

# Creating Inclusive Spaces: A Resource Guide

A collaborative resource for creating inclusive spaces for:

*Individuals with Disabilities*

*Students and Employees of Color*

*LGBTQIA+ Students and Employees*

*Veterans and Military Connected Individuals*

*International Students*

*Parenting and Caregiving Students*



## Table of Contents

Creating Inclusive Spaces .....	3
Creating Inclusive Spaces for Individuals with Diverse Abilities .....	5
Creating Inclusive Spaces for Students and Employees of Color .....	7
Creating Inclusive Spaces for LGBTQIA+ Students and Employees .....	9
Creating Inclusive Spaces for Veterans and Military Connected Individuals .....	10
Creating Inclusive Spaces for International Students .....	12
Creating Inclusive Spaces for Parenting and Caregiving Students .....	15

## Creating Inclusive Spaces

Creating inclusive spaces is vital for access and success for WTCS students, employees, and communities. Understanding the concepts below can support the WTCS community in creating inclusive spaces for students and colleagues with a range of identities.

Concept: Many terms are used to discuss equity and inclusion related to individuals with minoritized identities.

Action: Understand different terms and using them correctly

### **Privilege:**

- Having access to greater power and resources. White privilege refers to White people having greater access to power and resources than people of color.<sup>1</sup>

### **Equity and Equality:**

- Equality refers to everyone getting the same thing. Equity refers to everyone getting what they need, acknowledging that we do not all start on a level playing field due to historical marginalization of some identities.

### **Ally:**

- Speaking out against injustice and in support of a marginalized group other than one's own.<sup>2</sup>

### **Intersectionality:**

- The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.<sup>3</sup>

Concept: Some barriers are widespread and impact people across many identity groups.

Action: Frame conversations with regards to the systems, structures, and policies that create barriers and cause inequities rather than what individuals or groups lack.

- Question the implication behind terms like “disadvantaged” and “at-risk”. These terms are overly general and imply individuals are inferior to the “norm”.
- Reframe by naming the specific groups one is referring to (individuals living in poverty) and focusing on the risk of the institution or community not meeting the needs of the population (under-resourced neighborhoods, opportunity gaps).

Make finding resources easy and clear.

- Create one page on the college website that lists support resources on campus and in the community.
- Compile a handout for college employees and students that contains all supports the colleges has in one place.

---

<sup>1</sup> Collins, C. (2018). What is white privilege, really? *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2018/what-is-white-privilege-really>

<sup>2</sup> Gaffney, C. (2016). Anatomy of an ally. *Teaching Tolerance*. Retrieved from <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2016/anatomy-of-an-ally>

<sup>3</sup> Merriam-Webster. (n.d). Intersectionality. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intersectionality>

Concept: Student and community voices are essential to creating inclusive spaces where all can be successful.

Action: Create processes that require student and community engagement. Position resources to be available for acting on the needs of student and underserved communities.

- Create a steering committee of students with diverse identities to inform college support and decision making.
- Develop opportunities for students to help inform efforts to connect to the communities they live in and come from.
- Establish an advisory committee made of community leaders representing populations with different identities. This committee might include individuals such as Tribal Nation leaders, members of identity-based chambers of commerce, Hmong community leaders, etc.
- Regularly support and engage with student and employee affinity groups.

Concept: Some identities can be seen, others cannot. Individuals may hold identities that are not assumed or apparent to those who do not know them well. It is important to provide opportunities for people to identify how they would like to be addressed.

Action: Provide opportunities for individuals to self-identify if they choose.

- Do not make assumptions about how someone may identify if they haven't disclosed that information to you.
- Provide inclusive demographic options on application and intake forms.

## Creating Inclusive Spaces for Individuals with Diverse Abilities

This resource was created with input from the WTCS Disability Services Committee to support individuals looking to create inclusive spaces for individuals with diverse abilities. Important concepts to understand are laid out below along with action steps you can take to increase inclusion in your work.

**Concept:** Colleges must provide accommodation services to provide equal access for individuals with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**Action:** Understand and help others understand the accommodations process at your college

- Connect with your Accommodations and Human Resources Offices to learn about your college's process and the best way to refer students and colleagues for accommodations.
- It is important that individuals with disabilities know how to access support. Information for requesting and accessing accommodation services should be on every event flyer for the college or public.
- Remind others that accommodations are not "special", "extra", or "advantages" but rather that they are support for overcoming institutional barriers, leveling the playing field, and gaining equal access.

