

Components of Effective Programming

(Based on "Recommended Training Components for Service Providers and Families" written by the Colorado Autism Task Force's Training and Strategies Subcommittee.)

First Steps in Developing Proactive Programming

This section suggests ways to gather information about a child *suspected* of having autism and to plan an individual educational program to meet the child's needs.

1. Use child profiles that look at strengths, interests, learning styles, and needs.

Integrate information from comprehensive child profiles, including interviews with key informants, in order to make informed decisions regarding the content of curricula and intervention practices appropriate to each child.

2. Incorporate family input in the IEP/IFSP

Work with the student's family to accurately reflect a broad range of family priorities in designing the goals and objectives of the child's IEP/IFSP. Honor the parents' knowledge of their child when developing the IEP.

3. Determine the child's motivational interest and needs.

Assess a child's reinforcement preferences and any sensory-related preferences that may influence the choice of teaching strategies.

4. Establish clear goals

Utilize assessment data and IEP/IFSP (including parents) team input to assist in developing clear goals and measurable objectives for a child's educational program. Embed goals and objectives across all relevant environments. Have in place ways to monitor goals and objectives, and revise instruction accordingly.

5. Design a meaningful curriculum.

Using the goals, design a curriculum for the student that is individualized, functional, measurable, and directly referenced to the IEP. On any given day or intervention period, the teaching goals should be clearly evident when observing teacher-child interactions.

6. Employ formal and informal assessments.

Select and implement a variety of assessment strategies ranging from standardized and non-standardized testing strategies to play-based assessment to direct observation. Implement ongoing monitoring that focuses on real-world environments, typical interaction patterns among peers and between adults and children, and skills that directly affect the child's level of independence.

7. When appropriate develop and implement transition plans.

Allow families the time and resources to explore next environments, allow future service providers to see effective practices in action, seek to develop a seamless organization of services, and assure the maintenance of effective practices for the individual child.

8. Open communication and collaborative working relationships.

This includes proactive home-school communication and collaborative working relationships with all providers including private, therapeutic, medical, and other professionals.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Program Changes

This section explores the measurement of student progress. The process involves measurement of behavior (data collection), the interpretation of measured behavior (data analysis), and modification of previously measured behavior (program changes).

1. Design student progress measurement systems.

On the following pages are two examples of data-collection systems appropriate for monitoring the progress of an education program for a child with autism. Work with IEP team to determine appropriate data collection tools needed.

2. Use data-based decision-making

Look for changes in performance based on data gathered to effectively manage the child's curriculum on a day-to-day basis, and thus make timely, informed and effective program changes as required.

Daily Data Collection

Student:

Date:

Time	Activity	Adult	Data	Comments
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	
			4 3 2 1 0 ND	

Rating Criteria:

4=Child performs skill independently or when given a group direction. No adult intervention is needed.

3=Adult points/gestures/models/or verbally directs child to perform skill.

2=Adult provides partial physical assistance to complete skill but child can do some independently

1=Adult provides partial physical assistance (hand over hand) to complete skill.

0=Child refuses to perform skill, walks away, ignores adult, says "No", tantrums

ND= No data this session

*Adapted from the LEAP Outreach Projec

Data Collection Summary Sheet

Student:

Objective													
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND

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Environmental and Classroom Arrangements

This section suggests environmental/classroom modifications to enhance a child's progress within the classroom, home, and other environments.

1. Employ visual strategies that would:

- a) establish consistent and predictable routines
- b) facilitate effective transitions between tasks and activities
- c) teach receptive and expressive language more efficiently
- d) establish clear classroom rules and expectations

2. Use techniques of structured teaching:

- a) a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- b) designed with visual clarity
- c) designed with a clear visual organization
- d) able to be modified based on task analysis and functional assessments

3. Use consistency in designing the learning environment

The learning environment should provide:

- a) predictability of expectations across persons, places, and circumstances.
- b) consistency of curriculum and content
- c) consistency of instructional strategies

4. Monitor and modify environmental stimuli

Systematically evaluate and modify the learning environment to monitor and reduce environmental stimuli leading to sensory overload in visual, tactile, auditory, and the domains of proximity and interpersonal space.

Collaboration: Parents, Providers, Physicians

This section discusses the importance of working with multiple systems, professionals, and family members to achieve optimum decision-making and communication regarding services and interventions for individuals with autism.

1. Proactive home-school communication

Build a positive relationship with parents and family members, using communication strategies that encourage positive interactions. Involve parents in establishing a home-school communication system.

2. Collaborative working relationship with all providers

These children are often serviced by a variety of community resources. Be aware of the agencies involved and be willing to consult with them on a regular basis. Be sure to have the parent sign a release that allows you to communicate with these providers.

3. Proactive medical support

Be familiar with medical concerns such as diagnosis, health, nutrition, and pharmacological treatments.

Facilitating Transitions Between Settings for Children with ASD

Planning for Transition

Difficulties with communication and social interaction and the behavioral rigidity associated with ASD can adversely affect the student's ability to adapt to change. As a result, transition planning is an ongoing process that requires the learning team to plan for immediate (day-to-day), intermediate (year-to-year) and long-term transitions (elementary to junior high or middle school, junior high or middle school to high school, high school to post-school placement).

Sample Indicators of Effective Programming

- A flexible transition plan is developed at the beginning of the school year and included on the student's IEP. The level of detail in the transition plan reflects the complexity of the transition.
- Where necessary, the IEP identifies strategies for facilitating smooth transitions between activities, settings and/or persons (e.g., flexible scheduling, verbal warnings, visual supports).
- Consideration is given to the relevance of IEP goals and objectives to the student's ability to function in future educational, social and/or vocational settings.
- Comprehensive planning for major transitions involves all relevant members of the learning team and includes identification of:
 - the most enabling setting for educational programming
 - supports and adaptations required for the highest level of independent functioning in current and future settings
 - responsibilities of members of the learning team for transition
 - strategies for familiarizing the student with the future setting (e.g., visits to the program, social stories, videotapes of the new setting)
 - timelines for the completion of activities.
- Staff members in the receiving environment are provided with information regarding the unique needs, strengths, behaviors and interests of individual students, as well as general information and resources, prior to the transition of a student with ASD.

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TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition is defined as: a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, interest; and
- includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluations (IDEA, Sec. 602,H.R.1350)

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 14, and updated annually thereafter:

- appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills;
- the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and
- beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under this title, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under section 615(m). (IDEA, Part B, Sec. 614, H.R. 1350)

Early planning, intentional linkages to appropriate agencies and coordination of services are critical to the successful transition of students with disabilities to the adult world.

There are many agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. Some offer vocational and residential services, others provide personal support or financial assistance. The agencies that should be involved will vary from person to person depending on individual needs.

Before Graduation from High School

The best way for students to prepare for adult life after school is to explore and learn what things they like and are good at during the school years. It is recommended the following be considered and addressed before graduation:

- Interest inventory be performed ... explore what kinds of work you would like to do
- Varied work experiences ... try different types of work to see how you like it.
- Identify learning strategies ... what style of teaching works best for you
- Learning specific tasks proficiently ... training in skills you'll need for the job
- Learn about time concepts such as breaks, lunches, staying on task
- Initiation and following directions
- Orientation both small and large areas
- Preferred environment (indoor/outdoor/quiet/loud)
- Physical stamina
- Personal hygiene
- Transportation training
- Completing applications
- Interview preparation
- Learning where to find jobs in your community.

(10/02/06)