The Curriculum System

Success as an Educational Outcome

Educating Students with Autism and
Other Developmental Disabilities for
Life in the Community

Jenison Public Schools
Jenison, Michigan

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Other Developmental Disabilities for Life in the Community

Second Edition

– Carol Gray

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To my husband, Brian,
and our children, Joanna and Barrett,
whose love and humor make all things possible.
Individually and collectively, they're the best.

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- Carol Gray

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"This matter of education is a
big question for the American people.
It is of the utmost importance that
every faculty should meet it's environment."

- Thomas Edison

PREFACE

Five years ago, I sat across from my instructional assistant in a meeting discussing her evaluation for the year. After reviewing the evaluation, I asked her if she had any criticisms or suggestions for me, as the teacher. I will never forget her response: "It would really help if you could limit yourself to three or four new ideas a week." Her observation was that I'd come in to work with one inspiration, and within three days be absolutely sold on another.

Later I considered her comments. I realized in the search for success for our students with autism, I had developed an educational program that reflected the confusion surrounding this disability. Teaching during a period of time when educational and medical research was reporting a variety of discoveries and possible educational interventions, professionals could feel they had a "state of the art" program on Monday, which was terribly outdated by Wednesday.

I took my assistant's comments to heart. We needed an educational program that could grow along with emerging developments, while remaining steadily focused toward the achievement of goals at the same time.

A short time later, Jenison Public Schools was awarded a grant through the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council in Lansing, Michigan. The purpose of the grant was to determine whether people with developmental disabilities could work in the community alongside their non-handicapped peers. This goal provided a focus for the program, our students, their parents, and professionals...and irreversibly changed many lives.

Together, with our students leading the way toward greater and greater challenges, we learned a lot. Our students in vocational training sites needed improved social skills, so we looked toward teaching in a more social environment: general education. In general education, it became quickly apparent that while social, there was a curriculum to learn which was too difficult for our students - leading us to modify the curriculum. Our students also needed skills not addressed in general education classrooms, leading us to on-site instruction in the use of the grocery store, libraries, the post office, etc... In addition, there had to be time to reinforce and practice skills needed in all of these "non-sheltered learning environments". **Finally, and possibly most important, if an educational program was to be effective across a wide variety of environments, and skills retained across time, experiences had to be logically and systematically tied and addressed through one very strong curriculum.**

We also discovered early in our grant that our efforts would have to be tied - or better yet, cemented - to the future. For that, we needed to coordinate programming for our secondary students with the professionals in adult service organizations who would have our students on their caseloads after graduation. Aware of the waiting lists for sheltered workshops and supported employment programs, we needed to create and support every opportunity to provide a smooth transition from educational programming to adult life for our students. My responsibilities gradually moved from the classroom, to increased involvement with adult services, vocational programming, and general education placements - and my role became that of a "transition teacher".

In developing a responsive curriculum for educating students for life in the community, it was discovered sound principles were the most effective element to use in tying student experiences and professional, parent, and community efforts together. These principles were modified from the most current research and information on factors which contribute to success, and identified as central to the curriculum. The result is The Curriculum System, a process which enables professionals, parents, and students to organize existing curriculums and educational opportunities in an unlimited variety of environments into a systematic, individualized educational program. Student progress is systematically shared with many people - including adult service agencies - who are also valued members of a student's Collective Expert (Chapter 3). The result has been improved opportunities for success.

This manual represents the best and most successful efforts of many people. The Curriculum System is comprised of several components, processes, and instructional techniques. While described in separate chapters for the purpose of organization, all are highly inter-related (Appendix A: The Curriculum System Flow Chart).

To conclude the story about my instructional assistant and her request to limit myself to three or four ideas a week - the truth is, there are still more than three new ideas a week. The difference is the ideas now build and improve upon one another - and they are contributed by students, businesses, parents, professionals, and members of the community. Having a new idea doesn't discard yesterday's inspiration. In terms of new research, we've a system with which to consider new approaches for each student - principles and standards which provide a "litmus test" for evaluating the potential of new interventions. This manual represents the beginning - the framework - for focusing collective effort on the development of effective educational programming for students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

It is my hope that this manual may help other parents, professionals, and students coordinate efforts and develop curriculum to improve the chances for successful outcomes for students elsewhere. Be creative in its use, work with others, tailor the ideas, learn from mistakes, apply what you've learned, and focus on helping to develop successful futures one at a time. You can only fail by quitting too soon.

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CHAPTER 1

Success as an Educational Outcome

Introduction

Success has always seemed somewhat elusive - a concept with more definitions, interpretations and philosophies than there are people who have claimed to achieve it. Consider these thoughts regarding success:

**"There is only one success -
to be able to spend your life in your own way."**

-Christopher Morley

"The real secret of success is enthusiasm."

