

## Youth – The Future of Inclusion



The Inclusive Recreation Resource Center is partnering once again with the NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the New York State Recreation and Park Society, and other professional groups to increase the capacity of community and recreation providers that serve youth in their inclusion practices. Over the next two years, we will be focusing on the following activities:

- Developing and piloting a youth version of *Inclusion U Online*
- Developing and piloting a Mentored Inclusion Coaching Protocol to be used with 30 selected agencies to enhance programmatic and administrative inclusion at those agencies
- Working collaboratively with NYSRPS and other professional associations to recognize and celebrate inclusion champions at selected youth-serving agencies
- Studying effective programmatic and administrative inclusion practices through an in-depth evaluation study and developing a field-tested "Inclusion Toolkit"

### ***Inclusion U Online for Youth***

*Inclusion U Online*, our field-tested and effective online training, has been available now for about a year. The online training has been approved for 1.0 CEUs by NYSRPS and pre-approved by NCTRC as meeting content requirements for CTRS recertification. The training can be readily accessed on the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center website (see sidebar for more information). Using the award-winning *Inclusion U Online* as a foundation, we will be developing and piloting an online version of the training geared toward young people. We hope to make the *Inclusion U Online for Youth* an exciting way for youth to earn certificates and badges as they learn how to promote inclusion, whether as a part of a Scout activity, a summer recreation staff activity, a junior camp counselor activity, a 4-H project or other avenues. We will have youth on our newly formed advisory committee as we develop the short, fun and interactive online training geared toward 12-18 year olds. Our dream is that youth-serving agencies will incorporate the online training for youth into aspects of their operations, like summer staff training, camp counselor training, Scout badges, and more.



## ***Inclusion U Online***



*Inclusion U Online* is a 10-hour training that teaches you how to be a Certified Inclusivity Assessor. In *Inclusion U Online*, you will learn the foundations of inclusion and how to use the *Inclusivity Assessment Tool*.

*Inclusion U Online* has nine modules. For each module, you take a quiz to advance to the next module. At the end of the nine modules, you take the Inclusion U Final Exam to show that you have gained the knowledge and competency to be a Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA). You are then able to complete inclusivity assessments, using the *Inclusivity Assessment Tool*. You will be able to add your inclusivity assessments to the IRRC online recreation database.

Upon successful completion of the *Inclusion U Online* training, you will be able to print out your CIA Card and a Certificate of Completion. In order to receive 1.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for *Inclusion U Online*, you mail a copy of your Certificate of Completion, along with the CEU fee to NYSRPS. NYSRPS provides CEUs according to the guidelines of the IACET (International Association for Continuing Education). *Inclusion U Online* is also CE Pre-Approved by NCTRC.



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You can access and register for *Inclusion U Online* on the IRRC website at [www.inclusiverec.org](http://www.inclusiverec.org).

### ***Mentored Inclusion Coaching***

Another important activity of our youth inclusion project will be developing and piloting a Mentored Inclusion Coaching Protocol to be used with 30 agencies to enhance inclusion. In essence, we will be developing and testing an inclusion tool kit that can be readily used by staff to enhance inclusion practices. We will be working closely with carefully chosen youth-serving agencies, providing support, education, and technical assistance. In particular, we are interested in working with agencies that serve underserved populations in their communities including racially, culturally, geographically, and linguistically under-served. We plan to work with parks and recreation departments, youth bureaus, YMCAs, camps, Scout troops, 4-H groups, youth centers, and other youth-serving organizations. Two staff members from the IRRC, Geoff Peppel, CTRS and Ian Haines, CTRS, will spend time on-site at selected agencies assisting in inclusion efforts.

Chosen staff from each of the selected youth-serving agencies will complete *Inclusion U Online* (adult version; fee waived) and choose youth staff to pilot the *Inclusion U Online for Youth*. Staff will also participate in a mentored inclusivity assessment with the IRRC staff, help develop a plan for enhancement of inclusion, and then receive onsite mentored inclusion coaching as well as follow-up support throughout the two years of the project.



To recognize their efforts, a staff member from each of the selected agencies will be supported by IRRC to attend the annual professional conference pertinent to their agency (NYSRPS, ANYSYB, ACA, others) to be recognized by IRRC and NYSRPS as an Inclusion Champion based on their work with this project. IRRC will also feature the Inclusion Champions on the IRRC website.

### ***Evaluation***

Throughout our two-year project, we will carefully track individual and systems outcomes in relation to inclusive recreation and youth. We will be conducting pre- and post-assessments, doing observations of programs, and conducting in-depth interviews. What we learn in the evaluation will help us validate and field-test an “Inclusion Toolkit” that we hope to make widely available to youth-serving agencies. We envision the toolkit being something that staff can access during programs to help them come up with successful strategies for inclusion on the fly, hopefully in the form of an app or other easy to access format.



We are excited to once again partner with NYS DDPC, NYSRPS, ACA, ANYSYB, Scouts, 4-H and other youth-serving agencies to ensure that ALL people of ALL ages can play wherever they choose!

