

Early Intervention in Inclusive
Education in Mumbai
The 'Why' and the 'How'

Manual 9

How to Plan an
Inclusive Curriculum



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Foreword

The '*How to Series of Inclusive Education*' is a set of manuals that have emerged from a study undertaken by The Spastics Society Of India, Mumbai in collaboration with UNICEF and supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The title of the project is *Inclusive Education Practice in Early Childhood*. It is an action research project involving both intervention and research on a large scale covering 6000 families based in the impoverished areas of the Mumbai slums. Six hundred children, both disabled and non disabled, were placed in Demonstration Learning Centres within the community where an enrichment programme and a need based intervention was given over a two year period. The intervention strategies were carefully documented and the progress of the children tracked by external researchers not connected with the intervention team. The aim was to study the mechanism or *intervention* strategies needed to put *children with disabilities* into existing programmes being run by Government and non-Governmental agencies and the barriers that came in the way to accessibility and participation.

From this evidence based research emerged a series of instructional resource material: the '*How to Series of Inclusive Education*.' These manuals are relevant for any organisation, or agency, working to address the crucial need of bringing *children with any disability* into inclusive settings. They recommend *a whole community approach to inclusive education*, and although the research was carried out in India it can be used anywhere in the world.



Children at play



Learning number values



Writing on the slates



Joining puzzles

The enrichment programme is the curriculum with which you start with when children enter your anganwadi. An inclusive preschool curriculum covers 10 areas that prepare the child for formal learning. They are :

1. Visual Perceptual Training Programme
2. Language Programme in English & Hindi
3. Pre-reading / Number and Writing Programme
4. Creative Activities
5. Music and Movement
6. Free play
7. Dramatics
8. Yoga & Prayers
9. Ethics
10. Sports & Playtime

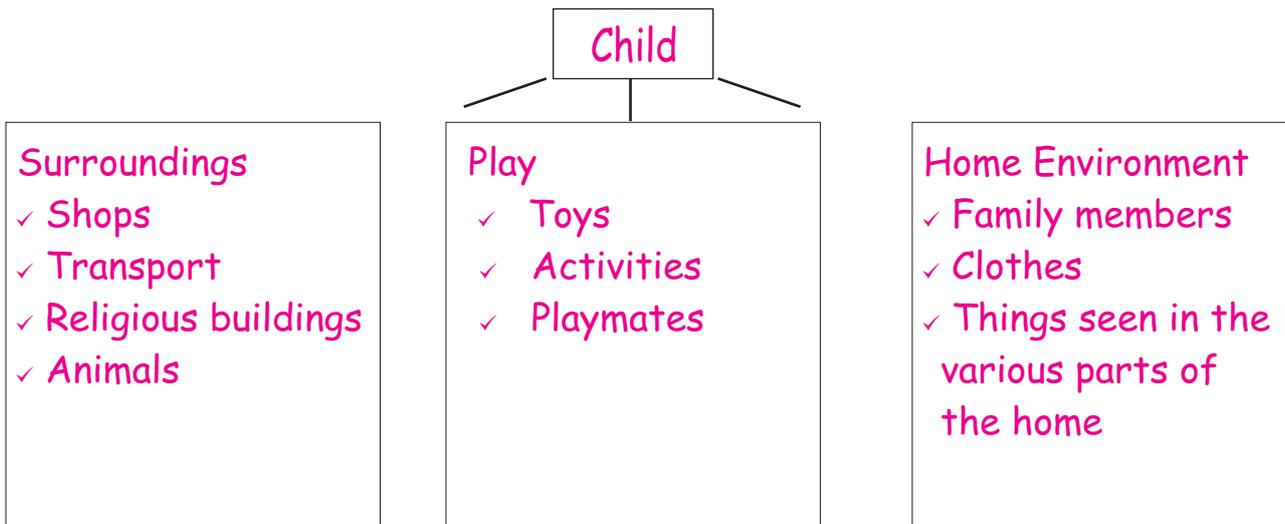


Paper folding

The support of the community people and resources like an assistant anganwadi worker, mothers and older siblings and teaching aids is essential in implementing the curriculum.

