Inclusion Barriers
(& Tips on Solving Them!)

Barrier #1
Connect parents and staff with inclusion-related workshops, support groups, and reliable information on sites like The Arc and NICHCY.

Barrier #2
Belief that inclusion only benefits some children
Use your newsletter to highlight inclusion benefits and facts

Barrier #3
Parent hesitation and resistance
Organize parent information nights
Consider an “inclusion observation series” that lets parents watch inclusion in practice
Invite a panel of families to speak about inclusion and answer questions
Have staff share inclusion success stories (notes with parents)

Barrier #4
Low expectations for kids with disabilities
Develop inclusion resource library with books, videos, etc.
Show staff how to use a resource like Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs to collect information about a child, embed interventions into classroom activities, and monitor progress. They’ll be able to see just how much kids with disabilities learn and grow over the course of the year.

Barrier #5
Lack of time
Begin planning for inclusion well in advance of the school year, so teachers feel ready on Day 1
Pair novice teachers with experienced ones so they can solve problems as a team
Build in weekly planning times for teaching teams during the school year
Hold monthly brainstorming lunches

Barrier #6
Lack of training and/or resources
Hire an inclusion coach to discover support needs and provide mentoring and professional development
Reach out to a program already implementing inclusion under the guidance of a licensed early childhood special educator. Ask if the educator could provide supervision at your site
If distance and funding are issues, consider video coaching strategies and online training modules

Adapted from First Steps to Preschool Inclusion by Sarika Gupta, Ph.D., with William Henninger, Ph.D., and Megan Vinh, Ph.D.