

**“Are we doing all that we can to Include Learners with
Autism and Related Developmental Disabilities
in the Regular Education Classroom”**

Presented by:

Ray Cepeda, BCaBA

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Life's WORC: Building Bridges through Life's Connections
The Marriot
101 James Doolittle Blvd.
Uniondale, NY 11553

So....are we?



NO.

Why Not?

Lots of Questions...

Too expensive?

Too time consuming?

Who would be responsible?

Who would develop the program?

Who's going to do the training?

Who's going to select appropriate classes?

How do we even get started?

Do we need to establish criteria?

What if we try it and it fails?

Etc.

That sounds like a BIG BIG hassle!



Just what is inclusion anyway?

And are we doing anything about it?



What is inclusion?

What it may actually be:

Randomly placing a child in music, lunch, gym, art or other “special” without careful consideration of that specific child’s strengths and difficulties.

Is that REALLY all that bad?



Isn't it important that learners with autism be exposed to typically developing children?



“Exposure” ≠ Acquisition

Exposure = Osmosis = Lack of Acquisition

So...what are actually looking for?

What we would like the inclusion experience to be...

Offering our learners with ASD ***consistent*** opportunities to generalize skills that were previously acquired in a more restrictive learning environment to a general ed setting and to acquire and expand academic and social skills within the same setting as their same aged typically developing peers.

We don't want...

Randomly allowing a child to attend a typical education placement unassisted and seeing if he can “step up to the plate.”

How do we Facilitate Change?

Answer:

- a. Preservice and Inservice Training for General and Regular Education Staff
- b. Sensitivity Training for General Ed students
- c. Implement formal inclusion program.
- d. Provide the necessary supports to the Teachers

Ok...let's focus on our learners...

What Skills should a Learner Have Prior to Being Included?

Varies by age...but one skill is of PRIMARY importance for ALL learners...

**A FUNCTIONAL
COMMUNICATION SYSTEM!**

Basic Skills for Learners

The following are not “required” (with the exception of certain skills related to self-control) but are certainly helpful and should provide you with specific targets that you may want to add to your learner’s goals.

Basic Skills

1. The learner can use appropriate communication to gain access to preferred items as well as attention.
2. If learner has a history of engaging in interfering or problem behaviors, there should have been a plan in place that has been effective and the learner is now easily redirected.

Basic Skills

3. Can accept “No” for an answer.
4. Will “wait” when instructed to do so.
5. Can transition from preferred to non-preferred activities free of problem behavior.

Basic Skills

6. Can transition from non-preferred to non-preferred activities free of problem behavior.

7. Can follow multi-step instructions.

Note: When teaching this skill, be sure that the skills are functional and that you build in time delays.

Basic Skills

8. Learner is currently engaged in regular playdates with same aged-typically developing peers and requires minimal prompting to stay on-task and to maintain proximity.
9. Generalized imitation skills. This includes actions of others (third person imitation) and a group as well as imitating a model. Both structured (e.g., cutting, coloring, writing etc.) and unstructured (e.g., on the playground, at birthday party etc.) activities.

Basic Skills

10. Learner can reciprocate a greeting and a statement.
11. Learner can answer basic social questions.
12. Learner can attend in a small group that includes the learner and two peers for up to 20 consecutive minutes without prompting and without displaying problem behavior.

Some Questions to Consider

1. Which teacher is the best match for the student?
2. What changes need to be made to prepare the student for the inclusion process?
3. In what activity and for how long will the student be included?

deBoer (pg. 119, 2009)

The Key Person...the 1:1

What does she need to know to facilitate the inclusion experience?

Skills of the 1:1

1. Understands what ASD is and has had experience fulfilling the role of a 1:1 successfully.
2. Have functional understanding of principles of reinforcement, punishment and extinction.
3. Be familiar with the student they are working with: strengths, difficulties, behavioral issues, behavior plans and goals.

