

as citizens, and their non-disabled classmates are learning not to discriminate on the basis of disability.

Furthermore, the relationships formed between the student who has a disability and his or her peers can last a lifetime and the benefits will touch both lives. In the past, most non-disabled students never had opportunities to meet an individual with a mental handicap. Therefore, many adults are unsure about how to react to individuals with a disability they meet as neighbours, clients, patients, customers, colleagues or co-participants in leisure activities. When the generation of students now in integrated classes grows up, our communities should be transformed. The children who are helping to solve the challenges of accommodation in the classroom will be the adults who will make accommodation possible in the workplace and who will expect their communities to include their former classmates. Non-disabled adults often turn to relationships formed during their school years to assist in finding a job or a place to live, or simply for friendship. And so students who have a mental handicap and who have experienced integrated education will also have a network of relationships, and a community of peers who understand how to accommodate their needs.

Already there are many stories about individuals who have a disability who have grown up as part of their communities and are benefitting from the friendships they formed. One story involves a young doctor who was able to respond to the needs of a patient at the scene of an emergency because he had grown up on the same street as her and knew how to respond to her. Other doctors and nurses had reacted nervously to the woman (Schaefer, 1982). Another story involves a person who has been labelled mentally handicapped and who is the business partner of two former classmates, one a doctor and the other an accountant.