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Education expert calls for 'inclusion'

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A global leader in education says children with learning disabilities should remain part of Bermuda's mainstream school system "to prepare them for later life".

Dr. Ashleigh Molloy will put forward his views on the importance of "inclusion, rather than segregation".

Dr. Molloy, a world renowned author, speaker and consultant from Canada, insists we should see children's differences simply as "part of life".

He believes those with special needs should be "welcomed" rather than

segregated in their own schools.

Dr. Molloy is the director of the Transformation Education Institute and president of the Down Syndrome Association of Toronto.



DR. ASHLEIGH MOLLOY

He is visiting the island to give an interactive workshop for the Learning Disabilities Association of Bermuda and is to

hold training sessions with the Bermuda Teachers Union.

Dr. Molloy will also meet government officials and staff of The Reading Association.

He said: "Children should not be set aside for their

differences, they should not be segregated.

"They may simply require a different type of teaching, so teachers just have to accommodate the way these children learn.

"Some of the tools and philosophies of teachers may have to change, that's all."

Dr. Molloy said the idea of 'special schools' was insulting as all children needed to be in an "inclusive class setting".

He said: "School has to prepare children for post-school. Segregation is not a reality."

He is calling on the Government to invest more in teacher training, para-professionals and resources, especially assistive technology.

Dr. Molloy said: "Inclusion can and will work if it is tackled in the right way. Children have got to learn together if they are to live together."

Dr. Molloy, also known as Dr. Ash, honeymooned in Bermuda with his wife 21 years ago. His own daughter has Down Syndrome.

The workshop 'Creating a Classroom Team: Mission Possible' runs from 9am to midday tomorrow at the Hamilton Princess.

He will show how teachers, parents and support staff can work together to achieve student success. ■

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