How should you prepare yourself for planning an inclusive curriculum?

Begin with an **ecological inventory** in which you should study the environment from which the child comes. You need to know the various objects and tasks that the child is familiar with in his environment.



- ✓ Using familiar objects in your teaching helps in the understanding of concepts faster by relating them to everyday life.
- ✓ Have a set of storybooks ready with you before the anganwadi starts. They should be culture specific, cost effective and locally available.
- ✓ For children with disabilities in your class, also have a 'remedial kit' ready with you for perceptual training.



Playing with bottle caps

¹ Source: Library of Spastics Society of India, Mumbai

A remedial kit guides you with a set of activities to be carried out in case children have difficulties in understanding certain concepts or have problems in a particular sensory area.

The initial period in the class

In initial period, children may:

- Cry
- Not leave the mother to sit in the class
- Show behaviour like shouting and screaming, throwing things, not listening etc.

Certain suggestions to overcome these difficulties are:

- ✓ Initially, you should keep the anganwadi for $\frac{1}{2}$ hr and then increase the timings gradually to 3 hrs.
- ✓ Mother should sit in the class with the child for few days, then phase out the mother's presence in the class. For the children with disabilities, the mother should be in the class for more time till the child settles in the class and you are sure of the child's routine.
- ✓ Initially, the children should be given toys and games for free play and then initiated into a group for structured activities.



Mother helping the child in the classroom

You should start with these activities:

- ✓ Painting
- ✓ Colouring
- ✓ Water play
- ✓ Group games
- ✓ Rhymes and songs
- ✓ Stories
- ✓ Music and movement



Group learning

The whole curriculum should be taught with certain guidelines in mind:

- ✓ Establish ground rules in the beginning of the year on punctuality, regularity, cleanliness and discipline.
- ✓ Build on the existing knowledge that the child carries from home and his community.
- ✓ Take care to provide appropriate variety in the day so that the level of interest and motivation is sustained.
- ✓ Proceed at a pace of learning that a child can follow.
- ✓ Build the concepts to be taught, step-by-step.
- ✓ Proceed to the next concept only when the children have understood the previous concept fully. It may happen that some children may not go at the pace of the class. Here the teacher can take some time (either after school or within the class time) when she can give one to one attention to the child.
- ✓ Maintain the cultural identity of the children by celebrating the local festivals in the anganwadi and inviting the parents to participate.



Independence Day celebration

No learning takes place in isolation. The development of knowledge, skills, disposition and feelings should be done in a harmonious and cohesive manner.

What are the procedures for implementation of the enrichment programme ?

You can divide your lessons into three phases:

- ✓ Lesson and time table planning
- ✓ Conducting the lesson
- ✓ Revising and assessment of the lesson

Timetable

Planning is necessary to be well-organized and prepared for the lessons. It is a guide to you through the day and the week. **You should be prepared for any adaptations to be made for children with disabilities.** Two parts of planning are:

- Organization of the timeframe
- Content to be taught in that time

The organization of the time frame should keep children constructively active and engaged during the school hours. The organization of timetable should start by:

- ✓ Understanding the syllabus fully, and then
- ✓ Breaking it into two parts, each to be completed in half year.

This can be further broken into **weekly timetables** according to the age appropriate growth and development of the child's understanding, social interaction, and physical growth.

Remember, the syllabus should always be available in the anganwadi as a ready reference. It is seen that a system developed in the beginning of the year and followed strictly through the year helps in running the anganwadi smoothly.

