

The Cost of Segregation vs. The Cost of Inclusion*

“Segregated” Models

“Included” Models

Education

Separate special education classrooms; or private schooling; or separate buildings; \$25,000 – \$55,000 per student per year

Higher academic outcomes from appropriate supports in classes with non-disabled peers; \$12,000 – \$15,000 per student per year

Employment

Lifelong segregation and ongoing dependence in sheltered work environments; average annual cost per person: \$19,388

Integrated, specialized employment, based on individual strengths, building skills and experience, and increasing independence; average annual cost per person: \$6,619

Transition & Community Living

Inflated government funds dedicated to crowded, segregated training facilities not conducive to increased independence; cost per year for an individual to be housed in an institution: \$104,025 – \$375,000

Many transition activities considered a “zero cost”; cost per year for an individual with a disability to live with supports and services in the community: \$21,789 – \$107,453

OUTCOMES

Federal and state funds furthering lifelong segregation and dependence, lowered expectations, and dangerous environments

Positive returns on investment – seen in responsible, independent adults contributing and belonging to our communities

QUESTION

More important than cost, which option offers better quality of life?

*Cost sources:

TASH exhibit, *The Costs of Segregation vs. The Costs of Inclusion* – on education and employment;
NCD’s *Deinstitutionalization Toolkit, 2010* – on institutionalization and community living.