

Inclusion Event Planning Guide

Developed by
Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative



In Partnership with

Friendship Circle International



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Introduction

What is a disability and what is Inclusion?

What is a disability?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a person with a disability as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A major life activity includes those such as hearing, seeing, walking, standing, speaking, learning, thinking, and communicating. Disabilities can also include food allergies, cancer, depression, anxiety disorder and other mental health conditions.

What is Inclusion?

- Inclusion is an attitude that honors and values every human being, without regard to ability.
- Inclusion is a process -- not an event or a special program.
- Inclusion is creating an environment in which the community goes beyond simply welcoming people with disabilities and invites those individuals to participate in every aspect of community life.
- Inclusion is doing things *with* people with disabilities, not *for* them, so that they can make decisions about how they want to participate.
- Inclusion ensures that we adapt our programs and activities so that everyone gets to participate.

Chabad's Leadership in Inclusion

Why You?

True inclusion begins with a mindset – a change in our thinking.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe OB" M pioneered this concept in its truest form, valuing every person based solely on that person's *inner* essence. The Rebbe further tasked us to make Judaism accessible to every Jew, without regard to that person's physical or spiritual status. It is the Rebbe's message of unity that has empowered Chabad to be instinctively inclusive -- to embrace each and every Jew and treat him or her like family, regardless of background or lifestyle. Chabad was already practicing inclusion before the term was even coined!

Inclusion is at the essence of Chabad philosophy and it is this deep commitment to the Inclusion of every Jew that places Chabad Lubavitch at the forefront of the message of disability Inclusion.

Why Now?

The Rebbe created a movement around *the message of Hakhel* to gather and engage every Jew in the richness of Jewish life.

We know how to create environments that are welcoming, where people feel comfortable, no matter what their previous Jewish experiences have been. These same principles guide us to lead our broader communities in the inclusion of people with disabilities.

The Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII) and Friendship Circle International (FCI) together created this step-by-step planning and implementation guide to help you host a community-wide Inclusion Event.

About the Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII)



About Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII)

The partnership between Chabad Lubavitch and the Ruderman Family Foundation, the Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative, is organic to Chabad. RCII aims to empower every one of our *Chabad communities* to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for people with disabilities in our shuls, our camps, and our schools – in every program that we offer.

We currently offer:

- a. Inclusion Hotline connects you to our team of experts to discuss challenges and identify solutions and answer your questions. Open daily.
- b. Resource Hub provides information about specific disabilities and resources, simple step action plans on a variety of topics from building accessibility to accommodations in all of your activities, articles and website links that connect us to the latest disability-related resources.
- c. Inclusion Day Event Package details the steps to take so you can create a program that raises awareness and builds community around inclusion.
- d. Guidance and training on best practices for Chabad House staff and leaders to better include people with disabilities in a deliberate way in their communities.
- e. Staff training planning and presentation. Our inclusion specialists can provide training for your staff, directors, educators and counselors.
- f. Grants available to communities and programs to enable inclusive programming and environments. Application available upon request.

RCII is a resource for you. We invited you to contact us by email at info@rcii.org or to call us at 701-404-RCII(7244).

- d. About Friendship Circle



About Friendship Circle

Friendship Circle focuses on abilities. We believe that everyone in this world is here for a unique purpose and that no two people are alike.

Friendship Circle in a local community creates meaningful relationships between teen volunteers (Teen Friends) and children with disabilities (Friends), igniting the dreams, increasing the confidence and redefining the worldviews of both.

Friendship Circle Teen Friends, with the help of their Friends, set an extraordinary example for the rest of the world, illustrating that typical teens and individuals with disabilities can have so much in common and bring out the best in each other.

Friendship Circle International invests in streamlining the successes of our 80+ regional chapters, creating a seamless force of flourishing friendship around the world.

To date over 300,000 people have been influenced by Friendship Circles worldwide, including teenage volunteers, individuals with disabilities and community members who understand the importance of our mission.

Visit us at FriendshipCircle.com to learn about what we are accomplishing across the globe.

Event Planning

Choosing a Keynote Speaker

A good keynote speaker is important to a successful event. They can spark interest in the event, boost attendance, increase media attention, attract vendors and, most importantly, inform, inspire and motivate the audience. These are tips to choosing just the right keynote speaker.