Sample of timetable

Timings	Subject
9 am	Greeting/Washing hands
9.05 9.15 am	Prayers, Yoga, Meditation
9.15 9.25 am	Chat time/ Conversation (Sit & talk with the children about their news in Hindi using English words)
9.25 10.00 am	Pre-reading Pre-writing Group A Group B
10.00 10.20 am	Break (Nutrition Time)
10.20 11.00 am	Language* Drama/Role Play • Story/Nursery Rhymes

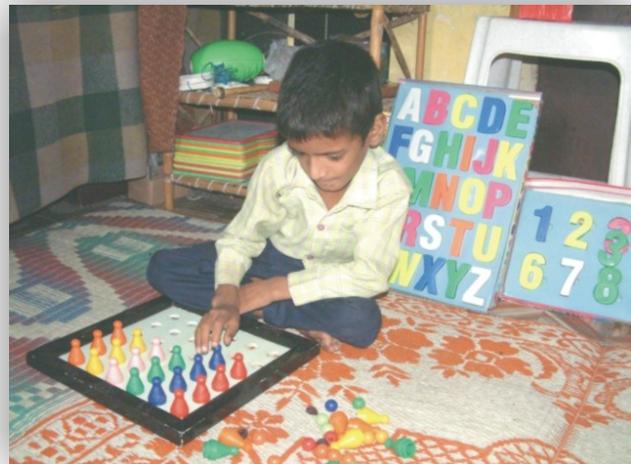
11.00 12.00 noon	Group A Outdoor Games	Group B Indoor Perceptual Training E.g. Paper pencil
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Organizing the characteristics of a timeframe

- ✓ Keep a register/ log book for making a timetable.
- ✓ Write the timetable in the local language for better understanding.
- ✓ The timetable for the full week should be planned in advance. For this sit half an hour extra at the end of the week with the helper/ assistant teacher and plan the next week's timetable.
- ✓ Put the timetable of the week up for everyone to see e.g. parents.

The anganwadi workers were not able to follow the timetable in English, so they were given the translation in Hindi. An explanation of the timetable had to be given, as they were not aware of activities like surprise box, or some of the rhymes like 'Bits of Paper'.

- Children can concentrate effectively for 20 minutes only. Thus the time period for formal teaching must be limited to this time, followed by some related activity. The timetable for the day should be well balanced to give adequate time periods for rest, recreation, change of activity, free play and games and exercises etc.
- Keep the non-academic activities like sports and games and perceptual training for the end of the day.
- More time should be given for pre-writing, pre-reading and pre-number concepts than conversation, and other activities.
- Sessions should be smoothly woven together so that there is no sudden jump from one activity to the next.



Learning colours with peg board

Remember, the above system is to be flexible to suit the needs of the individual anganwadi. A planned day with fixed timings makes the day predictable and structured.

Content of the timeframe should arrange the learning of young children in this continuum

- Easy to difficult
- Simple to complex
- Familiar to unfamiliar

Characteristics of the content of the timetable.

- Take care that there is a **continuation and link between concepts** taught in the previous week and the current week

In all anganwadis, Monday was kept for revising briefly all the concepts taught in the last week, while Fridays were for revising the concepts taught during the week in detail.

- **Pre-reading, prewriting and pre-number** concepts should be done everyday.
- The number of **concepts covered in a week should be restricted to one or two**. Do not cluster the concepts together in a day or the week, like teaching the colours green, blue and yellow the same week, or circle, square and triangle together.
- **Repetition of the concepts** is necessary for small children.
- Provide **multiple opportunities** to learn the same concept in the day. For example, when teaching the concept of green, you should ask the children to come wearing green clothes, have an activity with the green ball, have an activity of making salad from green vegetables. This way you should stress the concept green.
- You should **start the day with a routine activity** that is a prompt that the formal lessons are starting. It can be prayer session, which is culturally appropriate.



Learning big small with a worksheet

- Plan the activities with care so that all children take part. There should be a **provision for all types of children with disabilities** present in the class.

Lesson Planning

After deciding the timetable for the week, **lesson planning is a must**. A lesson plan is a detailed explanation of how you should conduct each session in the day. To simplify the process, you can make a table for each day as shown below and fill the columns for each day.

Date of the lesson				
Topic	What is to be taught?	How it is to be taught?	What teaching aids are to be used?	Feedback from The child

A sample lesson plan is attached in the appendix. Planning should be done keeping these in mind:

- ✓ You should keep a **log book/ register** for writing the lesson plan.
- ✓ You should write the lesson plan in a **fixed format** every day in consultation with the helper (see appendix for sample lesson plan).
- ✓ Teaching aids which are needed for the next day should be made one day in advance. **Prepare the bookwork a day before**.
- ✓ **Adaptations for children with disabilities** should be planned and written clearly in the lesson plan.

