

with strengths and a personality. She has experienced real life situations; she is learning in a setting that will prepare her for life in the community as a contributing and participating adult. She is accepted regardless of her abilities or disability by her peers, by those who will also someday be the adults in her community.

Peoples' attitudes are changing; people are more knowledgeable, more sensitive and more willing to accept children with differences into their classrooms, lives and communities. This letter from the mother of one of Mandy's classmates shows just how much attitudes are changing:

*As a relatively new resident of New Brunswick I was at first sceptical about integration. I was concerned that my child, who had previously been in French immersion, would not receive the extra attention that she may or may not have needed. My concerns were totally unfounded. My daughter has not been set back in any way by integration; but she has been greatly enriched, as has our whole family.*

*My daughter's best friend is handicapped. They are in the same class and are close neighbours as well. Morgan does not think of Mandy as handicapped. She doesn't treat Mandy any differently from any of her other friends, and cannot understand why some people make a to-do about being Mandy's "special friend". To Morgan, Mandy is special just because she is Mandy, a loving, generous, funny little girl, her greatest friend.*

*My personal views on integration have greatly changed. I have watched two little girls blossom together and I feel that wouldn't have happened without integration. My entire family has been enriched by getting to know a "handicapped child"; in fact I sometimes wonder who is truly handicapped. Mandy accepts us with all our limitations and narrow-mindedness and we accept Mandy for what she is, a child who is funny,*