

little opportunity to interact with their non-disabled peers.

Biklen (1985) has identified quality education as respectful of the individual needs of all students, creative, exciting, and welcoming of children regardless of their differences. Not only does integrated education prepare children with handicapping conditions to become part of their communities, it also prepares the children without any identifiable handicap to do the same.

A parent who was impressed with the way the children in her daughter's integrated Grade 1 class welcomed, cared for, and felt responsible for a student with Down Syndrome gives us a view of a very different future. She describes what her non-handicapped child has learned from being educated in an integrated setting:

*Our Erin now has a good understanding of what Down Syndrome means and understands also that this child can progress. She is comfortable with [handicapped people] and realistic and positive about them. It is a joy to us, as parents, in this highly competitive world, to see that these values can and do exist, and can be lived within an often less-than-perfect school system. (Secord, 1989)*

In a sense the jury is still out, not on whether integration is a good idea, but on how the movement toward inclusionary education will proceed in Canada. The challenge to school systems is a major one as the experience in New Brunswick illustrates. This creates a situation where those involved in education need to decide whether the prevailing approach to special education should be defended and enhanced, or whether fundamental and innovative changes should be implemented.

In both the Elwood and Robichaud cases the school authorities and the professionals involved resisted the parents' demands and hardened their positions. In both cases this was harmful to the parents and the child, as well as the school