

Development and Implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for Children with Moderate to Severe Disabilities in the Early Childhood Setting

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Individualized Education Program Defined

- A written, legal contract, also known as an IEP, developed, reviewed and revised in a meeting of an IEP team to best identify the nature and extent of special education intervention strategies and related services that a school will provide for a child with a disability (Ohio Department of Education)

What is included in the IEP?

- According to IDEA an IEP must include:
 1. A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance including how the child's disability affects the child's access to and progress in the general curriculum
 2. A statement of measurable annual goals including academic and functional goals designed to meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to participate in and make progress in the general curriculum and meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the disability.

What is included in the IEP?

3. A description of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will be provided.
4. A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services

What We Already Know...

- All Early Childhood Programs in the State of Ohio must have a written adopted curriculum that is aligned with the content standards
- All student's should participate in ongoing assessment to determine the child's strengths, needs, and emerging skills
- Progress monitoring is essential to provide a clear understanding of the impact of instruction and child's access, participation, and progress in the general curriculum.

What is the General Curriculum?

- For younger children the general curriculum is defined as appropriate activities. Activities therefore are where natural learning opportunities arise as well as instruction on targeted skills and concepts outlined by children's need, local, state, and federal standards

Assessment and Evaluation for the purpose of Programming

- Produces a clear understanding of a child's current skills and abilities
- Process of ongoing observations and documentation of children's performance
 - Gather information through observations, reports, and direct tests
 - Learn about children's interests
 - Understand children's preferences
 - Recognize children's styles of communication and interaction
 - Identify children's strengths and emerging skills
- Use assessment information to **guide** instruction
- Authentic – curriculum-based

Looking For Patterns

- Through ongoing assessment, look at child's performance across all areas of development—not just a single set of skills
- Are there factors affecting child's overall development?
- Is behavior impacting performance?
- Is the quality of the child's performance impacting their development?

Selecting Target Skills

- What is targeted should not be just what the child needs in a center-based program, but across daily routine
- Is the target skill necessary for the child to access the general curriculum?
- Does the target skill require specially designed instruction?
- Target skills need to be observable and measurable

What makes a need IEP Worthy?

■ 4 Filters

- Does the child have a documented disability?
- Does the delay have an adverse effect on access to, participation in, and progress in the general curriculum?
- Can this need be addressed this year?
- Does it require specially designed instruction?

Access, Participation, and Progress

■ What Ensures Access?

- Practices and Learning Ecologies that are...
 - Universally designed and common for all children
 - Responsive (i.e., responsive to the individual child, groups of children, families, and communities)
 - Evidence-based (i.e., grounded in theory, recommended practice, and/or research)
 - Comprehensive and integrated (i.e., scope of what is taught should be deep and broad and providers should understand the interrelatedness of skills and concepts that are addressed during early childhood)
 - Collaborative

Access, Participation, and Progress

- What Ensures Participation?
 - Practices and Learning Ecologies that are...
 - A part of a high quality curriculum framework
 - Built upon universal design for learning principles (multiple means of representation, multiple means of engagement, and multiple means of expression)
 - Tiered to meet the needs of diverse groups of children
 - Foundation is what is common among all learners and learning activities (focus on prevention)
 - Next level includes practice and maturation opportunities, strategies that are focused on a particular group of children and/or set of learning needs
 - Top tier is for intensive, individualized, and intentional instructional opportunities to address prioritized needs

Access, Participation, and Progress

■ What Ensures Progress?