**Provide appropriate referrals and respect individual choices**

- The accommodations process must be initiated by the individual looking for support, and is a participatory, case-by-case process for meeting individual's needs for equal access.
- Not all individuals may elect to use all accommodations they are eligible for at all times.
- Mentioning an IEP (high school), DVR, or 504 plan – are all indications that an individual may need a referral to accommodation services.
- If you suspect someone could benefit from a referral to accommodation services but they have not disclosed they have a disability, you could say, "I've noticed this is challenging. Can I share some resources with you that may help?"

**Concept:** People with diverse abilities are individuals with many abilities who are experts on their own experiences and in control of their own lives.

**Action:** Follow the lead of the individual with regards to how they identify

- Individuals with the same condition may identify differently. For example, "I am autistic" or "I am a person with autism".
- Use person-first language ("person with", "student with") unless the individual refers to themselves with a different term, then follow the lead of the individual.
- Many people prefer deaf over "hard of hearing".

**Focus on the abilities of the individual rather than what they cannot do, lack, or how they differ from others**

- Avoid using terms and phrases focused on limitations like:
  - Handicapped, wheelchair bound, special needs, normal/regular, hearing-impaired.
  - "You wouldn't be able to get this accommodation in the "real world".
  - This person has "issues" or "problems".
  - "You don't need this."

Honor the autonomy of the individual and the fact that they are an expert on their own life

- Look at the individual you are communicating with, not the sign language interpreter.
- Honor confidentiality by not discussing an individual's accommodations without them.
- Avoid:
  - Asking, "Have you taken your medication?"
  - Saying, "This worked last time for someone else".
  - Diagnosing someone or telling them which accommodations to ask for.

Concept: Many individuals need accommodations due to institutional barriers. There are ways to reduce institutional barriers that increase equity and inclusion for all students. It is easier and more effective to plan with accessibility and inclusion in mind rather than going back to fix things afterward.

Action: Learn about Universal Design as a series of strategies to reduce barriers and make spaces more inclusive for all

- Use Universal Design principles from the beginning when designing programs, events, workshops, and spaces.
- Provide content or information about resources in a variety of ways.

Use captioned media

- Captioning increases knowledge retention for all and increases access for individuals with disabilities, those that may not be familiar with the media's language, visual learners, and others.
- Learn your college's policies and resources regarding captioning media.
- Advocate for captions to be included and turned on (especially if there is no one from accommodation services in the room).

Ensure anything you buy or create is accessible

- From captioned media, to websites, diagrams, maps, podcasts, graphs, furniture, ask about accessibility.

Language and behaviors to avoid

- Using "crazy", "ADHD", "Bipolar" as a descriptor for negative situations.
- Talking slowly or loudly to someone you know, or suspect has a disability.
- Portraying people with diverse abilities as inspirational simply because of their disability. Ex: "You're so strong, brave".
- Impatience, exasperation, or unwillingness to work with someone to create an inclusive environment for them.
- Assuming someone with a disability needs help without asking them.

Resources

[Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[Universal Design For Learning](#)

[Association on Higher Education and Disability](#)

[Office for Civil Rights Disability Discrimination: Overview of the Laws](#)

## Creating Inclusive Spaces for Students and Employees of Color

This resource was created with input from the WTCS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee to support individuals looking to create inclusive spaces for students and employees of color. Important concepts to understand are laid out below along with action steps you can take to increase inclusion in your work.

**Concept:** Many terms are used to discuss equity and inclusion related to race and ethnicity.

**Action:** Understand different terms and use them correctly

### **Race and Ethnicity:**

- Race is a social construct grouping people with common physical characteristics together. Ethnicity is a social construct grouping people with common ancestry, cultural identity, linguistic heritage, religious affiliations, etc.<sup>4</sup> On the U.S. Census, respondents can mark both their race and ethnicity. Marking “Hispanic” as an ethnicity can be paired with any race.<sup>5</sup>

### **BIPOC:**

- Black, Indigenous, people of color.

