

What is Community Inclusive playground design?



Community inclusive playground design is a design philosophy based on two fundamental tenets:

First, playgrounds should be developed to be FUN places where visitors and residents (kids and adults) of all abilities, race and economic class can play together in a setting that is unique to the social, cultural and environmental history of the community.

Second, by getting the people who will use the playground involved in the planning, funding, construction and maintenance of the playground, the playground can be a catalyst for the development of relationships between user groups and individuals that span the community in addition to creating pride and a sense of ownership.



What makes CI playgrounds different from a traditionally designed playground?

CI playgrounds differ from traditionally designed playgrounds because the focus of the playground is taken away from manufactured play equipment and directed to a unique play setting that is an expression of the social, cultural and environmental history of the community.



Traditional playgrounds seldom incorporate natural shade or plantings and are not well integrated into the surrounding site. Hot, expensive, sterile play areas with no sense of place are the result. These places don't challenge children or keep them interested.



CI playgrounds include elements found in traditional accessible playground models as well as additional amenities such as art, nature, water and musical instruments. Manufactured play equipment is utilized in the layout but is not designed to be the primary element of the playground. Ample shaded play areas and seating are a must.



How is the CI design process different?

The design stage features a design charette so that kids and adults can get involved. This is an excellent way for kids to creatively express their ideas and get excited about the project. Assistance is also needed to research and document local historical and cultural events that are of importance to the community.



How can residents of a community get involved?

Opportunities for involvement are available during every stage of the development process.

A design charette, research opportunities and feedback to the designers occurs throughout this phase. Fundraising is a constant process with fun events like the Wheel-a-thon and engraved brick program. Community build opportunities during certain portions of the construction are available for small and large groups. Community clean up days and special events are a great way to continue involvement in the park after completion.

