



**Capable
Kids**

Inclusion

in the

RGV



Capable Kids

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the many people who contributed to this work through their partnership, participation, support, and feedback. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the local government and community partners for investing in this effort.

We hope this report will provide readers with a clearer understanding of what can be done to advance inclusion and inclusive options for our children and young adults in the Rio Grande Valley.

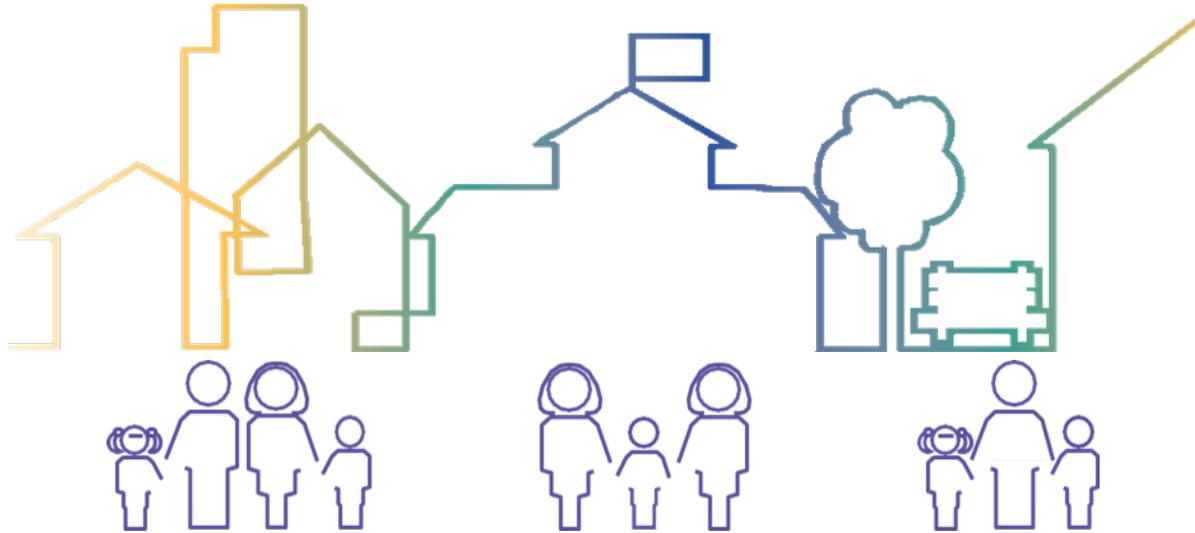
We are grateful to the parents, school district personnel, and advocates that generously shared with us their perspectives, existing data, reports, and time to complete this report.

Inclusion in the RGV

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INCLUSION in the RGV



CK Impact

CK Sports

CK Social

According to Texas.gov 'People with Disabilities: A Texas Profile, 2019 Update', Texas has the 2nd largest number of individuals with disabilities of all the states, at 11.8% of the population.

LWDA 23: Lower Rio Grande Valley

Table 46: LWDA 23 Lower Rio Grande Valley—Individuals with Disabilities by County, 2014

County	Population 2014	Individuals with Disabilities	Disabilities					
			Vision	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-Care	Ind. Living
Hidalgo	831,073	76,593	26,360	21,183	35,662	26,240	21,264	21,906
Starr	62,955	11,718	3,656	3,881	6,249	4,257	3,631	3,951
Willacy	21,903	4,682	1,143	1,511	2,538	1,814	1,336	1,952
Lower Rio Total	915,931	92,993	31,159	26,575	44,449	32,311	26,231	27,810
Cameron	420,392	61,930	17,387	18,471	34,706	20,840	17,925	21,482
Cameron County Total	420,392	61,930	17,387	18,471	34,706	20,840	17,925	21,482

Texas Labor Force Participants with and without Disabilities by Age Category

Age Categories	Total Number Of Labor Force Participants in Each Age Category	Labor Force Participants with a Disability		Labor Force Participants without a Disability	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
16 to 24 years	1,965,780	79,910	4.1%	1,885,870	95.9%
25 to 64 years	10,673,572	629,579	5.9%	10,043,993	94.1%
65 to 74 years	492,272	84,595	17.2%	407,677	82.8%
75 years and over	88,688	26,480	29.9%	62,208	70.1%
Total	13,220,312	820,564	6.2%	12,399,748	93.8%

2014 ACS microdata.

Inclusion comprehends people's involvement and empowerment. When people are included, their worth is recognized and respected. Everyone is at their best when they are their own authentic selves. To be one's authentic self, one must feel included.