### **Latinx:**

- A non-gender specific way to refer to people of Latin American descent. The term Latinx, unlike terms such as Latino/a, does not assume a gender binary and includes non-binary folks.

**Concept:** Historically dominant identities have been displayed as “normal” throughout the history of the United States. As a result, non-dominant identities receive messages that they are “other”, “exotic”, “unfortunate” or “different” from this established norm and minoritized individuals are often asked questions that people who identify with dominant identities are not.

**Action:** Model an expectation of respect for all people regardless of how familiar or comfortable we may be with their identity or culture

- Work to pronounce names correctly rather than giving a nickname or not learning a name.
- Refrain from referring to individuals from non-dominant cultural groups as “diverse” or “ethnic”. Diversity simply means variation, and ethnic refers to one’s cultural group. Both terms can include dominant identities too.
- Asking to touch someone’s hair, skin, or clothing can feel demeaning and imply exoticification or othering.

**Respect** an individual’s right to not share information about their cultural identity or history

- Refrain from singling someone out to ask them to speak for their real or assumed race, cultural group, nationality, etc.
- Question why certain questions or comments come to mind with some individual and not others. For example, is everyone in the room asked where they are from, or about their citizenship? Is everyone complimented for speaking English clearly or “eloquently” or only those who appear to hold non-dominant identities?

---

<sup>4</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (2016). Race. Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/race/#RacVerEth>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Race & ethnicity. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/mso/www/training/pdf/race-ethnicity-onepager.pdf>

Don't make assumptions about a person's background or experiences based on their perceived race or ethnicity

- Racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic assumptions can spotlight and embarrass individuals. Ask "Does anyone here speak Spanish", rather than making an incorrect assumption.

Language and behaviors to avoid:

- Referring to someone using an incorrect name or pronoun.
- "You speak so well, eloquently".
- Saying "I can't say your name. I'm just going to call you..." or one's name being consistently mispronounced without effort to correct the mistake.
- Saying "I don't see color (gender, class, etc.)".
- Touching or asking to touch someone's hair or skin.
- Referring to communities of color as "diverse" or "ethnic".
- Using terms like "Ghetto", "illegal", "disadvantaged", "at-risk".

Resources

[National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education \(NCORE\)](#)

[White Privilege Conference](#)

[The Hope Center](#)



## Creating Inclusive Spaces for LGBTQIA+ Students and Employees

This resource was created with input from the WTCS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee to support individuals looking to create inclusive spaces for students and employees of color. Important concepts to understand are laid out below along with action steps you can take to increase inclusion in your work.

Concept: The language used can quickly signal that a space may be inclusive and welcoming to individuals with diverse gender identities.

Action: Understand different terms and use them correctly

### Gender identity and Gender expression:

- Gender identity refers to a person's sense of themselves as male, female, a blend of both or neither which can be the same or different from one's sex assigned at birth. Gender expression is the appearance of one's gender identity which can be expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, etc. One's gender expression may or may not conform to socially defined characteristics typically associated with being masculine or feminine regardless of their gender identity.<sup>6</sup>

### LGBTQIA+:

- A common acronym for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Genderqueer, Queer, Intersexed, Agender, Asexual, and Ally community.<sup>7</sup>

Concept: Identifying as LGBTQIA+ may not be visible or physically apparent. It is important to provide opportunities for people to identify how they would like to be addressed.

Action: Display your own gender pronouns

- Doing this can communicate your understanding and respect of gender identities and model practices that create inclusive spaces for a variety of gender identities and expressions.

Give others the opportunity to share their pronouns

- Make it a norm to include pronouns in introductions.
- Provide pronouns on name tags for events.
- If you're unsure, ask, "I want to be respectful to you, which pronouns can I use to refer to you?"

Use gender-neutral language

- Use terms such as "partner or spouse" rather than assuming.

Resources

[Campus Pride Index](#)

[LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary](#)

---

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Campaign. (n.d.). Sexual orientation and gender identity definitions. Retrieved from <https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-terminology-and-definitions>

<sup>7</sup> LGBTQIA Resource Center. (2020). LGBTQIA resource center glossary. U.C. Davis. Retrieved from <https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary>

## Creating Inclusive Spaces for Veterans and Military Connected Individuals

This resource was created with input from the WTCS Veterans Services Committee to support individuals looking to create inclusive spaces for Veterans and military connected individuals. Important concepts to understand are laid out below along with action steps you can take to increase inclusion in your work.