Skills of the 1:1

4. Understand what prompting is.
5. Understand and be able to implement prompt fading.
6. Understand and use various methods of data collection.
7. BE CONSISTENT!
8. RESPOND TO FEEDBACK BY MAKING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR CHANGES!

Skills of the 1:1

9. Understand and be able to facilitate social exchanges between the learner with ASD and his peers without becoming the focus of the interaction.
10. You should **ALWAYS** be doing something for/with your learner!
11. Be sure that all materials that the learner requires are readily available every day.

Skills of the 1:1

12. Work as quietly as possible. Avoid talking to other adults unless it specifically applies to your learner.
13. Be flexible. The classroom teacher may change the schedule or make some other change. Go with it and prepare your learner appropriately for the change.
14. Refrain from making negative and emotional statements to your learner.

Skills of the 1:1

15. Do not automatically repeat the instructions of the teacher. Learn to use time delays appropriate for your learner to allow he/she to respond independently.
16. Avoids interacting with the learner in a “mothering” way.

Skills of the 1:1

17. Can communicate with parents in a professional manner during meetings and understands when to refer parents to the general ed teacher, the special ed teacher, etc.
18. Knows not to sit next to the learner unless absolutely necessary, but with the guidance of the general ed teacher interacts and supports other learners during times when the learner with ASD can be independent.

Skills of the 1:1

19. Collaborates with the general ed and special ed teacher in making curriculum modifications.

20. Provides constant feedback to the general ed and special ed teacher regarding progress. This facilitates any changes that may need to be made to facilitate the learner's success in a particular activity, class or with a specific skill.

The 1:1 should be part of the IEP and attend team meetings. This is the person whose sole focus is on a particular learner and their progress and most likely “knows” the learner the best and therefore they play a valuable and crucial role on the team. Excluding them from the IEP process and from team meetings does not make any sense.

What kind of data will be need to determine if our learner is being successful?

Data Collection

1. Responding to Peer's Interaction/Initiation
2. Responding to Teacher's Greeting
3. Responding to Teacher's Direct Instruction
4. Responding to Teacher's Direct Question
5. Vocally imitating Teacher
6. Follows Group Instructions
7. Imitates the Group during Structured Activity

Data Collection

8. Imitates Group during Unstructured Activity
9. Maintains Proximity to Group during Structured Activity
10. Maintains Proximity to Group during Unstructured Activity.
11. Raises Hand to Get Attention
12. Raises Hand to Answer Questions during Group Lesson

Data Collection

- 13. Spontaneously Requests to have Need Met
- 14. Spontaneously Comments during Structured Activity.
- 15. Spontaneously Comments during Unstructured Activity
- 16. Spontaneously Asks Questions: Peer

Data Collection

- 17. Initiates Interaction with Peer
- 18. Maintains Interaction with Peer
- 19. Transitions Free of Problem Behavior
- 20. Total Number of Prompts from the 1:1

Data Collection

This is by no means an exhaustive list of target behaviors, rather information to help you identify what the hierarchy of needs are going to be for a particular learner in the inclusion setting.

Feel Like this?



Training Typical Peers

The following comes from “Inclusive Programming for Elementary Students with Autism” by Sheila Wagner.

(Which is an excellent resource! She also wrote a book for middle school students!)

Training Typical Peers

Here's an example of how to explain to peers how children are different from one another:

- “- Some children have brown hair, some black, some blonde, some red, etc.
- Some children need eye glasses, some do not
- Some children read very well, some do not
- Some children need help from others to figure out math problems; some are great at math
- Some children seem to make friends easily; some do not
- Some kids need help to know how to play or act; others don't” (Wagner, pg. 47, 1999)

Training Typical Peers

1. Discuss differences and how children are the same.
2. Allow the children to discuss how they are all the same and different.
3. The teacher can then discuss the specific issues of the student with ASD that will be coming into the class.
4. Follow-up with classroom social skills lessons.
5. Implement a classwide motivation system such as the “marble jar.” (Canter, L., 1987)

Reinforcement for the Typical Students

1. Present the marble-jar to the class.
2. Tell the students that earning marbles is going to be a team effort that they will have to work together.