Strategic Plan Outline

Inclusion in the RGV



1. Description of Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process takes all stakeholder feedback into consideration. The Board of Directors, working with the executive Director, compiled information and data related to community and family needs and concerns and translated the information into goals and objectives contained within this strategic plan. Family and Community members will be invited to future planning sessions for the next Strategic Planning session.



2.

Vision

CK commits to the inclusion of each and every child and young adult with special needs with typically developing peers in all environments within the RGV.

This vision statement is an outcome of the 2022 Capable Kids Strategic Planning Summit- July.

The plan of this summit was to create the vision statement and use it to assure that future policy decisions would promote the inclusion of children and young adults with disabilities in all environments with appropriate supports and services available as needed.

3.

Mission for the future evolution of Capable Kids

Our mission is to promote these Guiding Principles:

Increase Equitable Opportunity: Inclusion of children and young adults with disabilities is a priority in decision making about program design and resource allocation in order to ensure equitable access and full participation in all RGV environments.

Partner with Families: We ensure the meaningful and supported engagement of families in policy/guidance decisions, planning, and evaluation of programs.

Share Benefits of Inclusion: We recognize and intentionally raise public awareness of the well-researched benefits of inclusion in all settings.

Build and Support a Competent Community: Every business, organization and governmental agency who interacts or services children and young adults with disabilities or their families should have the knowledge, competencies and supports to implement evidence-based practices. We deliberately shift policy to support elements critical to this effort: appropriate professional standards, embedded professional development, culturally and linguistically responsive practices, positive attitudes and beliefs about inclusion, and knowledge of disabilities.

Unified Purpose: We intentionally and strategically engage in formal collaboration across agencies and related nonprofits to make significant progress toward high quality inclusion across the RGV.

Set Goals and Track Data: Across all three programs we set concrete goals for expanding access to inclusive opportunities, including a baseline number of children with and without disabilities in play, educational, and social settings, and benchmarks that track progress toward the goal.

4.

Stakeholder Members

Stakeholders include families of children and young adults with disabilities, education providers, business owners, governmental agencies, advocacy groups, and local related nonprofit agencies. Conversations, surveys, and feedback from all stakeholders was used in consideration of this plan.

5.

Goals/Objectives/Action Steps

Goal 1: Increase clear, targeted outreach to families of young children with disabilities and those who serve them about what inclusion is, why it is important, and their child's right to receive services and access social opportunities in the least restrictive environment.

Objective: 1a.) Use existing resources (web page, electronic newsletter, and social media) to create a consistent message about inclusion across various education systems, governmental agencies and local business. Information must reach all sectors and be in small accessible learning objects. (Sound bites)

Objective: 1b.) Disseminate information to families of children and young adults with disabilities about existing educational, recreational, and social settings available to them in their community where inclusive opportunities are provided for their children. This should occur at the very first opportunity to understand inclusion.

Objective: 1c.) Disseminate information about inclusion to education systems, governmental agencies and local business. Offer initial and continuing training that allows the business to become CK Accredited- Inclusion Friendly.

- Action Steps:**
- Provide information and trainings about inclusion in multiple languages that is understood by multiple audiences (e.g., families, child care providers, translators).
 - Participate in outreach events/activities (i.e., exhibits at local interagency fairs, educational organizations and partners, Community partner fairs, nonprofit events, Community meetings, Governmental planning and regarding the importance of inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities).
 - Create and share examples of outstanding practices in inclusion. Include a variety of settings. These examples could be shared at family events, conferences, workshops, and agency fairs.
 - Create and disseminate a resource guide of local CK certified inclusion friendly agencies and services.