-Walter Chrysler

**"Many of life's failures are people
who did not realize how close they were to success
when they gave up."**

-Thomas Edison

(Above quotes from DO IT, John-Roger & McWilliams, 1991)

Either success is so broad a concept it requires several definitions to cover it, or it is highly individual, requiring by its very nature a personal effort to define, visualize, work toward, and achieve it. The Curriculum System assumes the latter. Assuming success is individually defined and created doesn't minimize the importance of any of the above insights...together they begin to form a list of requirements for an individual to achieve success.

In his book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Covey, 1989), Stephen Covey identified seven habits successful people have in common (New York, 1989). To do this, he studied successful people from the last 200 years. By identifying habits associated with effectiveness, Stephen Covey placed success as a subject alongside mathematics, reading, and social studies: **success can be taught.**

Steven Covey is one of many authors to identify successful habits, attitudes, and principles. Harvey Mackay, author of Swim With the Sharks (1988) and Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt (1990), offers a wealth of advice and wisdom for working successfully with people, in business and in general. Helen Keller, author of The Story of My Life (1954); Thomas Edison, whose diary is included in The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison (Runes, 1948); Ben Franklin, author of The Autobiography of Ben Franklin (1940); Viktor E. Frankl, author of Man's Search for Meaning (1959); and John-Roger and Peter McWilliams, authors of DO IT! (1991); and others assist in answering one question central to developing The Curriculum System:

If certain principles and habits result in success, can those same habits and principles be modified and built into daily implementation of a curriculum to improve the chances for success for students with autism and developmental disabilities?

Through experience with students with developmental disabilities learning in the community, and studying how success is achieved, a set of successful habits for a curriculum for transitioning students with developmental disabilities from school to adult life emerged. These habits are "built into" The Curriculum System. As habits, they have an ongoing influence on daily implementation of the curriculum. Together, they modify success in an effort to make it understandable, applicable, and functional for many students with developmental disabilities. These habits are referred to throughout this manual, and are listed and described in the remainder of this chapter.

The First Habit: Modified Interdependence

Successful interdependence - for students and their communities - is the stated goal of The Curriculum System. In reaching a goal of interdependence for students and their community, there must be a commitment to work toward this goal as parents and professionals. Interdependence must be translated into defined processes and materials to provide continual opportunity for working, living, and learning together - making interdependence the goal, and the habits required to achieve it. Stephen Covey indicates everyone has the potential to be "...a transition person - a link between the past and the future. And your own change can affect many, many lives downstream." (1989)

Interdependence is modified and habitually practiced throughout The Curriculum System. Two components of The Curriculum System: The Collective Expert and Social Reading, directly address the skills involved for successful interdependence - for parents, professionals, and students. Each are briefly discussed on the following page.

The Collective Expert

Stephen Covey says it this way, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," when he discusses the sixth habit of effective people, to "Synergize" (Covey, 1989). Harvey Mackay takes a different perspective on the same process, with a chapter titled, "Superman Doesn't Live Here Anymore," as he encourages people to gather the opinions of others when making plans or decisions (1990). The idea is to trust and rely on one another to collectively create a better outcome (Chapter 2).

Social Reading

In evaluating the skills required for successful interdependence for students and their community, it is apparent that 1) the community often needs assistance in understanding the student, and 2) a student needs to develop social skills to communicate with the community. Social Reading is one component of The Curriculum System designed to assist both the student, and the community, in communicating and working with one another (Chapter 11).

The Second Habit: Teach Positive

> **After Edison's seven-hundreth unsuccessful attempt to invent the electric light, he was asked by a New York Times reporter, "How does it feel to have failed seven hundred times?" The great inventor responded, "I have not failed seven hundred times. I have not failed once. I have succeeded in proving that those seven hundred ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work."**
>
> **Several thousand more of these successes followed, but Edison finally found the one that would work and invented the electric light.**
>
> **Failure is an attitude, not an outcome.**
>
> (Mackay, 1990)

History is full of examples which demonstrate the value of planning, thinking, and reacting positively - the value of a positive attitude. Let's face it, having a Collective Expert is no guarantee of getting it right the first time. Or the second. Or the third. The key is to **always gain** - from successful and unsuccessful attempts - to continually increase and collectively apply what is learned.

The Third Habit: Individualize

Teachers and parents continually strive to provide individual attention to meet the variety of needs and learning styles within any given classroom. In considering the education of students with autism, for example, the extent to which an educational program must be individualized to be effective and successful is magnified, requiring greater staff and parent involvement.

One factor contributing to this need to individualize is the complexity surrounding the disability of autism.