**Concept:** Many terms are used to refer to individuals who have some experience with the military.

**Action:** Understand different military terms and use them correctly

### **Military connected:**

- The broadest term, this refers to anyone who may have served in the military or has connections to someone who has. Spouses and dependents of Veterans are included in this category.

### **Veteran:**

- The federal law defines a Veteran as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and was not dishonorably discharged. Using this term can designate services specifically for those who have served.

### **Active Duty:**

- A person who is active duty is in the military full-time. They work for the military full-time and can be deployed at any time.

### **Reserves:**

- Each branch of the military has a Reserve unit. Individuals in the Reserves are activated solely for Federal purposes. People in the Reserve can be deployed at any time should the need arise but do not work for the military full-time. Students and colleagues in the Reserves may need to leave the college if called to duty.

### **National Guard:**

- Each branch of the military has a National Guard component. The purpose is to provide and maintain trained units and qualified persons to be available for active duty in the armed forces when needed for State and Federal purposes. People in the National Guard can be deployed at any time should the need arise but do not work for the military full-time. Students and colleagues in the Reserves may need to leave the college if called to duty.

**Concept:** Federal and state level benefits are available to some individuals connected to the military. Navigating benefit eligibility can be complex and confusing but there are specific individuals at the college to help.

**Action:** Help individuals that ask about benefits connect to the correct person at your college

- Know the point of contact for military benefits and the first step of the process.

**Avoid assumptions about the benefits**

- Avoid assumptions about the benefits an individual may receive, or promising students benefits.
- Instead of saying “you can probably get that paid for with your benefits”, say “Let me connect you to someone who can determine if any benefits you’re eligible for would help in this situation”.

**Know about organizations**

- Inform yourself about organizations that support Veterans and military connected individuals in your community.

- Individuals and organizations at the county, state, and federal level can help provide resources for housing, transportation, legal issues, etc.

Concept: Many Veterans that have been deployed have experienced serious situations of life, death, and sacrifice.

Action: Be aware of questions or phrases that may bring back traumatic situations or minimize the gravity of combat

- Avoid:
  - Asking someone “what happened” during their military experience.
  - Asking a Veteran if they’ve killed someone or witnessed torturing.

Be careful not to try to relate everyday experiences to war or combat

- Avoid:
  - Trying to equate traumas or compare symptoms.
  - Offer what you would have done in their shoes.
  - Using terms like “boots on the ground”, “front lines”, “Safe zone”.

Refrain from making assumptions

- Making assumptions about what someone has or hasn’t experienced in the military or how they are now
- Avoid:
  - Assuming all Veterans have PTSD.
  - Telling someone to get over it.
  - Assuming all those that have been deployed have seen combat.

Be mindful when recognizing veterans

- Recognize that all Veterans and their families make a sacrifice of some kind.
- Thank a Veteran for their sacrifice rather than their service.
- Avoid talking about how great someone has it now that they’re back and have benefits.

Language and behaviors to avoid:

- Assuming a military connected individual has a certain political leaning or is necessarily supportive of the government, war, etc.
- Saying “you were only there a short time” or “you were only in the National Guard”.
- Referring to Veterans as “broken” or “disabled” (use injured instead).
- Terms like “entitled” (use earned instead) and “taking advantage” (use utilizing instead).
- Terms like “trigger”, “deploy”, “patriot”.
- Not allowing choice in where a Veteran sits or stands.

Resources

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[County Veterans Services Officers](#)

[Wisconsin State Veterans Benefits](#)

[WI State Statute on Accepting Military Credit](#)

## Creating Inclusive Spaces for International Students

This resource was created with input from the WTCS Global Education Committee to support those looking to create inclusive spaces for international students. Important concepts, actions and definitions are laid out below to help increase inclusion in your work.

**Concept:** There are a number of regulations that apply to maintenance of student visa status. It is helpful to know these regulations when referring international students to resources in the college or community.