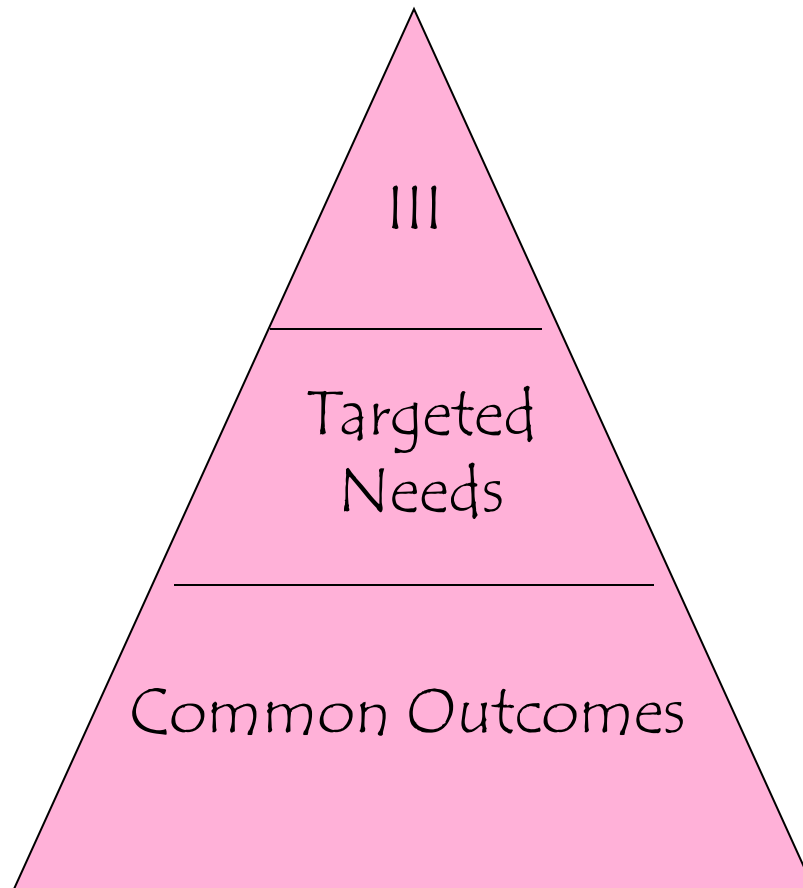
■ Practices and Learning Ecologies that are...

- Guided by assessment (i.e., up front knowledge of children's current abilities, interests, and emerging skills)
- Revised by ongoing data collection
 - Curriculum-based assessments for checking all areas (i.e., the scope of the curriculum framework)
 - Frequent, repeated, common data collection regarding children's progress toward common outcomes and individualized goals
- Intent upon addressing the whole child – equally emphasizing pre-academics and social competence
- Grounded in knowing how a particular concept or skill is best taught/learned (i.e., providers understand developmental, pedagogical, and/or logical sequences for instruction)

Activities and Instruction

- High quality instruction is tiered
 - Can meet the needs of diverse learners
- High quality instruction embraces a continuum of strategies
 - Adult directed to child directed
- High quality instruction is guided by assessment and revised by ongoing data collection
- High quality instruction addresses common and individual outcomes

Tiered Instruction



Common Outcomes

- What all children should learn
- Cover all areas of development and learning
- Can be sequenced in order to guide instruction
- Are observable, functional, generative, and teachable

Targeted Needs

- Temporary or situation specific supports
- Focused on repeated practice/learning opportunities
- Target a particular set of concepts or skills

Triple "I" Needs

(Individualized, Intentional, Intensive)

- Needs resulting from an identified disability
- Needs that have an adverse affect on a child's participation during daily activities
- Needs that can and will be addressed this year
- Needs that require specially designed instruction

Putting it all Together- Key Ideas

- Use a criterion-referenced assessment to determine child's strengths, needs, and emerging skills
- Utilize a quality curriculum that is aligned with the content standards
- Use a variety of instructional strategies that facilitate the child's access, participation, and progress in the general curriculum
- Write an IEP for those needs that required **individualized specially designed instruction** (i.e., Triple "I" Needs)

IEP's and Content Standards

1. What is expected for everyone?
2. What concepts and skills are represented by indicators (e.g. Big Ideas)?
3. Be aware of pre-requisite skills to ELCS.
4. Remember that IEPs are what will help the child gain access to daily activities where ELCS are addressed.