1. Tips to Choose a Keynote Speaker

1. Look for speakers who can fit the theme of your event: Inclusion Event:
 - a. Person with a disability
 - b. Parent, sibling or other family member
 - c. Professional who works for a disability or social service organization
 - d. Rabbi, educator or other Jewish professional
2. Decide if you want a local or national speaker. Speakers do not have to be celebrities. In fact, you could find someone to speak who fits your event who is just starting out as a speaker. The important thing is that they will help you accomplish your goals for the event.
3. If you don't know anyone personally, ask your colleagues to recommend speakers for your event.
4. Have you heard this person speak to a similar audience? Were they motivational, inspirational, factual, humorous or informational? How did the audience respond? You want your audience to be engaged with this speaker. If you haven't heard them speak before, ask the person for references and if available, a video of them speaking.
5. What is the fee? Make sure that your speaker is within your budget.
6. Is the speaker available on the date you've chosen for your event? If not, are you able to change the date to get the right speaker?
7. A speaker should be knowledgeable about your event and what you want participants to learn and leave with and then follow-through to convey those messages in the speech. Will the speaker have a planning meeting with you so that you can share that information with them?

Event Planning Checklist

✓	Event Planning Assignments	Timeline	Person/s Responsible
	Confirm event date and time. Check Jewish community calendar to avoid conflicting events.	3+ months	
	Develop a budget. Template provided.	3+ months	
	Reserve event location.	3+ months	
	Contact potential sponsors, if needed.	3+ months	
	Identify target audiences to promote the event.	3+ months	
	Identify and confirm speaker(s).	3+ months	
	Arrange lodging for out of town speaker.	3+ months	
	Invite vendors from organizations in your community to host resource tables. Charge fee, if appropriate.	3+ months	
	Invite local rabbis by email and/or phone calls to put on their busy calendars.	3+ months	
	Invite local clergy and colleagues from other faith communities.	3+ months	
	Send information to Federation to post on community calendar.	3+ months	
	Create/Print flyer/poster – For print and social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).	2+ months	
	Post event in newsletters and/or on website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Create hashtag.	2+ months	
	Email flyer to your email list.	2+ months	
	Recruit volunteers to assist with marketing and assist with event.	2+ months	
	Draft program agenda.	2+ months	
	Book a caterer/ bake for event.	3 months	
	Distribute (again) event flyers/posters/ mailing/ post on social media.	2 months	
	Rent chairs, tables, projector or other equipment as needed.	2 months	
	Write and send press release to local Jewish and secular media.	4 weeks	
	Finalize presentation, if needed.	4 weeks	
	Finalize volunteer schedule & tasks for event.	3 weeks	
	Make phone calls to key people you want to attend.	3 weeks	
	Review AV needs and confirm reservations	3 weeks	
	Confirm vendors	3 weeks	
	Print final program ,if needed.	1 week	
	Print handouts, if needed	1 week	
	Make a sign in sheet for the registration table to capture names, email addresses and phone numbers of participants.	1 week	
	Finalize and confirm refreshments.	1 week	

	Remind vendors to send out the flyer again to their constituents and to post it on social media.	1 week	
	Print name badges, if needed.	1 week	
	Make signs to direct attendees to event location/room.	1 day	
	Set up event location, registration area, presentation space, food and beverage tables, put up signs, etc.	1 day	
	Print an 8 1/2x11 page for each vendor and put in on their table so they know where to set up.	1 day	
	After event Have participants fill in Event Evaluation Form.	At event	
	Email survey to participants (optional).	1 week after event	
	Follow-up Press Release with event details.	1 week after event	
	Send event summary evaluation to RCI.	Within 2 wks	

Inclusion Event Planning Considerations

- Choose a day and time that will bring people from the community to the event and won't conflict with programming in the community, such as Wednesday evening religious school. Some communities host events on Sunday afternoons or evenings and others have had successful turnouts by combining an inclusion event with a *Havdallah* service with activities.
- Advertise your inclusion event to your entire community, and encourage people with disabilities and their families to attend. Include people with disabilities in planning for the event—"Nothing about us without us!"
- Include language that encourages people to contact you if they require an accommodation. This is recommended language:

Every Chabad community is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. If you require an accommodation in order to attend please contact (name) at (phone number) by (insert a due date so that you have time to make the arrangements).

