

Learning Journal #4- Tana Voegel

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The video about Tana Voegel depicts inclusion in a variety of ways. Tana is a student with cerebral palsy who has been included in the regular classroom throughout her schooling. Since kindergarten, Tana has been taught alongside her peers and is incorporated into many aspects of the classroom life. This is important because it is the basis of what inclusion means in terms of being taught in the regular classroom and having access to the same learning opportunities as her peers (Porter & Richler, 2011). Tana has many friends in her class and positive connections with her teachers as well as a mother who provides a great support system for Tana. This is important because it enables for inclusion within this classroom to actually be successful, as it is beyond just the placement of Tana in the regular classroom. It is clear that there is collaboration between Tana's family and her school life in the way that her mother is actively involved in her daughter's social world. This helps for there to be social participation for Tana, which is another important aspect of inclusion (Mirenda & Fossett, 2017).

While watching the video I was surprised to hear that Tana's mother goes to school every year and gives a talk to the class about her daughter. At first I thought that it was an odd thing to do as I personally would be embarrassed or would feel like I am being separated more by the fact that my mother is giving the class a talk about her daughter. Upon further reflection, I see the importance of her mother doing this. Most people when they are unsure about a situation or do not fully understand, tend to keep a distance between themselves and that situation. I believe that many of the students in Tana's class benefitted from her mother talking to them because they

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were able to ask questions about Tana and learn that she really is not that much different than everyone else and therefore it is okay to interact with her.

References

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