When Twinkle comes to the class, she stares at the teacher, claps and then sits down. Before she used to cry incessantly on coming to the anganwadi and get extremely scared of loud noises. Now all these reactions are not seen. Mother has reported that the child readily gets dressed for the school, which did not happen before. The community workers have modified their expectations for learning for her. They emphasize more on recognition of objects, increasing the attention span by doing activities of interest for her, increasing the vocabulary - both receptive and expressive. More emphasis is placed on learning through play activities, though she is included in the formal learning and activities.

- ✓ The lesson time can be divided into three phases: **introduction, delivery and revision** of the lesson

- ✓ These phases of lesson plan should contain information (as shown above) on **what would be taught, what materials would be used, how the lesson would progress step by step, what modifications would be needed** for children with disabilities.
- ✓ Try and **incorporate all learning styles**, like learning through seeing, listening, touching and talking in the lesson, such that all children comprehend the lesson at the same time.
- ✓ The objectives of the lesson for the children with disabilities can sometimes be **different but compatible** with the overall goal of the lesson, and you need to be aware that these are achieved in your lesson.
- ✓ **Teaching materials should be readily available** within reach to save time while taking class.
- ✓ Worksheets can be kept ready and extra worksheets can be prepared in case somebody spoils or tears their worksheet. **If a child has difficulty in seeing small size pictures or letters, use a big size, or photocopy / big handmade pictures for him/ her.** As some children are faster than other they may need additional activity or worksheets.
- ✓ You can **plastic coat picture cards** so that they last longer as children who have difficulty in swallowing may drool and this could spoil the cards.

Prathmesh has cerebral palsy. He also has severe problems with sensory processing. The parents too are more inclined towards treatment rather than education. He lives in a very small room. The T. V is on at full volume. He lies on a sheet on the ground just next to the T.V. The members of the house do not communicate with him much and even when they do, they do so with baby talk. Real conversation does not take place.

When he started coming to the anganwadi, he used to sleep for the whole period. The anganwadi worker has modified expectations for him. Gradually he started being alert for the whole class and then he started responding with a smile when the teacher called his name. While doing the nursery rhymes too, the child would respond by some movements. The mother also reported more alertness in the child after he started coming to the demonstration unit. He had started sitting on the corner chair for sometime without crying so that he can be included in the group of children.

He used to come to the anganwadi but dropped out due to the following reasons: inability to carry him all the way to the school, low priority given to education, workload at home of the mother.

For Twinkle, a child in the anganwadi who has problems in fixing attention, the goal of each story session was that she should start focusing for a short time on the picture cards, while for other children it was comprehension of the story.

- ✓ When planning activities, be sure to plan that there are enough materials to be used and within easy reach of the children. Three bowls of gum and other materials are sufficient for a group of 6-7 children when doing sticking activity.
- ✓ Keep crayons, plasticine/ clay, puzzles, and drawing/ colouring sheets ready for children's use.
- ✓ Keep written assignments simple and short.

Conducting the lesson

The lesson plan creates a framework in which you should conduct your lessons.

Remember:

- ✓ The classroom should be made ready for the day five minutes before the children arrive. For this you should come 15 minutes earlier to the school. Also, all your teaching aids and teaching materials should be well arranged before the start of your session.
- ✓ Start a session by fixed prompts that indicate that the class is going to start.



Clapping hands



Raising hands

In Jawahar Nagar, the anganwadi worker used to clap her hands and when all children were seated and attentive, she had fixed a sequence of gestures to say - put your thinking caps on, put your glasses on, look in front and concentrate. This sequence became familiar to the children and they used to become attentive and ready to start lessons.

