Inclusion Through Reverse Chaining

PROJECT ACCESS

WHAT IS INCLUSION?

Inclusion is when a student with special needs is integrated into the general education classroom with their peers. This can include core academic activities, related arts, lunch, parties, ect,

WHY INCLUSION IS IMPORTANT

Inclusion exists when the general population adapts to the needs of all learners. Through successful inclusion, learners with special needs have the opportunity to interact with their peers and experience the feeling of being accepted and supported. Inclusion is also important for other students to learn how to have an attitude of acceptance and how to interact with those who are different from themselves. This attitude established in school follows them through adulthood as they are kind, understanding, and welcoming to all people despite their differences.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR LEARNER THOUGH INCLUSION

Sudden and untaught integration is seldom a successful experience for the learner or their peers. Once the student fails in an integrated activity, it is extremely difficult to convince administration and fellow teachers to try again. However, integration behaviors can be taught systematically and successfully through a reverse chaining procedure.

TEACH THE LEARNER

1. <u>Select an activity where the learner is most likely to be successful.</u> Usually fun activities with low demands work well for this! Consider the activity's characteristics: unusual location, large echoing room, crowded, noisy, hot or cold, unstructured or structured, meaningfulness for student, duration, frequency of occurrence, etc.

2. <u>Plan placement of the learner during the activity.</u> Use proximity and natural environmental props. Examples: Bring a chair to the gym, sit at the back near the door, sit at the end of the table, sit near the wall (which deadens the noise), bring along a favorite object, bring a blanket for proprioceptive feedback, etc.

3. <u>Plan to decrease sensory input if needed.</u> Allow the the learner to wear the headphones, sunglasses, jacket, ect based on the environmental factors.

4. <u>Introduce the learner to the environment in advance of the big day</u>. If possible, take the learner and another peer or two to the environment one or two times prior to the event. Role play the acceptable behaviors several times. Use social stories to explain behavior expectations and to show environmental elements to the student.

5. <u>Add the event to the learner's visual schedule</u> so that the event is predicted.

6. <u>Practice reverse chaining.</u> Take the learner into the integrated setting for a time interval at the end of the activity and allow them to leave successfully with their peers. Select the time interval using your knowledge of the learner's tolerance for the type of activity they will be attending. Both the learner and their peers will believe that the learner behaved acceptably when they all exit the activity at the same time. A "bad kid" must be taken out early, but a "good kid" stays till the end.

   a. <u>Example of old-style integration</u>: The learner can manage 15 minutes in the lunchroom, so they are taken in with their peers and removed when they begin to tantrum.

   b. <u>Example of reverse chaining:</u> The learner can manage 15 minutes in the lunchroom, so take them in 12 minutes before the end of lunch and they eats their dessert there. The 12-minute period was initially chosen so that the learner is less likely to engage in problem behavior. Over time, increase the time duration as the learner indicates they can handle more.

7. <u>Provide positive praise and reinforcement</u> as they complete successfully complete the activities with their peers.