Responsive Environments for Children with Multi-Sensory Loss

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TEAMING wheel

- Environment
- Six C’s
- Adaptations

Teaming
Without TEAMING, the student suffers and supports crumble (wheel falls off).
TEAMING = Collaboration

“Coming together is the beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

-Author Unknown.
Effective Teaming
Who are the Team members?

Parents

Teacher

Child

Therapist

Specialist

Administrators
Qualities of team members

- Team members need a variety of skills to work with each other;
  - a willingness to try
  - a sense of humor
  - a willingness to “get down with the kids”
  - an ability to be flexible
  - an ability to listen to children
  - a respect for children and team members
  - a respect for learning and the learning process
Simon’s story
Teaming

Multi-disciplinary approach:
members of a team from different disciplines working and representing with respect to their expertise

Trans-disciplinary approach:
a strategy that crosses many disciplinary boundaries to create a holistic approach
• What kind of environments (classrooms) do children with multi-sensory loss need?
Compare the two

Why would the space be so important?
Environment- Space

• Self-determination
  – Self-determination involves a development of one’s self image.
  – Self-image comes by way of **successful interactions** with caregivers and environment of space and manipulation of objects.
  – A feeling of confidence of some predictable control in their lives.
Spatial Environment

• What did you see?
• Why was the space so important?
• What did the arrangement of this activity provide for this child?
• How does the child benefit from an activity like this?
Environment

• Philosophical concepts:
  1) Know the child;
  2) Follow the child;
  3) Individualize;
  4) Do with the child, not for the child.
Defined space
Spatial Environment

Consider:
- Furniture
- Materials
- Flooring
- Lighting
- Accessibility
Responsive Environments

Responsive environments or active learning items provide:
- safe place to explore;
- exploration of objects at one’s own pace;
- selection of toys within the space;
- increased interaction with objects;
- spatial awareness;
- facilitation of other development (i.e. fine motor, gross motor, communication, concept development);
- independent play;
- muscle strengthening.
Sensory Environment

• Examples of active learning items:
  – Vest
  – Little Room:
  – Resonance Board
  – Resonance Bucket
  – Spring Thing
  – Harp
  – Scratchboard
  – String Thing
  – Triangle Board
  – Tactile Book

*Show and tell.
Environment-materials

• The choice of materials need to be responsive to the unique interest and abilities of the child that is using them.

• Refer to “Likes Information” hand out by Keller and Scoggin, 2005.
Environment-materials
Environment-materials
The teacher was introducing a unit on "The Five Senses." The dialogue with the teacher and the three-to-four year olds went like this:

Teacher: We have eyes for....?
Children: Seeing!
Teacher: And a nose for...?
One Child: Earrings!
Teacher: And ears for...?
EARRINGS!!!
Adaptations

“These adaptations are the lens which the kids see through.”

-Dr. Christine Roman
Adaptations

- Circle time video
- Let’s discuss

![Video Example](d-Low Vision Adaptations Video Example.mp4)
Adaptations-visual

– Know the child’s visual needs.
– Lights for visual impairments that need;
  • Flash lights to high light materials
  • Spotlighting for work spaces
  • Utilizing window area
– Light sensitive-use visors, dim lights, sunglasses
– Light source should come from behind
Adaptation-visual

– Contrast between object and background
  • wearing plain clothing, using black aprons, darkened backgrounds, visiboards to drown out visual clutter

– Reduce visual clutter- presented information through materials, pictures should be simple and clutter free.
Adaptation-auditory

• Stationary sound sources can be used as natural auditory landmarks (chimes, hums)
• Associate natural auditory cues with their related activities and point them out (running water in a sink for clean-up)
• Enhance natural auditory clues with their associated materials (clanking of silverware)
• Use musical sounds as clues
Adaptation-matериалы

- Используйте доступные, ясно маркированные материалы. Убедитесь, что у каждого студента есть специальное место для хранения его вещей, которое он может легко и независимо достать.
- Используйте контейнер для финальных материалов, в который можно поместить материалы после завершения работы.
- Предоставьте четко определенные рабочие и игровые зоны.
- Убедитесь, что рабочие и игровые зоны свободны от мешанины, чтобы студент мог передвигаться независимо в своем окружении.
Adaptations-position

• Kids with multi-sensory loss need a variety of positions
  – Wheel chairs
  – Standers
  – Pony walkers
  – Floor
  – Bean bags
  – Learning chairs
  – Mats
Adaptations-position
TEAMING wheel

Environment

Teaming

Six C’s

Adaptations
The Space Between

• A teaming success story

• Look for:
  – Spacing
  – Adaptations
  – Teaming
  – Self-determination
Resources


Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind. Patterns for Adapting the Environment
