fair to the child or to the rest of the school to accept Germaine. Teachers did not have the time to spend on a poor child like this and the other children would all suffer because of the extra attention this child needed. The child would be teased because children are cruel and he would feel excluded. He really would have liked to help them as it was his Christian duty but the Education Department made this impossible with the new curriculum, big classes and lack of resources. In any*

case the teachers were not trained to work with children like this.

Endeavour Primary School

The principal was friendly but worried when he saw Germaine. He asked some questions about his development and behaviour and then told the Ms Cloete that they wanted to help Germaine because of the new policy but the school's governing body struggled to accept this proposal. The Education Department also did little to support them. He called the Grade 1 teacher to get her opinion. The teacher could not hide her shock when she saw the little boy. However, she said that if the school expected her to take him, she would do her duty. She asked Germaine to write his name and count to ten. When he could not do this she shook her head and said that she really did not think she could cope with him. She told the Principal that in her experience parents seldom took responsibility for their children, and often expected the teacher to do all the work and to go out of her way to teach the child. If she took Germaine into her class it would just be to demonstrate to the Principal that inclusion could not work.

Open Doors Primary School

By this time Ms Cloete was so discouraged that she left Germaine at home. Ms Cupido, the Foundation Phase Head of Department at Open Doors Primary school welcomed her warmly and asked her why she had not brought Germaine with her. Ms Cloete burst into tears and explained how hard it was for her to see people's shock when they saw her son. She realized that he needed a school urgently and asked if there was no special school or place where he could be helped. Ms Cupido comforted her and asked her to tell Germaine's story. Ms Cloete was relieved that she could do this and explained that he was a wonderful child and that she did not want to send him away. She realized that he was slower than other children and needed lots of extra help because of his damaged hands. She said that it was sometimes difficult at home because Germaine was also sometimes naughty and very active. When Ms Cupido realized that Germaine was a child who would need intensive support, she explained that the school was trying to include all children whatever their needs, and was making special plans to support them. The whole school really worked as a team. The Governing Body had even built a ramp so that they could include a child in a wheelchair. She was just concerned about including Germaine

because the Grade R and Grade 1 classes were very full and the school was finding it difficult to get extra help and support for the teachers. She promised to discuss Germaine's case with the principal and the school's ILST. Meanwhile she suggested that Ms Cloete go to the neighbouring school because that school had really made tremendous progress towards becoming inclusive.

Signpost Primary School

With a sad heart Ms Cloete made another appointment. When she and Germaine approached the new school the children were just returning to their classes after break. A few of them waved and smiled at Germaine. To her surprise a teacher came and invited Germaine to join her class while Ms. Cloete spoke to the principal and the H.O.D. They listened carefully to her story and seemed to understand her needs. The principal explained that the whole school was working very hard to create an environment where all children could feel that they belonged. He said they tried to do the following:

  a. Teach all learners to respect and help each other, understand and accept differences and work actively together in the classrooms.
  b. Respect and welcome parents into the school and encourage them to share their information about their children with the staff and to work together with the school as a team for the well-being of the children.
  c. Teachers were learning to respect diversity and to accept every child as an individual with his strengths and challenges. They worked together with other teachers, Lists and the School Management Team to minimize barriers to learning that the child might be experiencing. They brought in experts from the community, a special school and the Education Department when necessary.
  d. The School Governing Body supported the school's mission and vision to become inclusive and to be an effective school.

Ms Cloete did not understand everything the principal told her, but she understood that the school wanted to take her child and help him. She could not thank the principal enough and promised to do whatever she could to help Germaine in the school.

Now answer the following questions. You can use the questions to guide your thinking about your essay.

1. There are clear differences between each of the schools that Ms. Cloete visited. Note down four important differences between the schools in the following categories:
   - Attitudes
   - Facilities
   - Organization

2. Which school do you think was ready to receive Germaine? Why?

3. Think carefully about your school, whether it is an ordinary school on the way to becoming a full service school, a full service school, a youth care centre, or a special school. If you don't work in a school then use a school in your district as an example. Write an assessment of the school in terms of how far you think it has come on its Inclusive Education journey. Perhaps it is only at the very beginning, or maybe it is well into the journey. That is not important. What is important is how you are able to critically evaluate the school's progress. Use at least the following to structure your evaluation:

   a. What are the school's strengths?
   b. What are the challenges that the school faces?
   c. What are the main obstacles the school is experiencing?
   d. Indicate the main goals that you think the school should set immediately towards the development of inclusive practices.
   e. Identify support systems that the school would use to help in this developmental process.

Assessment for Portfolio 1: Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
Sisonke Consortium

Assignment 4

Participant's name:

Please comment on progress under the relevant headings.

Criteria	Completed successfully	Needed support
Notes important differences between the schools in the following categories: • Attitudes • Facilities • Organization		
Identifies which school was ready to receive Germaine and explains why		
Identifies the strengths of own school or schools in the district		
Identifies the challenges and obstacles that your school faces		
Indicates the main goals that you think the school should set immediately towards the development of inclusive practices		
Identifies support systems that you would use or bring in to help you in this developmental process		
Reviewer's comments		

Notes and References:

[i] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*, Feb 2006, p.23.

[ii] Porter, G.L., Wilson, M., Kelly B & den Otter (1991). "Problem solving teams: a thirty minute peer helping model". In Porter, G.L. & Richler, D. (Eds). *Changing Canadian Schools: Perspectives on Disability and Inclusion.* North York,Ont: The Roeher Institute.

[iii] Ibid.

[iv] *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the implementation of Inclusive Education: Full-service Schools*, Department of Education (June 2005).

[v] *Draft National Strategy for Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.* February 2006, pg 102

[vi] Ibid, pg.122

[vii] *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the implementation of Inclusive Education: Special Schools as Resource Centres*, June 2005, pp. 10-11.

[viii] Ibid.

162