

Breaking Down Inclusion; Building Up Students

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MGH Aspire

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MassGeneral Hospital
for Children™



Agenda



Introductions

IEP Process Core Concepts

What is Inclusion?

Strategies for Successful Inclusion

Q+A

Who am I?

Who are you?

Program of MGH and MGH for Children

Dedicated to providing children, adolescents, and adults with Asperger's, high-cognitive autism, or a related profile with the knowledge and skills necessary to make social connections and lead fulfilling lives.

MGH Aspire's "3S" Model:

- Social Competency
- Stress Management
- Self-Awareness

Aspire's "3S" Model

- Self-Awareness
- Stress Management
- Social Competency



These domains support all that we do and are a part of our short and long-term trajectories.

Without these three ingredients life is a challenge.

Building skills in these areas requires a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Recognize that social competency is needed in life
- Understand my social strengths/challenges
- Develop social thinking and social skills
- Apply this knowledge in various contexts/relationships
- Show empathy for others
- Form positive relationships, work in teams effectively, deal effectively with conflict

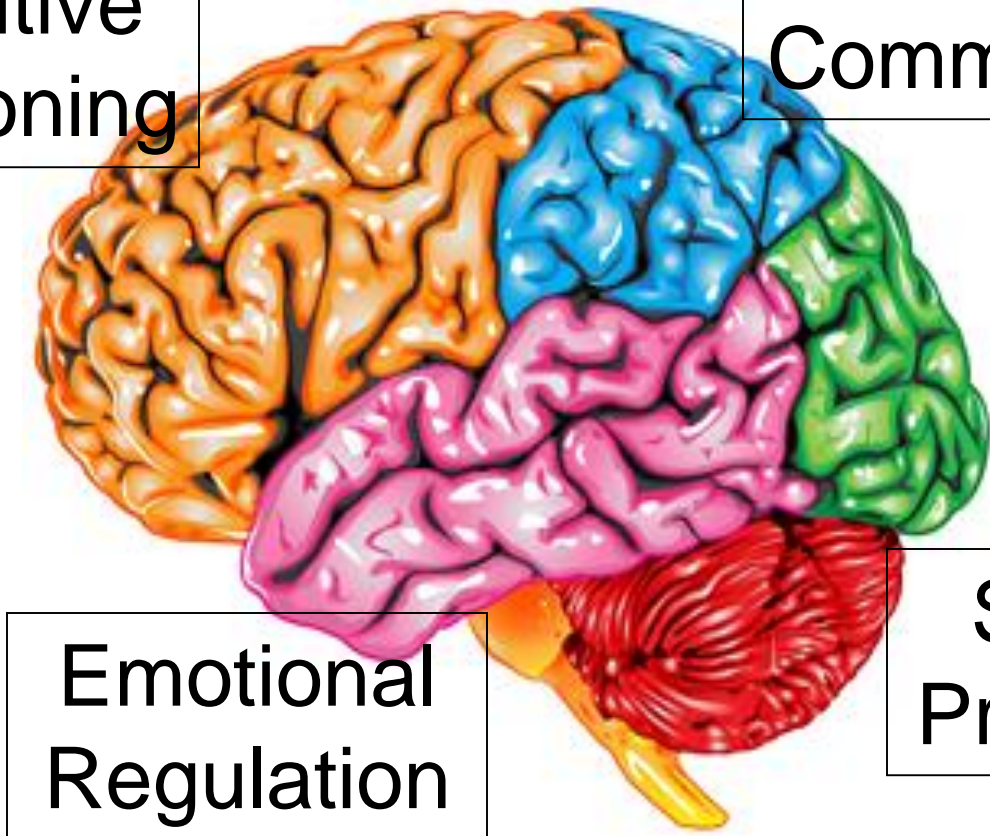


- Understand stress is a part of life-neither good nor bad
- Know, recognize, and predict internal and external triggers
- Link thoughts, feelings, and behavior
- Manage stress responses (reactively and proactively)
- Develop and utilize a coping tool box of self-regulation and stress management strategies

- Know my personal strengths and challenges
- Recognize and express my likes, dislikes, passions
- Acknowledge and control my habits
- Set goals
- Understand and manage my emotions and behavior to achieve goals
- Recognize when effort/perseverance is required and be able to apply it

Executive
Functioning

Social
Communication



Emotional
Regulation

Sensory
Processing

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

IDEA is...