> **Part of the complexity relates to the fact that autism is a syndrome. Autistic persons display certain characteristics (behaviors) that fall within certain limits. Each autistic person, however, presents a different pattern of behavior from other individuals who may have the same diagnostic label.** (Wolthuis, 1990)

Another factor relates to the direct and immediate impact of educational programming on students with autism. For example, compare the impact of educational programming on the development of social skills in general education students, to that of students with autism. The general education students learn communication and social skills as part of their educational program, and independently from a wide variety of experiences. In contrast, educational programming for students with autism directly addresses the development of communication, social skills, and behavior. Also, students with autism are less likely to learn independently from other experiences. The result is a magnified impact of educational programming on students with autism.

In addition, autism is a developmental disability which holds life-long implications not only for those afflicted with it, but for their families as well (Cohen and Donnellan, 1987). This is not only true of autism, but most developmental disabilities. Consequently, the long term importance of the effectiveness and applicability of educational programming prior to graduation is increased for students with disabilities and their families.

Therefore, individualizing an educational program for a person with disabilities requires attention not only to the student's needs and abilities, but habitual involvement of others directly impacted by programming. The availability of options and choices lie in the creativity and collaborative efforts of professionals, parents, and students. Beyond yearly

reviews or three year comprehensive re-evaluations, the contributions of students and families to the ongoing development and details of an educational intervention are critical to its success - a success defined by the student and those closest to him.

The Fourth Habit: Teach Skills Across Environments, Time

Many students with autism have difficulty generalizing acquired skills.

> **For some reason many autistic persons seem to learn new skills or behaviors in the context of certain situations and then cannot apply these newly learned skills in a situation that is different from that in which the original learning took place.** (Wolthuis, 1990)

The fourth habit of effective educational programming for students with developmental disabilities, specifically those with autism, involves teaching identical skills simultaneously in a variety of environments. In doing so, it is quickly apparent that the context of a given skill can alter how it is performed, enough so that to a student with autism the skill could seem unfamiliar.

The Curriculum System is designed to enable professionals to monitor development of similar skills in different environments, through the use of one method for recording and measuring progress. With data objectively recorded on the acquisition of similar skills in different environments, a student receives practice generalizing skills. Also, the factors contributing to the learning of new skills may be identified. For example: a student is performing a given skill independently in one environment, but requires extensive assistance to perform the same skill in another environment. The factors contributing to the student's independence in the first environment can often be identified and applied to the second environment, as well as to the learning of other skills in the future (Chapter 4 & Chapter 5).

The Curriculum System also provides for the tracking of skills across time. Skills are functional only if they are eventually retained and applied without continual review. The Curriculum System uses a system called Skill Tracking to check for retention and generalization of skills across time as well as across environments (Chapter 5).

The Fifth Habit: Modified Visualization

"The positive use of the imagination is often called visualization" (John-Roger and McWilliams, 1991). Visualization is a critical component of success. Harvey Mackay refers to the impact of visualization in a chapter titled, "Fantasize": "I came to realize that fantasizing, projecting yourself into successful situations, is one of the most powerful means there is to achieve personal goals." (1988)

There are many examples of successful athletes using visualization. Many can be observed on the sidelines of a football game or gymnastics competition. There, athletes make small movements just prior to a performance, seemingly in response to something they are thinking. In fact, they are thinking, visualizing a successful performance. A "warm up" for the brain, a rehearsal of a desired outcome; visualization is a valuable tool for many peak performers.

Stephen Covey discusses research conducted by Dr. Charles Garfield concerning the characteristics of peak performers:

> **One of the main things his research showed was that almost all of the world-class athletes and other peak performers are visualizers. They see it, they feel it, they experience it before they actually do it. They begin with the end in mind.** (Covey, 1989)

If visualization is associated with success, can it be modified as part of the educational process for students with developmental disabilities? In an effort to answer that question, two aspects of visualization are increasingly apparent.

First, students with disabilities, particularly those with autism, have significant difficulty visualizing. Therefore, the first step toward modifying visualization is to take it apart, step by step, to identify the required skills. The result? There has to be an ability to form some kind of "picture", maybe not visual, but a mental "picture" based on information (auditory, tactile. anything!) that can be recalled for rehearsal. "Don't let the word 'visual' throw you. We're talking about the imagination. Some people primarily see things in their imagination. Others primarily feel things. Still others primarily hear things. Whichever sense you use to access your imagination is fine." (John-Roger & McWilliams, 1991)

Second, people routinely and habitually visualize daily situations, not just major goals or performances, to assist them in mentally pre-selecting responses. Visualization continually works for most people to prepare them for upcoming situations... situations which often have social implications. For example,

if a person notices he is late for work, a series of very accurate guesses concerning his boss's reaction help him prepare a response ahead of time. People visualize many social situations prior to their occurrence. Throughout the day, people constantly guess to prepare themselves for each situation they encounter. If they didn't, each situation would feel like entering a room where the crowd has just yelled "SURPRISE!"