S^{R+} for Typical Students

3. Let the students know that the jar is a reminder of how they can be a team.
4. Tell them that one marble will be placed in the jar whenever the teacher notices a student helping another student who is having difficulty (without being told to do so).

S^{R+} for Typical Students

5. 2-3 marbles should be awarded each day and the students responsible for the class receiving the marbles should be acknowledged in the front of the class at the end of the day.

The procedure should continue until there are approximately 50 marbles in the jar and then the class selects a reinforcer (e.g., a class party or other fun activity).

Once the party is over the jar is emptied and the system starts again.

Training Staff

1. Define ASD
2. Explain that there is a continuum of ASD
3. Describe and discuss the following as related to ASD:
 - Cognition, Learning, Social Interaction, Play, Communication, Adaptive Behavior, behavior characteristics, motor skills, sensory activities (deboer, pg 12, 2009)

Training Staff

4. Lovaas Video: Presents the three potential outcomes from IBI
5. Discuss the positive effect of inclusion on peers:
 - Reduced fear of human differences accompanied by increased comfort
 - Growth in social cognition
 - Development of personal principles
 - Warm and caring friendships (deBoer, pg. 33, 2009)

Training Staff

6. Assessments
7. Curriculum modifications
8. Collaborative planning (**MOST IMPORTANT!**)
9. Problem-Solving/Troubleshooting
10. Implementing behavior plans
11. Alternative forms of Communication
12. Case Histories

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

Please maintain objective and realistic expectations of your child and the professionals working with your child.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Paraeducators

Create and facilitate learning opportunities both academically and socially and carry-out any specific behavior plans.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

General Education Teacher

Accept the learner with ASD and be sure that there are opportunities for this learner to acquire new skills, practice previously acquired skills and have opportunities for social interaction.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Special Education Teacher

Provide ongoing support and feedback to General ed teacher, paraeducator and the learner with autism.

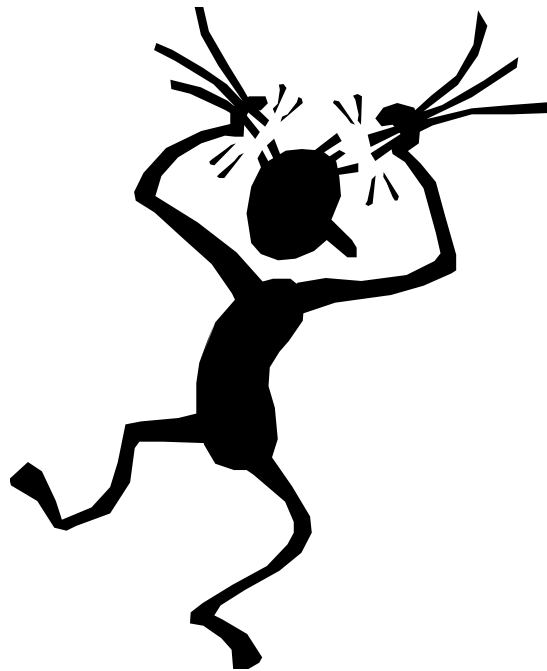
Work cooperatively with autism expert in the design and implementation of behavior plans.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Administrator/Principal

Provide the IEP team with any assistance necessary to overcome the issues that arise prior to and during the inclusion process.

That sounds like a lot...again! Is there anything that may be easier to start with?



YES.

The “Reverse Inclusion Model”

With Who?: typical peers

What for?: systematic and programmed
generalization of previously acquired skills

When?: Daily = consistency

Where?: self-contained class/speech office

Why?: to teach value of social interactions

How?: we’ll quickly discuss...

Any ?'s

Thank you!