- ✓ Follow the lesson plan as closely as possible, as well as be flexible enough when you find that things are not going as planned. The best of planning can be disrupted due to unforeseen circumstances, like the day is too hot to concentrate, a child decided to cry for the whole session distracting the class, or a child with epilepsy has a seizure in the middle of the session.
- ✓ Teaching aids should be extensively used during lessons.
- ✓ In between lessons, if you find that the children are not responding to an activity or concept, do not hesitate to modify the activity or change it.
- ✓ Keep time in the session to involve the children through questions, games, quizzes or activity to sustain the interest and motivation. Be sure to involve all children, including children with disabilities according to their capacity so that they also enjoy the session.

Mangesh can utter few sounds but the teacher never fails to ask him a question from time to time within the session. This is done in a natural manner without making it obvious that everyone cannot understand him. The teacher then uses flashcards to clarify his answer to the whole class.

- ✓ Child-to-child teaching should be encouraged.

In the Mukund Nagar anganwadi, the teacher usually gives turn to various children to come in front and teach other children. Karan recites the alphabets one by one and other children repeat after him. During water-play, children help Mangesh and Lokanathan, who are slow in their response, with the activity.



Child teaching on a black board

Remember,

- ❖ Use the children's names in the lesson as examples, to sustain the children's interest
- ❖ Voice modulation is necessary, especially when telling a story. While teaching, a soft voice should be used but when doing activities and games, one should mould the voice to whatever is being done.
- ❖ Tell children when the assignment is regarded as completed e.g. your story is finished when you tell me what the characters in all the pictures are doing. This is especially helpful for children who have problems in attention.
- ❖ Prepare the child's hands and fingers for writing through various activities like tearing, twisting, crushing making, small balls and folding paper before you start writing with the children. Thus the visual perceptual training programme is necessary for the enrichment programme.
- ❖ While showing things/ objects to children, start with the child with disability and then go to the other children. If possible, have an additional set of these objects for the children with disabilities.
- ❖ A communication board for the non-verbal children should be constantly used as means of communication.
- ❖ Rewards should be used throughout the day.
- ❖ Do not point to the children with disability or label to introduce him/ her to others.
- ❖ Do not discuss the children with disability with everyone in front of him/her.
- ❖ Repeat, repeat, repeat is the sure way of learning for the young children.

Assessment and evaluation of the lessons

The purpose of assessment is to know that the children have understood what is taught to them. Assessments should be carried out at two points of time

- ✓ In-between the lessons
- ✓ At the end of the term.

Assessing during the course of the lesson indicates:

- Whether children understand what is taught to them or the lesson needs to be modified.
- The effectiveness or the delivery of the lesson.



Exhibiting pre-writing skills

Assessment at the end of the term should be used for:

- Planning the next term's syllabus by understanding the learning level of the children
- Assessing the effectiveness of the teaching during the last term
- Identifying any children who need extra help

Remember

- ✓ Assess the content the child knows and not what the child does not know.
- ✓ Assessment should be adapted to the child's capability. Adapt your assessment procedure according to the ability, learning style and mode of communication used by the child.

Jaiprakash has difficulty in hearing. The teacher uses flashcards to teach him. Any assessment of his knowledge is also done through flashcards.

- ✓ You should be creative and innovative in your assessment procedures. Assessments need not be boring and only paper pencil tests.
- ✓ You can photocopy the original checklist and make as many copies as the number of children.
- ✓ For worksheets, make it in their own notebooks or ask children to copy the worksheet from the blackboard into their notebooks.

End of the term assessments are done both formally and informally for young children. Informal assessments are necessary as the child who knows everything may not reply during the formal assessment.

Informal assessment can be done, by the anganwadi worker, using the checklist of all activities in all areas of development. The areas are:



Worksheets for assessments

- Pre-reading activities like puzzles, colours, shapes
- Pre-number activities recognizing, labeling, understanding number concepts
- Prewriting activities like copying shapes, lines, manipulating the pencil and crayons.
- Language development like storytelling, reciting rhymes, responding to instructions and communicating needs.
- Perception like eye- hand coordination, spatial relationships, constancy of shape.
- Social and emotional development

A sample of this checklist is given in the appendix.