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Appropriate Evaluation
- Parent and Teacher Participation
- Procedural Safeguards
- Plus: Confidentiality, Transition Services, Discipline

IDEA is NOT...

“Inclusion”

So, what is inclusion?

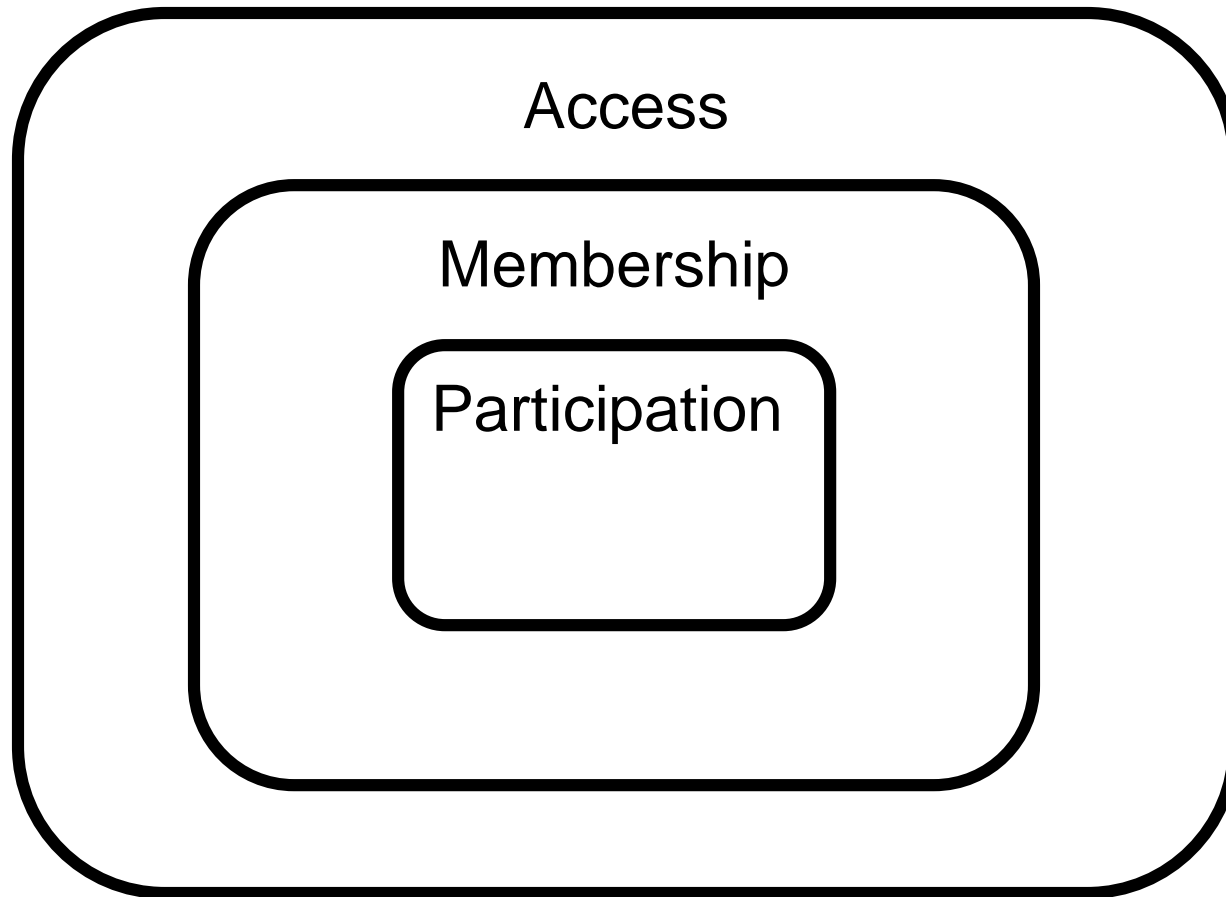
- A conceptual framework, not a legal principle
- A top-down belief system
- Commitment of resources
- Active prioritizing of resources
- NOT “integration”
- NOT “mainstreaming”

“Inclusion—the preferred term—involves supporting students with disabilities through individual learning goals, accommodations, and modifications so that they are able to access the general education curriculum (in the general education classroom) and be held to the same high expectations as their peer.”

—The IRIS Center

Inclusion practices (when implemented with fidelity):

- Increase student success variables (examples: time spent engaged in academically challenging curricula)
- Improved self-esteem
- Greater academic achievement (Everyone benefits from differentiated instruction!)