Characteristics of a "High Quality" IEP Goal

- Measurability
- Functionality
- Generality
- Instructional Context

Specially Designed Instruction Defined

“Specially-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards adopted by the State Board of Education that apply to all children”
(Ohio Department of Education)

Examples of Specially Designed Instruction

- Backward & Forward Chaining
- Floor Time
- Direct Instruction
- Peer Mediated Interventions
- Project Approach
- Routine Based Intervention
- Culturally Responsive Instruction
- Pivotal Response Instruction
- Activity-Based Intervention
- Transitions

Instructional Strategies

Backward & Forward Chaining

■ Chaining – Forward & Backward

- Forward & Backward chaining builds a behavior.
- Behaviors can be taught from the beginning of a chain, requiring a child to display increasing amounts of simple behaviors at the front of a chain.
- Steps can be taught from the last step of the skill, moving toward the first step.
- Provide reinforcement for one step at a time and one behavior at a time. This enables the child to recognize that behavior is connected to each step.

Instructional Strategies

Floor Time

■ Floor Time

- Developed by Dr. Stanley Greenspan to use with children having Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Floor time is a play-based approach to help children develop relationships, language, and thinking.
- Floor time refers to time in which teachers spend entering the child's activities and following a child's lead. This type of intervention strategy increases engagement and attracts the child to be more active with learning opportunities.

Instructional Strategies

Floor Time

- Some Basic Principles for Floor Time
 - Follow the child's lead.
 - Join in at the child's developmental level and build on his/her interests.
 - Open and close circles of communication – inspire the child to take turns.
 - Create a developmentally appropriate play environment and experience.
 - Broaden the child's range of interactive experiences.
 - Tailor your own interactions to the child's individual differences.

Instructional Strategies

Direct Instruction

- Direct instruction involves working directly with a child in order to provide intense one-on-one interventions.
- Direct instruction requires modeling and consistent reinforcement. When a child becomes familiar with a particular skill, the skill can be placed in a learning center for a child to complete with scaffolding to maintain a skill. Once a skill is mastered, the child may complete activities requiring the demonstration of a skill independently.

Instructional Strategies

Direct Instruction

- Four steps to teaching direct instruction:
 - Specifically, show and demonstrate to the child how to use the skill or strategy.
 - The child will then practice this skill and receive praise and positive reinforcement from a teacher.
 - The child uses the skill independently in class, and
 - The child uses the skill in a variety of other settings within a classroom and/or home to encourage generalization of the skill.

Instructional Strategies

Peer-Mediated Intervention

- A specific strategy those working in inclusive learning environments can use to meet the needs of all children.
- Peer-mediated interventions create opportunities for peers to take an instructional role with children with disabilities to promote social interaction and communication.

Instructional Strategies

Peer-Mediated Interventions

- Types of PMI:
 - Peer proximity
 - Peer prompting & reinforcement
 - Peer initiation
- Characteristics of PMI:
 - Comprehensive to target skills across a classroom activities and routines.
 - Increases a child's active participation during daily activities.

Instructional Strategies

Peer-Mediated Interventions

- A Teacher's Supporting Role
 - Identify a child with a disability's need or select a target skill.
 - Match/pair a peer who has the target skill already mastered and who can model/perform the target skill for the child with a disability.
 - Teach the peer to model/perform, assist the child with a disability to practice the target skill.
 - Make sure necessary support are provided for the peer such as a script, toys, materials.

Instructional Strategies

Project Approach

- A project approach to providing instruction provides young children the opportunity to investigate their interests and curiosities.
- A project approach to providing instruction entails formulating and asking questions about topics of interest to young children.
- Projects facilitate the development of a child's autonomy and independence. Young children are given opportunities for socialization and working together in small groups.

Instructional Strategies

Project Approach

- Collaboration in Project Work
 - Young children extend their respect for peers and build a classroom of community learners.
 - Children become familiar with diversity.
 - Projects provide a natural context for a classroom spirit that offers hands-on learning experiences for all young children.
 - Teachers can encourage peer mediated interventions through role modeling and prompting for children with special needs, so that typical children are able to model concepts under investigations for children with special needs.