Goal 2: Increase tangible supports that increase inclusive opportunities within the community that all families may access for their child with a disability.

Objective: 2a.) Partner with local business to offer support and ideas on making their organization more inclusive friendly.

Objective: 2b.) Partner with local related nonprofits to share resources and improve access to inclusive sports, social and educational opportunities that can strengthen the entire community.

Objective: 2c.) Revise quality standards related to inclusion to ensure continued relevance

Objective: 2d.) Partner with local governmental and community agencies to access and share additional resources at a free or reduced cost that support inclusion.

Action Steps:

- Review and target events and programming that is more in line with the overall strategic plan.
- Increase the number of part-time staff to provide technical assistance across the mixed delivery service model as needed to support targeted events.
- Create Volunteer Program with orientation, inclusion training and mentorship to increase volunteer retention to improve delivery of service to families and the community.
- Make available inclusion training and technical assistance through expanding the number of trained staff. CK Certified Inclusion staff would promote best practices across systems.
- Provide information and coaching to support to local educational, governmental and business organizations about the importance of inclusion and help them understand the benefits of meeting any mandates and requirements.
- Seek out partnerships with related nonprofits, supporting their events to maximize shared resources and create a community effort of collaboration and efficiency for the delivery of inclusive services and opportunities.
- CK staff will collaborate with governmental and educational agencies to revise and improve the quality standards related to inclusion within the RGV to ensure they stay relevant.
- Create additional sources of on donation related steady revenue to minimize reliance on donated funds.



Goal 3: Provide guidance, incentives, and accountability to support local governmental and educational agencies to ensure that special services are provided to children and young adults with disabilities and their families within the mixed delivery service model.

Objective: 3a.) Create and implement guidance with administrators to provide inclusive opportunities for serving children and young adults with disabilities and their families across the RGV area.

Objective 3b.) Elevate models of successful collaboration between government and educational agencies to create best practices how to offer more inclusive opportunities.

Objective: 3c.) Expand delivery of Impact, sport and social opportunities within the four-county area to grow the inclusive community and better serve our targeted families.

- Action Steps:**
- Identify regions in the RGV where opportunities for creating models of cross nonprofit service delivery would be accepted.
 - Create a task force that includes all stakeholders to advise guidance and problem solve issues of boundaries, resources, transportation and support services availability.
 - Create Volunteer Program with orientation, inclusion training and mentorship to increase volunteer retention to improve delivery of service to families and the community.
 - Provide Best Practice ideas and support to community organizations, businesses, & governmental agencies to build community-based networks for supporting inclusive services within the RGV. Invite members of networks in areas to serve as mentors for new networks.



Goal 4: Provide guidance, incentives, and accountability to support inclusive programs to ensure that required services are provided within the mixed delivery service model.

Objective 4a.) Build the required infrastructure to support community business and organizations trying to provide inclusive services with the intent of maximizing inclusive opportunities all RGV families.

Objective: 4b.) Create a community board that includes all stakeholders to support sustained Inclusive opportunity growth across governmental, educational and community-based organizations (CBOs).

- Action Steps:**
- Identify areas in the RGV where opportunities for creating models of cross nonprofit service delivery would be accepted.
 - Provide incentives to the RGV counties to build community-based networks for supporting inclusive services. Invite members of other nonprofits and CBOs in established Community board areas to serve as mentors for new networks.

Progress Indicators

Increase in number of Nonprofit, governmental and CBO partners to maximize resources and increase Impact, Sport and Social inclusive opportunities within the RGV.

Increase in online information and print materials about high quality inclusion that are available in multiple languages.

Increased number of contacts and dissemination of materials explaining high quality inclusion to families of children with disabilities.

Increased contacts and dissemination of materials to providers and leaders of local government, education and other targeted agencies regarding high quality inclusion for families of children and young adults with disabilities.

Increase in the number of individuals served in all four counties within the RGV.



Improved volunteer retention and increased volunteer satisfaction ratings in annual surveys.