- Universal Design
 - Accommodations
 - Modifications
- Community-wide knowledge and standards
 - Training, Professional Development
 - Charter or Mission
- Staff attitudes

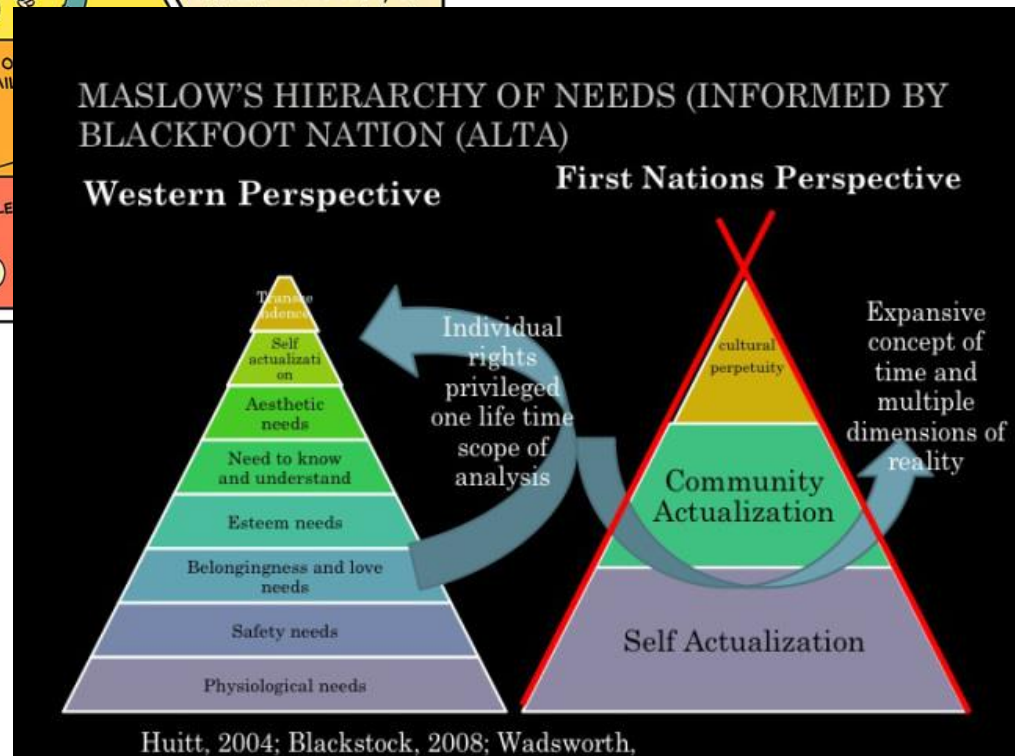
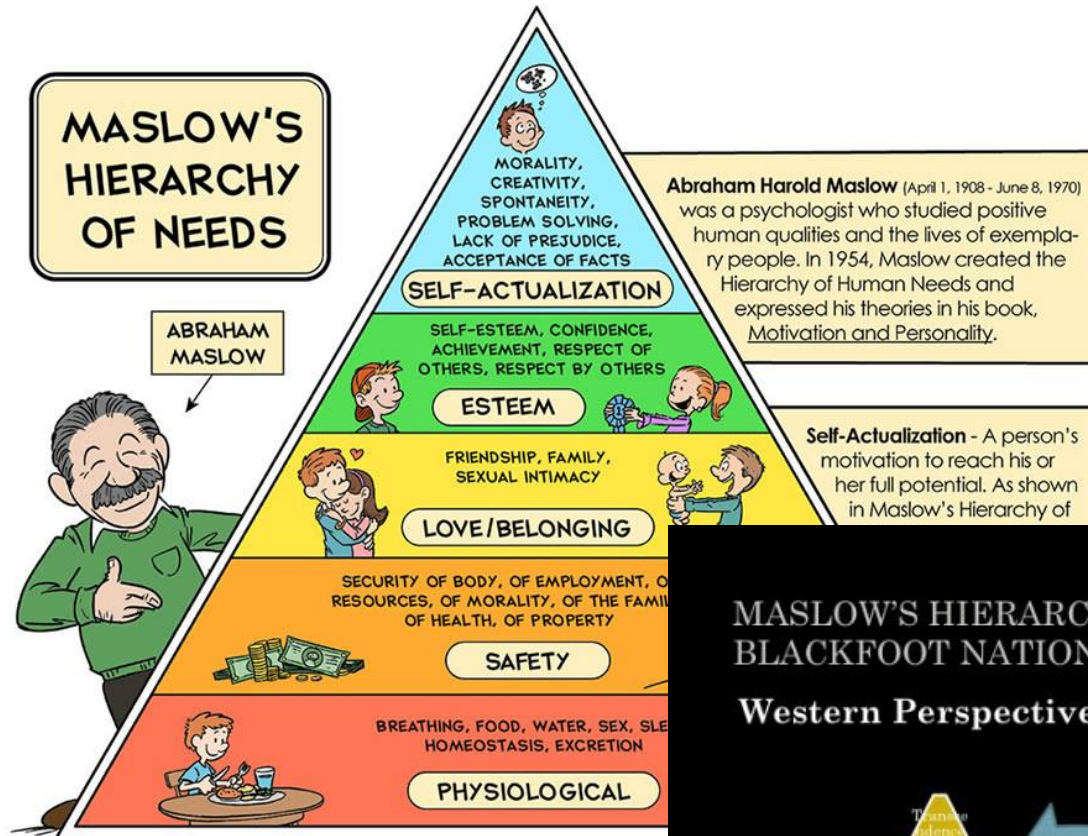
For the student, this is *passive* engagement.