- Arrange for an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter to be at your event, if requested.
- Ensure that people who use wheelchairs, walkers and canes can access the event space and restrooms.
- Make sure that handouts are available in alternative formats such as large print and Braille, if requested.
- Offer a quiet space during your event and let people know they are welcome to use it when necessary.
- Invite and encourage every organization in your community to attend because this discussion affects everyone.
- Invite a guest speaker who has a disability to speak to your audience. You can ask your local Arc, state parent training center, state governors council on disability or disability organization to provide a guest speaker if you don't know someone personally.
- Invite related organizations to be vendors at the event. This can provide income (\$50.00/table) to pay for the event as well as increase publicity if they share the event with their constituents. You can provide tables for display, flyers to distribute electronically to their constituents, and include them in your social media. Vendors must be present at the event to staff their tables.
- Organizations you want to invite (some from this list could be vendors too)
 - Jewish Community Center
 - Schools for students with disabilities
 - Jewish Day Schools and Public Schools
 - Hadassah
 - Synagogues in your community
 - Athletic groups
 - Disability benefits law firms
 - Transition providers and programs
 - Job coaching/employment organizations
 - University disability studies departments
 - Local disability organizations including: Arc, state parent training and information center, Autism Society, Down syndrome organization, etc.
 - Children's Museum
 - Camps
 - Day care programs
 - Scouting organizations
 - Arts organizations

Event Budget (separate Excel file)

Marketing Materials

Sample Flyer Copy (see Sample Flyer jpg for design ideas)

Logo and Name of Your Organization

Inclusion Event

FREE and Open to the Public!

Date:

Time: include start and end times, Dessert Reception Following

Location:

Keynote Speaker (Insert similar information, a photo, a quote and short bio about your own speaker)

Joseph (JB) Bensmihen, MSW, RG



“I never knew I was disabled until I was 12 years old.”

Mr. Bensmihen, who lives with cerebral palsy, was instrumental in changing laws for people with disabilities in his native Canada. He is a graduate of Yeshiva University. He is a small business owner and an advocate for competitive employment of people with disabilities. Mr. Bensmihen is currently a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from Florida.

Also featuring guest speaker (insert name)

Brief description of who speaker is and topic/photo

We are Chabad of/Friendship Circle of... Join us for the community-wide Inclusion Event to learn more about how you can foster meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

Our organization is passionate about building bridges throughout the entire community! We cordially invite the entire community to the Inclusion Event.

Please RSVP: (email address and phone number for RSVP)

If you require an accommodation in order to attend please contact (name) at (phone number) by (insert a due date so that you have time to make the arrangements).

Evening of Awareness is a joint partnership between Friendship Circle International and Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII).

Be sure to include both the Friendship Circle logo and the Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII) logo.

Sample Press Release-Pre-event

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Phone:

Contact email:

Website:

(Your Organization) HOSTS COMMUNITY INCLUSION EVENT Inclusion Event

Your City, State – The Chabad House of/Friendship Circle of ... will host a free event, Inclusion Event on (date), (time), at (location). The event is open to the public.

The purpose of the event is to bring (name of your community or city) together to learn how we can each do more to include people with disabilities in all aspects of community life. The event will feature outstanding speakers, activities, and a dessert reception following.

The keynote speaker is Joseph (JB) Bensmihen, MSW, RG. Mr. Bensmihen, who lives with cerebral palsy, was instrumental in changing laws for people with disabilities in his native Canada. He is a graduate of Yeshiva University. He owns Boca Health Care in Boca Raton, FL and he is an advocate for competitive employment of people with disabilities. Mr. Bensmihen is currently a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from Florida.

The event also features guest speaker (Name of Speaker, name of speaker's organization) who will provide information about (one sentence about what the speaker will talk about).

According to the recent U.S. Census, nearly 20% of the population has some form of disability including physical disabilities, mental health conditions, autism and allergies. Chabad of/Friendship Circle of... is hosting this event because disability affects each of us in some way. This event is open to the entire community - schools, synagogues, religious and secular organizations, friends and families.

Come learn about **accepting and including individuals with disabilities nationally and locally** with our two guest speakers.

Chabad of/Friendship Circle of... is partnering with The Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII) for this event. The RCII is dedicated to helping Chabad communities

become more inclusive and welcoming for people with disabilities in every part of community life by providing them with practical tools and resources.

Mission of (your organization)

is a non profit organization that (insert your mission statement here. Indicate how the Evening of Inclusion event exemplifies the mission).

Chabad of/Friendship Circle of... is passionate about building bridges throughout our community and encourages all community members to join us. Bring your friends!

To learn more about this event contact:

Name and phone number of contact:

Email of contact:

Website: for your organization

Inviting Community Vendors

Your community has numerous organizations that serve people with disabilities and their families. Inviting them to display their information and materials and to meet participants benefits everyone.

You are giving these organizations the opportunity to meet many people who may benefit from their services and programs. Asking vendors to contribute a small amount of money to participate will defray your costs for the event. \$50.00 is a reasonable amount to charge per table. Providing electronic flyers for them to send to their constituents and using social media to mention their participation can attract additional people to your event. The vendors will also be attending your event and learning about you and your organization.

Sample Vendor Invitation E-mail

This is a sample email that you can send to local organizations inviting them to participate in the Inclusion Event. Include a link in to the registration form (recommend using Google Docs).

