

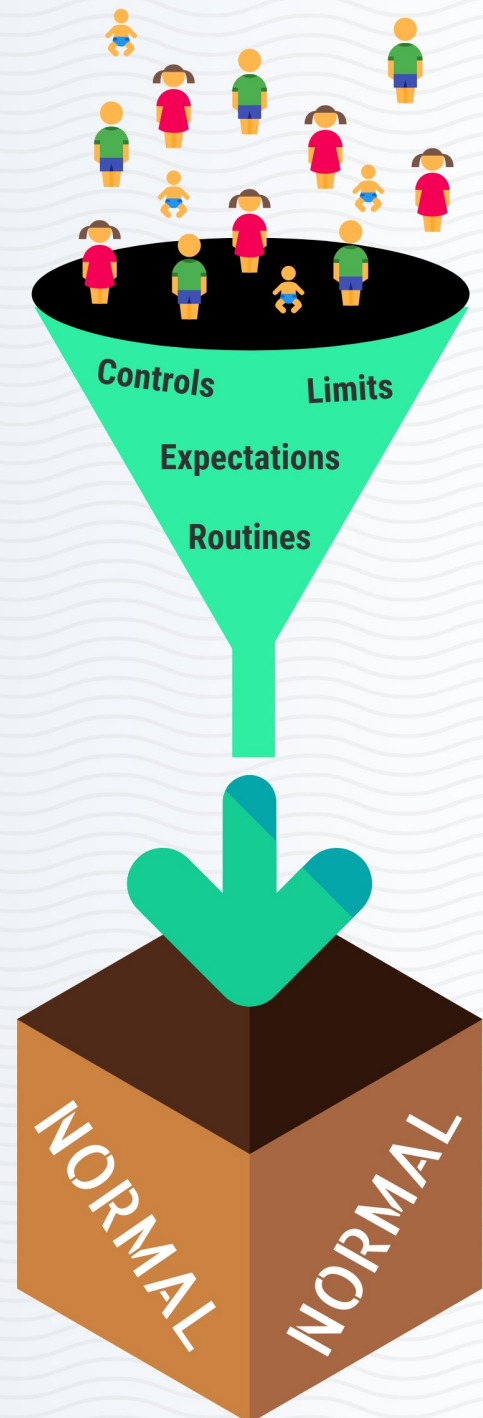
Why social justice is important...

Social justice acknowledges that everyone is unique and that differences should be valued and encouraged. It allows children, educators and families to get the support that they need based on their circumstances, not the support we think they need based on our circumstances.

Quite often the approach to behaviour guidance or integrating children with additional needs into an inclusive environment is to encourage them to build the skills needed to fit in with everyone else, or to put it another way, trying to filter the child's uniqueness out so that they fit in the normal box.

There are several issues with this.

- 1) If a child has a condition it can mean that their brain is literally different to yours, or the other children, so this approach is setting them up for failure as their brain functions differently.
- 2) What is "normal" when everyone has their own individual approaches to problem solving, creativity, social interactions? So the "norm" usually becomes one person's opinion, and this is exclusive of anyone who thinks or behaves differently.
- 3) The child is not getting the support they need and the tools they need to help them feel included, supported and develop trusting relationships. This can lead to frustration, withdrawal and attention seeking behaviour.
- 4) Other children are not being role modelled an inclusive and supportive approach to diversity, instead learning that those that are "different" are lesser than those deemed "normal". Children need to learn to protect their peers and look out for them, not bully and target them for being unique.



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