TITLE: Mainstreaming Children into Grade School Classrooms

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Thesis:
Is the decision to mainstream a child into a classroom the choice of the parents or the schools? Who gets to decide what effects the child’s education and does it really make their learning environment better?

Core Concepts/Keywords: mainstreaming, parents, schools, elementary education, learning environment

Primary Source:

Citation: Jacob’s Story. Sinai School. Online Video. 2008. http://youtube.com/watch?v=twwTa6ctsPI//

Annotation: The short film gave an indepth look at how a child with cerebral palsy can function in a mainstreamed environment and still succeed. The video is a great way to show the general public that children with disabilities espically ones that are physical and mental can succeed in a mainstreamed environment.

Print Reference Source:


Annotation: The encyclopedia was a great tool when starting out the research for the project, it had so much valuable information. The Encyclopedia is accessible and an up-to-date account of all aspects of child development. The encyclopedia was written by a team of experts from around the world and covers topics from neonatal development into child development at the gradeschool age. The article that I found most helpful was titled “Development of Learning and Memory” it was a comprehensive look at how the memory of a child is formed and what can shape the development of the learning process to help determine how well the child can perform academically.

Electronic Reference Source:


Annotation: The article gives a great history of Special Education for disabled people that dates all the way back to the day’s of early Greece and Rome. Special Education became universally accepted in all developed countries by the twentieth century. Today two main concepts still dominate the role that Special Education has in society they are the ‘interindivdual differences’ and the ‘intraindividual differences.’ The concept of the ‘interindivdual differences’ compares one child with another on skill level and other abilites such as motor skills and communication ability. The concept of the ‘intraindividual differences’ compares one child’s ability in one area with another area of the childs ability.

Web Sites:

Citation: Lyness, D’arcy. “Article of Interest – Mainstreaming Kids.” Bridges4kids. May 2002. 31 Mar. 2008
Annotation:
The article really had some great background information on Mainstreaming Children into classrooms. The term was coined in the early 1970’s to describe classrooms where children with and without disabilities are learning together. There were some key points brought up by the article that really discussed what it was like for the children to be mainstreamed and how it affected them individually and as a whole classroom. This a source on the topic that is recommendable to others who are looking for a basic understanding or definition of what mainstreaming is and how it is implemented now in the classroom. The article was written by D’arcy Lyness who has a PhD and has written many other articles on the subject.

Citation:

Annotation:
The website is very helpful because it provides links to other websites that contain the same information on Inclusion Mainstreaming, which is another term for mainstreaming in education. There are all sorts of articles listed on the Inclusion page and other resources for educators that are teaching in a mainstreamed classroom and also for parents who are looking for some helpful hints on how their child may be learning in school. The site is easy to navigate and clearly titled with an array of sections that will satisfy all your education questions and concerns.

Books:

Annotation:
The book, although outdated, still holds some good information on how the laws and legislature came to be about mainstreaming children into classrooms. Much of the legislation many parents had to fight for there were no politicians with an Inclusion Education platform when the changes were needed the most. The book also talks about the resistance to mainstreaming and how that plays a role in where inclusion education is now being implemented. This source is a good launching point for writing a paper on this topic and also holds very reputable information it is associated with the School of Education of the University of Michigan.

Citation:

Annotation:
This book is highly reputable it is associated with Indiana University at Bloomington and it has many essays on diverse topics that are all associated with mainstreaming in grade school education. The section titled: The Impact of Reform on Students with Disabilities was the most helpful part of the book it really described, accurately, how the disabled child feels. The section really talks about how the teachers could do a better job to meet the needs of the child by creating special activities that are on their level but still relevant to what the class is learning. This section discusses how in public schools the teachers and parents need to work together to make sure that the needs of the child are being met.

Citation:

Annotation:
This book is a valuable resource on the subject of inclusion education and how a child understands what is happening in the classroom. It examines what happens when children with varying levels of disabilities and no disabilities work together in a classroom. The source shows how children who don't have disabilities describe children with learning disabilities and with physical disabilities. Children often think that those
who have learning disabilities to be just like them and children with physical disabilities to have some level of difficulty with school work even though the disability is only physical.

**Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles:**

*Citation:*
http://web.ebscohost.com.gate.lib.buffalo.edu

*Annotation:*
Throughout the past 20 years the policy and practice of special education for children with disabilities has been mostly aimed at incorporating children with disabilities into a mainstreamed classroom environment without much thought to who else would be affected. The policy is widely supported based on principal by parents, teachers, school administrators and in the public opinion. There has however been a substantiastically lower agreement about whether it can be practiced without rendring too many consequences on the other children in the classroom. The article was really helpful it gave a different perspective on the issue and gave the negative effects of having mainstreamed children participate in a normal classroom environment.

*Citation:*
http://web.ebscohost.com.gate.lib.buffalo.edu

*Annotation:*
Studies have shown that children who have disabilites and have been mainstreamed in education tend to have a harder time making friendships with other children who don’t have disabilities. Children with disabilities often lack the social–age–appropriate skills to aid them in the task of building friendly relationships with children of their own age. The article talks about two different types of relationships that children need to make in order to develope their social skills properly: vertical relationships and horizontal relationships. Vertical relationships are formed with people who have more or less knowledge and power, an example is a relationship between a teacher and child. Horizontal relationships can be made between people with equal status in a situation, an example is children with other children in a classroom. This article was helpful in providing vital information on how children form friendships and relationships inside of a mainstreamed classroom.

**Newspaper Article:**

*Citation:*
http://www.factiva.com.gate.lib.buffalo.edu

*Annotation:*
The newspaper article was written on behalf of the disabled kids in a small town in Pennsylvania where the state is opening a special school for grade school and high school children with moderate to severe emotional, physical, and social/behavioral disabilities. The advocates believe that opening the school will only segregate these children more within their group of peers and in their community. In the article one mother talks about how her daughter, who uses a wheelchair and attends a regual public school, is going to graduate in June along side her peers. Her mother believes that the school experience her daughter recieved wouldn’t be the same if she attended a school only for children with disabilities.

**Additional Sources:**
Citation:

Annotation:
The article gave a small argument on why the Mainstreaming programs need to be flexible and work with each child on an individual basis. A blanket approach won’t work all children with special needs cannot be treated the same because their needs are specific to what handicap they have. The article, although short, was helpful in pointing out that the programs need to be able to gravitate around the child’s need and not around a certain curriculum.

Citation:

Annotation:
The author of the article is a retired principal who presents opinions on the special education programs based on her experiences. She argues with an article that was written previously that she felt was negative toward the special education programs and the work that schools are doing to incorporate inclusion in a way that benefits all the children and the parents. She argues that the inclusion programs are of high quality and do a sufficient job of helping the children in the classrooms. This article was a good way to look at the arguments that often come up against inclusion because of false theories.

Citation:
Griffin, Colleen. Interview with Molly Reimondo. Rec. 7 April 2008.

Annotation:
The interview took place in a special education room that was designed to help children with their speech and hearing needs. Colleen Griffin is a licensed speech pathologist who works with kids of all ages and disability levels who are currently mainstreamed into classrooms. I sat in a classroom for a half of a day and observed how the students learned and how they interacted inside the classroom and in their mainstreamed classrooms.

Citation:

Annotation:
The chapter in the book is centered around the idea of separation and inclusion into public schools when dealing with special education. The chapter goes on to show both sides of the viewpoints by showing how hard it is to figure out how to best educate these children who have different learning capacities. The excerpt from the book was helpful because it talked about the needs of the children and the inclusion vs. separation issues that a lot of public schools are dealing with.