Dear (Name of Organization or contact person's name):

We would like to invite you to join us as we host an Inclusion Event on (date) by hosting a table where you can promote the work of your organization and meet many people who can benefit from your services and programs.

The Inclusion Event brings together people with disabilities, family members, professionals and community members from the broader (name of your community) community to learn more about how we can all be more inclusive.

The Inclusion Event features keynote speakers including:

- Joseph Bensmihen, MSW, RG who is a self-advocate and is running for Congress in Florida.
- Name of second speaker—with a brief description

This engaging event will also feature activities, discussions, and a dessert buffet following the program.

Details:

Date, from (start time) to (end time) at (event location address, city, state, zip).
Q&A and a dessert reception to follow.

We would love for your organization to have a presence at the Inclusion Event and to share your resources with the community.

Please fill out the form below with your payment of \$(fee) to have a table at the Inclusion Event.

(THE FORM BELOW WAS CREATED GOOGLE FORMS for Friendship Circle of Virginia's Inclusion Event)

If you have trouble viewing or submitting this form, you can [fill it out in Google Forms](#).

Sample Vendor Registration Form

This sample registration can be created in Google Forms for online registration.

Inclusion Event Vendor Registration Form

We invite you to join us as a VENDOR at (name of organization) Inclusion Event on (Day, Date) from (start time) to (end time). Table cost \$(your fee). Set-up begins half an hour before the start of the event.

Organization Name

Contact First Name

Contact Last Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Website

Number of Representatives from your organization who will attend

Comments or questions

Method of Payment

Cost of Table is \$(your fee)

- Check (mail to [your address] by (date)**
- Credit Card (you will be e-mailed instructions)**
- PayPal (you will be e-mailed instructions)**

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms

Sample Event Schedule Breakdown and Event Detail

Approximately 90 minutes Plus 30 minute Dessert Reception

Put PowerPoint Slide 1 “Welcome” on the screen 30 minutes before scheduled start time.

Have the vendors be completely set up and available to talk with participants at least 20 minutes before the event starts.

10 minutes before scheduled start time play the Yaakov Shwekey music video “I Can Be” and Matisyahu DeScribe "Pure Soul" video which are looped on You Tube with this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3nF2KHmQ60&list=PLorf09XcaQQaqi6R0gxnJu4l1RaG3GZNN>

Return to PowerPoint slide 1.

5 minutes. Welcome and Introductions. Change to Slide 2.

5 minutes. Vendor, sponsor, volunteer and staff thank yous. Change to Slide 3.

10 minutes Group Activity (change to slide 4) —Show the Baseball Cartoon. Ask people to turn to the person next to them and discuss what is happening in the left panel of the cartoon for 2 minutes. Then have them discuss what is happening in the right panel. Bring the audience members back together and ask for feedback on the left, then the right panel. This is a short activity bound to engage the participants.

15 minutes – Guest Speaker Disability Awareness 101

(Change to slide 5—insert photo of guest speaker and contact information)

Introduce Speaker from your community. Give a brief introduction of what the speaker is sharing and why it’s important. Give a brief bio and invite them to the podium/stage area.

5 minutes – Video (provided) about disability inclusion etiquette.

3 minutes: Change to slide 7 if you are using the Miami Marathon video of JB’s talk.

20 minutes –Introduction of Joseph (JB) Bensmihen. Change to slide 8.

Optional slide 9 of photos of JB at the Miami Marathon in 2016.

10 Minutes – Awareness Quilt Pledge. This optional activity can be found in the Event Materials section of this Guide.

2 minutes – Change to slide 10. ‘If you shovel the ramp we can all get in’ cartoon. Explain what’s happening in the cartoon with the point that an accommodation made for someone who needs one can benefit everyone and this is the message of true inclusion.

Sample script for this slide: This is the outside entrance to a school on a very snowy day. The custodian is shoveling the stairs and students are waiting to get inside. There is a ramp that is also covered in snow, and a student who uses a wheelchair is waiting to use it.

This student says to the custodian, “Could you please shovel the ramp?” The custodian replies, “All these other kids are waiting to use the stairs. When I get through shoveling them off, then I will clear the ramp for you.” The student who uses the wheelchair says, “But if you shovel the ramp, we can all get in!”

Ask several participants to share their thoughts about the message of this slide.

SUMMARIZE: “Inclusion means looking at things differently. This cartoon is a great example of making things accessible for all people and really shows how inclusion is first and foremost about a change in our mindsets.”

3 minutes – Leave Slide 10 on the screen. Thank yous!

Dessert Reception and Vendor tables open.

