



A Teacher Describes an Inclusive Project

Transcript

Lauchie MacKinnon: Well, we did two things actually. One was we did candle-making, and Jonathan worked with the Grade 11 class. You remember that? We made candles. The reason I did it was the other class, the Grade 11s, really needed a project, and my guys really needed a chance to interact with people. And I am absolutely not Martha Stewart and I am glad that the two TAs that were there, they really helped. And we were able to get the big case of plastic... There's a name for it, and I can't remember now-- white wax (paraffin) that the nuns were no longer using and they gave it to us. And we found out that it was dangerous to do this after we had finished the candles. The School Board didn't want us to make them anymore because they would have been liable for the candles if they went up!

But the boys liked it, and Jonathan, I remember, grated the colours—we took the colours and we grated them and we put them in. But it was a chance for them to interact with older students. And sometimes—you know, Jonathan was really lucky, his peer group was very accepting. And like I said before, the teachers really created an environment, and I particularly remember Sherry Rankin and Jerome Stewart really creating that, including them and making them a part of that. But for a lot of other kids, the teachers just don't see that as important, or see it as their job. Not because they don't care. But because they look at it and they say, "My job is to teach Social Studies. It's not to teach Social Skills. That's what the YSF does, or what the special education teacher does."

(With thanks to Lauchie and to L'Arche Cape Breton for videotaping)

