

10 TIPS FOR BELONGING

What makes individuals with disabilities and their families feel they truly belong? So often we think we have done our job if individuals with disabilities are present. But that is only the first step. So much more work follows to ensure that individuals of all abilities experience true belonging. Below are some good ideas for each of the stages of belonging used by parishes and schools to welcome individuals of all abilities as fellow missionary disciples

| People of all abilities and their families are: | When we: |
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| 1. PRESENT | Provide an accessible campus. |
| 2. INVITED | Extend personal invitations as a first step in getting to know someone and the accommodations they may need. |
| 3. WELCOMED | Train everyone to play a role in hospitality. |
| 4. KNOWN | Introduce people of all abilities to one another. |
| 5. ACCEPTED | Facilitate small groups <u>over time</u> to encourage personal interactions. |
| 6. SUPPORTED | Ask, "What can we do for you?" |
| 7. CARED FOR | Show kindness and concern. |
| 8. BEFRIENDED | Design ministries to facilitate friendships. |
| 9. NEEDED | Provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to minister to others. |
| 10. LOVED | Recognize the contributions of individuals with disabilities as fellow missionary disciples. |

Adapted with permission from Erik Carter, Vanderbilt University, www.erikwcarter.com.