**Action:** Understand key student visa regulations:

- Students must normally be engaged in full-time study. Unless students apply for a reduced course load under specific circumstances, they must maintain a full-time course load (typically 12 credits during primary terms for undergraduate, 8 for graduate). Dropping courses below full-time can result in violation and loss of their visa status.
- Student visa holders have very limited opportunities for employment. They are allowed to work on campus jobs at their primary school of attendance and they can apply for specific work authorization related to their field of study (see OPT, CPT, AT terminology below). Unauthorized off-campus work is a serious violation of visa regulations.
- International students are not eligible for federal financial aid and cannot complete a FAFSA application.

**Note:**

*Colleges may optionally impose additional conditions as part of their management of international student programs. These practices will vary by institution (e.g., Mandatory enrollment in health insurance, required orientations, specific fees for services, etc.).*

**Concept:** One challenge in knowing how to best serve international students is that the terminology and reference points vary depending on who uses the term.

**Action:** Know the differences between "international students" and others with international backgrounds

- In higher education in general, and at most WTCS colleges, the term "international student" is narrowly defined as those studying at the college on a student visa (F-1, J-1, M-1).
- When a college serves as the visa sponsor for a student studying at the college, those students are subject to a number of requirements and regulations related to maintaining their status as a legal student. Colleges have a responsibility to provide the support services and advising for students to comply with these requirements as well as other services that colleges may offer to help them adapt culturally or socially.
- Colleges may have a broad range of students who were born abroad or identify as international, but those students are not subject to the same regulations and mandated services as college-sponsored visa students (see information on permanent resident or undocumented students below).

**F-1 student:**

- The most common visa category for students is the F-visa, designed for full-time enrollment in a program of study. A student studying on an F visa is known as an F-1 (if a student has a spouse, children traveling with them as dependents on an F visa they are known as F-2s). J and M visas are also other categories under which students can study and use the same J-1, M-1 terminology.

**SEVIS:**

- The Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a federal Homeland Security database in which every international student's information, including sponsoring college, current address, courses of study, and related information must be kept current. All colleges sponsoring international students must have a Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) who oversees college and student compliance and data accuracy for SEVIS.

**Permanent Residents (Green Card Holders):**

- A green card, known officially as a Permanent Resident Card, is a document issued to immigrants as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege of residing permanently in the United States. Permanent residents are not subject to SEVIS reporting or other visa limitations on their work or enrollment. While colleges may elect to offer programs for diversity and inclusion that welcome these students, they should not be treated differently than U.S. citizens with regard to enrollment or FAFSA financial aid.

**Refugees:**

- Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.<sup>8</sup>

**Undocumented Students:**

- Students who have entered the United States without visa documentation or may have overstayed the authorized length of their visa, are often referred to as undocumented students. Institutions vary with regard to how they work with undocumented students.

**DACA Students:**

- The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (sometimes known as the Dream Act) is a specific federal program designed to allow individuals who were brought into the country as children without documentation to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and become eligible for a work permit in the U.S. DACA students are not subject to international student visa regulations but are limited by other statutes.

**OPT/CPT:**

- F-1 international students can apply for authorization for employment that is specifically related to their program of study through Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) programs. OPT and CPT each have their own limitations and requirements. CPT authorization is issued by the college. OPT authorization is granted by the USCIS (federal agency).

**Academic Training:**

- Academic Training is a period of employment authorization for J-1 students. It permits students to gain work experience in their field of study. Academic Training typically takes place off-campus. A student can participate in Academic Training during or after completing their program. The total training period may not exceed the amount of time spent in the full course of study, not to exceed 3 years.

---

<sup>8</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (n.d.). What is a refugee? Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/what-is-a-refugee.html>

## Language and behaviors to avoid:

- Assuming an international student does not speak English.
- Asking if one has internet or the use of basic items in their country.
- Assuming one's political affiliation, religion, interests, abilities, or knowledge based on their nationality (i.e., but you're Brazilian, you must play soccer!).
- Giving someone a nickname instead of trying to correctly pronounce their preferred name.
- Referring to international students, immigrants, or refugees "taking jobs" in the United States.
- Asking international students to share about stereotypes or tragedies related to their country of origin.