- **NEURODIVERSITY**
 - Student-centered
 - Strengths-based
- Trust-worthy, accessible expertise
- Proactive oversight
- Staff Attitudes

For the student, this is somewhere *between passive and active engagement.*

- Accommodations and Modifications
 - Input
 - Output
- Specialized providers
- Specific Curricula: Structured Social-Emotional Learning
- Educated, empowered Teaching Assistants
 - On-going support systems

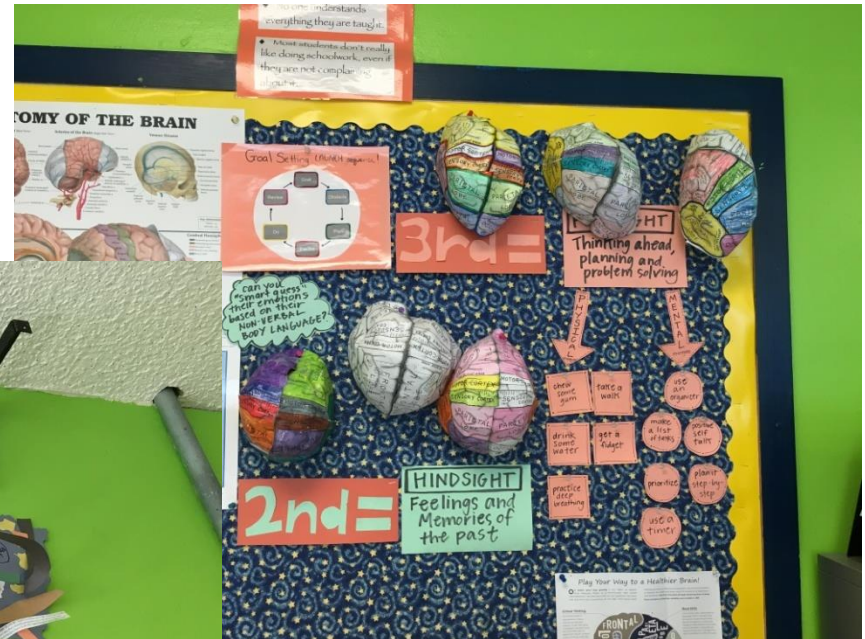
For the student, this is *active* engagement.



Response to Intervention (RTI)



NEURODIVERSITY



Students should see themselves reflected in their environment.

- Personalized Learning
- Project-Based Learning

Transparency

Holistic/Whole Child

- Preferred interests...
 - ...are social currency
 - ...are vocational currency
 - ...are the key to quality of life and independent living
 - ...are a starting point on which to build other cognitive skills
 - ...tap in to intrinsic motivations
 - ...serve as a model for cognitive organization

- In Home-School collaboration: QUALITY over QUANTITY
- Reduction of services is not always a bad thing
- Cohorts matter
- Balance individual student needs with a commitment to inclusion (hybrid models)

The Four Most Important Beliefs Adults Can Foster in Children:



A feeling that they are appreciated/liked/valued for their neurodiversity (comprehensively).

What they do is different than **Who** they are.

A sense that they have some control over their lives. Mastery leads to pride.

A sense that they are increasingly autonomous.

Q+A