Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA) formed in 1974 to provide recreation services to individuals with disabilities. The association is comprised of 17 member park districts located in the Northwest Suburbs of Chicago.

**Communities Served**
Arlington Heights • Bartlett • Buffalo Grove • Elk Grove • Hanover Park • Hoffman Estates Inverness • Mt. Prospect • Palatine Prospect Heights • River Trails • Rolling Meadows • Salt Creek Schaumburg • South Barrington • Streamwood • Wheeling

**NWSRA Mission Statement**
We exist to provide outstanding opportunities through recreation for children and adults with disabilities.

**Vision Statement**
To be a leading force, creating greater options that enrich the life experiences of the participants, families and communities we serve

**Values**
• Teamwork: Support each other and work together
• Respect: Be open, honest, and kind
• Enthusiasm: Exceed expectations
• Collaboration: Combine resources to achieve common goals
• Communication: Listen, share and adapt
INCLUSION SERVICES

NWSRA and its member park districts believe that all individuals should be provided with leisure opportunities that allow for performance at their highest level of ability. Although many people achieve this through participation in an NWSRA program, others may have greater success in a park district program. NWSRA and its member park districts work together to assess what accommodations may be provided when an individual with a disability registers for a park district program.

What does Inclusion Support Look Like?
Inclusion is an ongoing process and should always be a part of program goals. As each individual’s needs are unique, inclusion support is customized to fit the program or service in which the individual is participating.

Support provided to the park district may include:
• Training and guidance of park district staff
• Adaptive equipment
• Individualized resources (Behavioral plan, visual schedule, communication board, etc.)
• Observations
• Facilitation of personal care plans
• Placement of inclusion aide

Requesting Inclusion Support
1. Register for the appropriate park district program.
2. Indicate on the registration form that accommodations may be needed on the appropriate section of the registration form.
3. Families are encouraged to contact a member of the NWSRA inclusion team to inform them of the need for support so advanced coordination of services can begin. Securing an aide typically takes 2+ weeks notice, sometimes longer.
4. Once NWSRA receives the inclusion request from the park district, the inclusion coordinator will contact the family for additional information to learn and support the individual in the least restrictive environment.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an Inclusion Aide?
The role of the inclusion aide is to support the individualized needs of the participant so he or she can participate safely and successfully in the program. An inclusion aide is not viewed as a separate 1:1 staff, shadow, or therapist, but a member of the park district team. The inclusion aide works with the park district staff to meet the needs of the participant. Every effort will be made to make the placement as seamless as possible, so as to not identify the individual receiving support. The supervision of the inclusion aide is shared by NWSRA and the park district.

What experience does an Inclusion Aide have?
Part-time staff hired as inclusion aides have a variety of backgrounds from high school students to college graduates to industry professionals. While staff have varied levels of previous experience, all staff share a desire to work with individuals with disabilities. In addition to general NWSRA training, inclusion staff receive enhanced training on essential topics such as disability information, empathy, behavior management, active inclusion, communication and safety. Inclusion aides also receive training from the park district. As inclusion is a dynamic process, staff are constantly receiving onsite training to ensure they are meeting the needs of supported individuals.

What happens if the aide is absent?
The park district program staff and NWSRA will communicate to discuss how the individual may be supported. There are many situations where the existing park district staff will be able to accommodate the needs of inclusion supported individuals without replacing the aide for that given day. In certain circumstances, NWSRA will work with park district staff to secure a replacement aide based on the need.

How do I contact the aide?
Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with Inclusion Coordinators. Coordinators will ensure information will get to all necessary parties. The inclusion aides contact information will not be made available by NWSRA.

Whom do I notify if my child will be absent?
Please notify the park district program staff and your NWSRA inclusion coordinator when your child is absent or if any schedule changes have been made. This will ensure that NWSRA is utilizing all available staff as efficiently as possible.

Whom do I contact if I have questions?
Questions regarding the inclusion process, inclusion support, or an update to the accommodations needed, should be directed to your NWSRA inclusion coordinator. If your questions are regarding the program or the program content, please contact the park district program coordinator.

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Interim:
Arlington Heights
Buffalo Grove
Palatine

Prospect Heights
Mount Prospect
River Trails

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Bartlett
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Elk Grove
Hoffman Estates
Inverness (Interim)
Rolling Meadows
Salt Creek
South Barrington