## Supporting International Students

### **Here are 10 ways to support international students**

- Provide training to college employees to raise awareness of cultural differences, diversity, and inclusive practices.
- Provide support to international students before they arrive (such as a "pre-arrival course") and in the months after orientation to reduce anxiety and help students acclimate. "Buddy systems" with peers from their home country or cross-cultural friendship programs can help.
- Provide opportunities for international students to make social connections.
- Connect international students with campus supports, such as writing center, tutoring.
- Normalize counseling services for your students and be aware that international students may manifest physical symptoms for mental health challenges.
- Provide a reflection space for students of all faiths.
- Provide programs that support students' English (academic and social).
- Help students understand the U.S. educational system. Encourage use of faculty office hours.
- Provide opportunities for international students to contribute on campus. Recognize the valuable contribution they bring to the broader campus community.
- Be curious. Ask students about their home, their family, how they are doing. Smile and show genuine interest.

## Creating Inclusive Spaces for Parenting and Caregiving Students

This resource was created with input from students and college employees across the WTCS that work to support parenting students. Important concepts, actions and definitions are laid out below to help increase inclusion across the WTCS.

Concept: Establish a process to collect data on parenting and caregiving students.

Action: Understand how many parenting and caregiving students are being served by the college

- Construct an opportunity for students to self-identify.
- Normalize college employees asking students if they are a parent or a caregiver, similar to asking if they have a job.

Concept: Different terms are used to refer to students in caregiving roles.

Action: Be mindful of language used on advertising and support materials for caregiving students

- Support for caregiving students is often geared toward mothers. However, students in parenting roles that may not identify as mothers as well as students that are caregivers but not parents may also need resources.
- Use the phrase “parenting and caregiving students” to be inclusive to the widest group of caregivers.
- Be specific. If an event is specifically geared toward mothers be clear about this and then consider how you might make space for fathers or non-binary parents as well throughout the year.
- Recognize that students parenting older children (or attending college at the same time) may also need support.
- Provide a list of comprehensive parenting and caregiving resources.

Concept: Parenting/caregiving students continue to handle several responsibilities such as a job, class time, course work, and caring for their families while they are going to college.

Action: Be flexible and understanding with scheduling that conflicts with family responsibilities

- Communicate to students in syllabi and in class that flexibility is available when necessary. Encourage students with such circumstances to discuss their concerns regarding assignments and tests with relevant college employees.
- Be open to meeting with students at times that work for them and their families.
- Provide childcare while parents are attending on-campus meetings.
- Allow students to bring those they care for to an on-campus meeting. Keep activities in your office that can engage children if a parenting/caregiving student needs to bring children to an appointment.

Tailor resources to meet the needs of parenting/caregiving students

- Create one page on the college website that lists resources for students to access.
- Compile a handout for college employees and students that contains all parenting supports the college has in one place.
- Work with the food pantry to prepare take home meals for families not only individual students.

Concept: Parenting/caregiving students report feeling unsupported in their decision to go to college. Connecting with other caregiving students can provide significant support, motivation, and connection to resources.

Action: Create opportunities for parenting/caregiving students to connect with each other

- Parenting/caregiving students report feeling unsupported in their decision to go to college. Connecting with other caregiving students can provide significant support, motivation, and connection to resources.
- Use social media, college online platforms, student life, and in person marketing to create spaces for parenting/caregiving students to find each other.
- Offer programming virtually and in person that is marketed directly to students in caregiving roles.
- Create a steering committee of caregiving students with diverse identities to inform college support and decision making.
- Create opportunities for parenting/caregiving students to help inform recruitment efforts.
- Help students caring for children with disabilities connect with each other and find resources

## Supporting Parenting and Caregiving Students

### **Here are 5 ways to support parenting and caregiving students**

- Provide training for college employees to learn about the barriers these students face.
- Examine classroom policies to determine whether they could be a barrier. For example, “classroom door locks promptly at 8:00”, this is not accessible for someone that may have to drop off a child at daycare.
- Be aware of challenges that could exist for students taking courses virtually – balancing live online class while simultaneously caring for sick or screaming child.
- Connect students to funding opportunities such as Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, grants.
- If affordable on-campus childcare is not an option, establish a partnership with a local community option. For example, the YMCA, YWCA, or the Boys and Girls Club.

### **Resources**

[Child Care Access Means Parents in School \(CCAMPIS\)](#)

[Wisconsin Department of Children and Families](#)

- [Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program](#)
- [Child Care Subsidy for Parents](#)

[Family Friendly Campus Toolkit](#)