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Mental Health Young People & Their Inclusion

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Can a young person be included and still feel completely alone?

Tekst vašeg odlomka

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Mental health challenges among young people

- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Stress
- Uncertainty about the future
- Difficulties with belonging and connection

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Why are young people with disabilities and accessibility needs more vulnerable?

- Social exclusion
- Fewer participation opportunities
- Bullying and stigma
- Lower expectations
- Physical and communication barriers

Accessibility is also a mental health issue.

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Presence ≠ Inclusion

A young person attends every activity and follows instructions...

But rarely speaks, sits alone, and leaves immediately afterwards.

Does this young person feel they belong?

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Belonging is a protective factor

Young people need to feel:

- Accepted
- Valued
- Connected
- Respected
- Able to contribute

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What can youth workers do?

- Build trusting relationships
- Notice strengths
- Offer choice
- Create safe environments
- Support peer connections
- Encourage participation
- Reduce barriers

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Accessibility supports mental health

- Visual instructions
- Additional processing time
- Quiet spaces
- Flexible participation
- Different communication options
- Comfort and regulation supports

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Inclusion is more than participation

- Participation asks: Are young people here?
- Inclusion asks: Do young people belong here?

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Final message

The opposite of exclusion is not participation.

The opposite of exclusion is belonging.

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Thank you!

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