Instructional Strategies

Routine Based Intervention

- Routine based instruction provides teachers the opportunity to deliver intervention throughout the daily classroom routine.
- Routine based instruction provides natural occurring intervention to take place as a child becomes more comfortable with his/her expectations of their daily routine within a classroom setting.

Instructional Strategies

Routine Based Intervention

- Key components for using routine based interventions consists of:
 - Embed interventions throughout the day that will not interfere with the routine.
 - Provide appropriate instruction and/or support for the child.
 - Disperse the intervention naturally throughout your classroom environment in a variety centers and activities.
 - Consistent opportunities to repeat the intervention within a predictable framework for a child to be successful and independent.

Instructional Strategies

Culturally Responsive Instruction

- Culture is a "group's shared set of meanings. Culture is defined by skills, arts, and traditions of a given people.
- Culturally Responsive Instruction respects cultures. This instruction uses the information from families regarding their culture and diversity to provide interventions and resources for children with special needs.
- When implementing culturally responsive instructions, it is very important to acquire parent information and background in order to understand the cultural background of the family and how it will impact a child's education.

Instructional Strategies

Pivotal Response Instruction

- Pivotal Response Instruction is a model of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) incorporating positive child and family-centered procedures.
- ABA refers to a style of teaching which uses a series of trials to shape a desired behavior or response.
- Skills are broken down to their simplest components and then taught to a child through a system of reinforcement.
- Prompts are given as needed and gradually faded away.

Instructional Strategies

Pivotal Response Instruction

- Characteristics of Pivotal Response Instruction:
 - Use child-centered activities and allow a child to make choices during the activities.
 - Vary the intervention tasks to sustain the child's interest.
 - Rotate tasks a child has mastered with new tasks to maintain the child's sense of competence and to increase the likelihood a child will repeat the task again.
 - Provide adequate modeling for a child regarding the target behavior.
 - Use natural reinforcers directly related to the task.
 - Reinforce all the child's attempts to respond correctly, avoiding responding only when a child elicits the correct response.

Instructional Strategies

Activity-Based Interventions

- Activity-Based Interventions uses routines, planned activities and child-initiated activities to add in individualized interventions.
- ABI addresses functional goals and objectives. Uses naturally-occurring antecedents and consequences.

Instructional Strategies

Activity-Based Interventions

- An Activity-Based Intervention should:
 - Make sense to the child.
 - Be interesting to the child.
 - Keep in mind the child's strengths and interests.
 - Encourage learning of new skills.
 - Encourage generalization of skills.

Instructional Strategies Transitions

- Educational Benefits of Using Transitions for all young children:
 - Increased attention span.
 - Receptive and expressive language.
 - Observing, listening.
 - Social interaction.
 - Cooperation.
 - Large and small motor development
 - Problem solving and creative thinking.

Instructional Strategies

Transitions

- Questions to consider when using transitions:
 - What is the purpose of the activity?
 - What comes before and after the transition?
 - What is the space needed for the transition?
 - What directions will be needed for the activity?
 - What are the developmental characteristics and needs of each child participating in the transition?
- Types of Transitions
 - Movement
 - Calming
 - Action Breaks


Instructional Strategies

Transitions

- Children with developmental delays need a longer time to move through transitions, extra cues, and assistance.
- Consider doing transitions in small groups rather in large groups.
- Give the child frequent choices, so he/she can let you know when he/she is ready to transition to another center

Instructional Strategies Additional Ones to Consider

- Time Delay
- Task Analysis
- Scripts
- Positive Reinforcement
- Integrated Therapy
- Visual Cues



Where does inclusion fall?

All young children participating fully,
having access to and participation in the
same academic and developmental
opportunities.

Resources

- ◇ Division for Early Childhood (DEC). (2006). *Division for Early Childhood companion to the NAEYC and NAECS/SDE Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an effective, accountable system in programs for children birth through age 8.*
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