

Evaluating Inclusion in Schools: The Amigos Program

Background

Heads up for Inclusion first developed their Amigos School Program in 2001 as an objective to using peer support and mentorship through the pairing of **Amigos**: youth with an intellectual or physical disability who face barriers to inclusion with **Connectors**: mainstream school students who are well connected and supportive of others.



Purpose of Project

After over 25 years of implementation of the Amigos school project, Heads up for Inclusion seeks research and suggestions for best practices to proceed with in the future of this program. Therefore, research is centered upon providing the host with best evaluation practices for the program, as well as the evaluate the success of the Amigos Program since it's implementation in 2001.



Methodology

Our research is centered around a cross-sectional research design of three primary methodologies: interviews, literature review and coding/grounded theory. Interviews are focused around parents, teachers and host coordinators who are connected to the program, our literature review will allow us to find and compare similar programs, and coding/grounded theory will help us understand the successes and/or challenges of the Amigos program across and between a range of stakeholders.

“Your disability is what you have, it’s not who you are.”

-Lucinda Hage, Founder of Heads up for Inclusion

Research Questions

1. What similar programs to Amigos as offered across North America, and what are the typical modes of feedback for each?
2. What challenges do they and other programs face in obtaining useful feedback?
3. How do different populations connected to this program define ‘inclusion’ and in what ways has the Amigos program contributed to the lives of participants from the perspective of parents/guardians and teachers?
4. How do parents/guardians and teachers view the effectiveness of the current Amigos Program in relation to the programs stated aims and goals?
5. Do barriers exist that impede the success in the goals of the Amigos program? How and in what ways?
6. Are there suggestions from teachers and parents/guardians for the future of the program?

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