For **formal assessment**, you should use

- ✓ Worksheets for written evaluation
- ✓ A Questionnaire for oral evaluation.



Worksheets

Samples of both are provided in the appendix.

Questions to be asked can be formulated in simple language on concepts like me and my family, rhymes, parts of the body, auditory discrimination, fruits, vegetables, transport and animals.

Assessments for **children with disabilities** should be done with the other children in the class.



Colouring activity

- ✓ The anganwadi worker should prepare the modified assessment and keep it ready before all assessments begin.
- ✓ Children should be allowed to answer in any mode of communication that they regularly use, like through communication boards, flash cards, pointing, and utterances.

- ✓ For children with visual problems the assessment can be done using kinesthetic and touch.
- ✓ For children with physical problems, verbal answers can be taken while a writer (anganwadi worker) does the actual writing.

Remember

- ✓ One or two worksheets should be given per day.
- ✓ The worksheet should have clear instructions in the beginning.
- ✓ Have enough crayons or pencils before you begin.
- ✓ The question should be asked in the language used for instructions in the class. If the child is unable to answer in that language then you can use the language the child is comfortable with.
- ✓ If the child still feels hesitant, then let him have another chance later in the day.



Developing pre-writing skills

Appendix 1: Format of the lesson plan

Lesson Plan for Tuesday, 12th February 2002

Aim:

1. Pre writing
 - a. Children are able to colour within a boundary
2. Pre Reading
 - a. Children should understand the concept of
 - i. Green
 - ii. Big

Method:

Pre Writing

1. The teacher will prepare separate sheets of drawings for each child of a particular object like a leaf, banana, car, parrot etc. (big drawing).
2. The children are given a single crayon of green colour and asked to colour inside the boundary.
3. The teacher does one colouring to demonstrate.

Pre Reading

1. The teacher will select 4 objects: one green vegetable, one crayon, one photograph of parrot, a child wearing green clothes
2. These are shown to the children one by one .
3. The children repeat the name of the colour after each thing is shown.
4. Then to revise, the teacher will take two things of red colour like red ball and compare the green things with the red objects. Like
 - What is the colour of parrot?
 - Is it different from the colour of the ball?
 - What is the difference?
5. Such questions will strengthen the concept of big and green.
6. Tell a story of a green parrot sitting on a tree with green leaves on the flannel board. He sees a child wearing green clothes crying under the green tree. The green parrot asks the child wearing green clothes "why are you crying?" The child replies that he has lost his red ball. So, the green parrot says that he will help search for the ball with the child wearing green clothes.

The Green parrot flies high and sees the red ball on the green grass in the garden. The child wearing green clothes is very happy.

Moral of the story: We should help each other

7. Emphasize the word green in each sentence.
8. Introduce the concept of big in the same way showing big picture of parrot, big ball, big green crayon, comparing the hands of the child and the teacher.
9. Ask the children to wear something green the next day.

Aids:

Pre writing:

Sheets of drawing for each child, green crayons

Pre reading:

Big objects of colour green, red big and small balls, cutouts for the story/ chart of the sequence of the story, flannel Board

Language:

Label of each child's name, stapler, a picture of a child or a person.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Internal Assessment

Me and my Family

1. What is your name?
2. What is your mother's name?
3. How many members are there in your family?

Rhymes

1. Ask them to say a poem they know. (2-3 children together)

Parts of the Body

1. Ask 2 different parts of the body from each child.
e.g. Where are your eyes?
What part of your body do you use to eat?

(Simplify the question if necessary)

Auditory Discrimination

1. Make all children close their eyes or turn and then identify various sounds.
 - Close the door
 - Clap your hands
 - Dog Barking

Fruits

1. Show a fruit and ask which fruit is it?
2. Ask them to pick a fruit and name it.

Vegetables

1. Same as above

Transport

1. Show a picture from the chart and ask what is it?

Animals

1. Show a picture and identify
2. Ask the child to point or get a picture of a particular animal.

An Inclusive Curriculum in Action

