



Children learn inclusion from adults who model it.

My name is Crista. I am a special educator and the mother of a teen with Down syndrome.

My son Nate belongs in his community. Curious and observant, Nate loves the outdoors. He enjoys music and has the best dance moves.

We homeschool Nate. Here's why. When Nate attended our local school, he showed up every morning excited to learn. But Nate couldn't learn because he didn't have the right supports. The teachers weren't sure how to include him in their lesson plans. He spent more time with support staff than with his classmates. Nate wasn't part of his school community.

Weekends are where Nate shines. He invites his neighbor over every Sunday for pancakes. They play all morning. When she sees her friend Nate, she knows that different is just part of who he is.

Let's train our teachers to model inclusion. Because everyone benefits when everyone belongs.

Crista Yagjian. 2022. Guilford, Vermont.



**“Belonging is more than just being present -
it's being included.”**

“HELLO, NEIGHBOR.”

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