Classroom and Communication Skills Program: Practical Strategies for Educating Children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities

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1:45-3:00pm
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Learning to Learn Model

- Assessing the Child
- Development of a Learning Plan
- Teaching and Learning
- Monitoring Performance to Promote Progress
- Outcome

Identification of Students and Staff

Students
- Non-Verbal, Limited Verbal, Not Table Ready
- Children attend 4 half days per week
- *Not* a disability specific program
- Trial period in their least restrictive environment
- Needs in communication and classroom readiness skills

Staff Support
- Early Childhood Special Education Teacher
- Instructional Assistant
- Inclusive Speech Therapist 2x/week
- Inclusive Occupational Therapist 1x/week
- Physical Therapist

Goal #1

To utilize specific assessments which successfully support state standards so that adequate yearly progress can be met under NCLB.

Assessments

- ISTAR
- Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS) *Revised 2007*

Goal #2

To identify the curriculum match between the children's demonstrated skills and the classroom demands for students who are non-verbal/limited verbal and have difficulties engaging in activities.

Curriculum Framework

- Foundations for Young Children to State Academic Standards
- Early Childhood Thematic Curriculum
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Goal #3

To review program design and effective implementation of methodologies and strategies aligned with the needs of the child.

Program design includes:

- Functional Communication Skills
  - Total Communication Approach
    - Sign Language
    - Picture Exchange Communication System
    - Verbal language
    - Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC)
    - Combination of multiple modalities
- Classroom Readiness Skills
  - Engagement, attending, and sitting skills

Ultimate Goal: Successful transition into a developmental classroom

Strategies and Methodologies

- Differentiated Instruction
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
- Applied Verbal Behavior (AVB)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Treatment and education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children (TEAACH)
- Visual Strategies and Visual Supports
- Floor time/DIR
- Positive Behavior Management
- Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS)
- Do Watch Listen Say by Kathleen Quill
- Functional Sign Language
- Sensory Integration activities

Goal #4

To identify functional classroom readiness skills and shape the behavior of the child for outcome of engagement, joint attention and classroom foundation skills.

Behavior Shaping

"It's all about behavior"
-Positive reinforcement
-Use a variety of reinforcers
-Pairing ourselves with all that is good
-"Do It Best" aprons
-Passive/Aggressive behaviors
-What behavior are you reinforcing?

Goal #5

To identify effective communication modalities that can be taught to the child to replace inappropriate behavior with an acceptable way to communicate.

Communication

"It's all about communication"
- Total communication approach
- AVB for responses
- The problem with "wait time"
- Requesting

Every Child Communicates

Program Successes

- Establishment of positive relationships; Promotion of fun interactions
- Teaching of functional skills in the natural school environment
- Multiple opportunities throughout the child's school day to practice skills
- Promotion of student independence
- Schedule flexibility

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How does** CCSP **teach a child to be independent with their skills therefore decreasing the need for a one on one assistant?**
- **How do I collect and monitor data?**
- **How do you find the time to do all this?**
- **How do I promote parental involvement?**
- **How do I keep the environment fun?**

FAQ's con't

- **How do I complete a reinforcer inventory?**
- **How do I set up the classroom environment?**
- **What are some initial ideas for beginning communicators?**
- **How do I begin a conversation with my administration with regard to starting a CCSP program?**