Sample Event Evaluation Form

Thank you for participating in the Inclusion Event. Please take a few moments to complete this evaluation. It will help us plan future events.

I am: (check all that apply):

- A person with a disability
- Parent of a child with a disability
- Clergy
- Educator
- Volunteer at a disability-related program
- Disability Professional
- Mental Health Professional
- Member of a Congregation
- Community Member
- Other _____

How did you hear about the Inclusion Event?

- Received an email notification from my local Friendship Circle
- Received an email from my local Chabad House
- Friend or family member
- Post in congregation newsletter
- Social media
- Newspaper article
- Saw the flyer posted
- From one of the vendors (please tell us who that was) _____
- Other _____

What did you enjoy most about the Inclusion Event? Check all that apply:

- Music videos
- Level the Playing Field group activity
- Guest Speaker (name)
- Disability Inclusion Etiquette video
- Keynote Speaker JB Bensmihen
- Inclusion Pledge Activity
- Dessert Reception
- Vendor displays and information
- The location

What did you like least about the Inclusion Event? Check all that apply:

- Music videos
- Level the Playing Field group activity
- Guest Speaker (name)
- Disability Inclusion Etiquette video
- Keynote Speaker JB Bensmihen
- Inclusion Pledge Activity
- Dessert Reception

- Vendor displays and information
- The location

What could we improve upon?

Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to add?

9. Event Materials

a. Awareness Pledge Activities

1. Awareness Pledge Quilt Activity

Your Inclusion Event event can include an activity. One way to continue to remind people of the importance of including people with disabilities is to create an awareness pledge quilt. The quilt is easy to create and assemble. You can hang it in a prominent place so that everyone who enters your building can see it.

You will need:

ALEX Toys Craft Knot a Quilt Kit (easy to assemble) and available on Amazon and other online stores.

<http://www.amazon.com/ALEX-Toys-Craft-Knot-Quilt/dp/B000F3V2R2>

CRAYOLA Fabric Markers, 80 count, available on Amazon and other online stores.

<http://www.amazon.com/Crayola-588215-Classpack-Assorted-different/dp/B0017DHP66>

[Note: Permanent markers work just as well](#)

Ask participants to each write on a piece of fabric something that they pledge to do to spread awareness and to include people with disabilities. After the event you can piece the quilt together to hang in a prominent location.

2. Awareness Pledge Alternate Activity

Like the Awareness Pledge Quilt, this activity encourages people to make a commitment following the event. It takes a little less time than creating the quilt.

You will need:

Notecards or sticky notes

Pens or pencils

Ask participants to write on the note card or sticky note something that they pledge to do to spread awareness and to include people with disabilities. Then ask them either to put these notes on a flip chart page or wall where you will read these aloud to the audience or ask each person to share their individual pledge. Be sure to invite people to take their written pledges home with them.

b. Beyond Inclusion Event Event Ideas

How can you raise awareness about inclusion of people with disabilities in your community? Here are some other ideas that will boost awareness and make your Chabad House/Friendship Circle community a leader in supporting inclusion! Contact Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative (RCII) for information and assistance in planning your follow-up activities. info@rcii.org.

- As an outcome of your Inclusion Event, organize a disability inclusion committee to focus on making your Chabad House/Friendship Circle more inclusive.
- Create a community calendar of events that are open to the public.
- Visit the RCII Resource Hub for webinars and information on a variety of topics and training materials.
- Gather representatives from every Jewish organization to convene an inclusion roundtable that will meet regularly to discuss the needs and work toward building capacity in the community.
- Choose a yearly inclusion theme such as "Person First." Identify Jewish values that are relevant to the theme.

Short Videos for Your Event

Play the music videos as guests are being seated before the program starts or incorporate them into the event. Your speakers may have introduction videos or ones that they prefer to show as part of their presentations. Videos should not be longer than 2-4 minutes.

Yaakov Shwekey - I Can Be

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3nF2KHmQ60&list=PLorf09XcaQQaqi6R0gxnJu4l1RaG3GZNN>

Matisyahu DeScribe "Pure Soul" feat.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6LZNuESxq4&index=2&list=PLorf09XcaQQaqi6R0gxnJu4l1RaG3GZNN>

Play one of these suggested videos as part of the program if you have time.

Disability Inclusion Etiquette-There's No Need to be Awkward

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv1aDEFIXq8>

How Katie Got Her Voice. A 2+ minute video for children (and adults!) that explains how to treat people with disabilities—just like anyone else! <http://videos.disabled-world.com/video/213/disability-awareness-for-kids>

Budget
Handouts
PowerPoint Template
RCII and FCI Logos