Visualization will work for students with disabilities only if it can be modified to make it understandable and functional. Students need to learn **what** to visualize, and **why**. Students also need to learn **when** to visualize. For example: a field goal kicker visualizes a perfect field goal as he stands at the side of the field, not a starring role in Swan Lake. Students with disabilities, autism in particular, need to have visualization structured to assist them in learning when, how, and what to visualize. Therefore, visualization has to be built into the routines of a curriculum for students with disabilities to replicate the role visualization plays in the lives of non-disabled people.

These two aspects of visualization are addressed in an instructional concept important to The Curriculum System, GUESSWORKS. GUESSWORKS is visualization, modified and made functional. GUESSWORKS structures visualization and applies it through several activities and techniques in The Curriculum System. It is:

- the rationale behind OOPS, an instructional intervention developed to decrease prompt dependence of more severely impaired students (Chapter 5).

- a part of Social Reading, a technique assisting the development of social skills (Chapter 11).

- a special section of objectives in the Objective Bank designed to assist students in predicting upcoming social situations (Chapter 4).

- the rationale behind the format for writing objectives and evaluation forms which assist students in predicting their own performance to compare with actual performance (Chapter 4 & Chapter 5).

Visualization is also structured for parents and professionals in The Curriculum System. The Collective Expert (Chapter 2) must visualize desired outcomes to set not only short term, but long range goals. It is often difficult to visualize desired goals for achievement two, three, or ten years ahead. Still, a long range plan is critical if a student's educational program is to incorporate experiences and

instruction leading to the desired outcome. **Add detail to long range goals.** Keep in mind this quote from Lily Tomlin, "I always wanted to be somebody, but I should have been more specific." (John-Roger & McWilliams, 1991)

In addition to providing a long range focus, visualization plays an important part in the success of more immediate educational experiences. For example, in establishing placements in non-sheltered learning environments, it is helpful to first create a mental picture of an optimal situation for the student in that setting. Once a placement begins, it is important to recall the original mental picture as a standard of comparison for the actual placement.

The Sixth Habit: Focused Goals

Many people make goals. The sixth habit discusses focused goals, why they are important, and how to apply and actively use them as the center of an educational effort.

Successful people know where they are going, and why. In fact, they most likely knew where they were going years ago. "If you don't have a destination, you'll never get there." (Mackay, 1988)

Achievement of any goal is dependent upon a positive focus. George Bernard Shaw put it this way:

> **People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.** (John-Roger and McWilliams, 1991)

Goals can give rise to determination, persistence, and patience - qualities which are often associated with successful efforts. **The most powerful goals are not those created by others for students, but those determined by students for themselves.**

Students need the opportunity to establish their own goals in addition to those selected for them. The way in which that opportunity is presented will largely determine the degree to which a student is able to understand, and apply, goals to their own experiences (Chapters 4, 5, & 10).

The process of goal setting, and using goals to improve performance, can be modified for many students with autism and other developmental disabilities. Modifying the process of goal setting involves specially designed materials, structured

opportunities to set goals, and ongoing experience in working with - and toward - personal goals. Students gradually learn to develop goals in cooperation with others.

Follow-through is extremely important. Students may need assistance in measuring their progress toward a goal. Some students may be able to identify factors contributing to their achievement of, or failure to reach, a given goal. When taught effectively, self-selected goals may increase student motivation, and often develop renewed interest in the evaluation process (Chapters 4, 5, and 10).

In addition to establishing and reviewing long term goals, the Collective Expert (which includes the student when possible) is continually involved in the establishment of short term goals. This is accomplished through processes (defined in Chapters 4 and 5) used in development of the Objective Bank, and a curriculum and an evaluation system for each student.

The Seventh Habit: Modified Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation is a critical part of learning, and plays an important role in any educational experience. People routinely decide on a course of action, take that action, and make corrections based on their experience. Mistakes provide personalized feedback, and together with other forms of feedback create a personal opportunity. "While we are free to choose our actions, we are not free to choose the consequences of our actions." (Covey, 1989) Within those consequences lie successes, mistakes, and opportunities for learning. "Learning from mistakes is the essential requirement for effective course correction, although by no means the easiest to demonstrate." (Mithaug, Martin, Agran, & Rusch, 1988).

For students with autism and developmental disabilities, recognizing and responding appropriately to mistakes or successes as they occur is often difficult. To make this process meaningful for students, it has to be systematically addressed step by step. Modifying self-evaluation involves clearly communicated goals and expectations, structured experiences with goal setting, ongoing visual and multi-sensory feedback, and support materials and instructional techniques.

Through ongoing practice with self-evaluation, students have an opportunity to gain a more accurate understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses and interests. Self-evaluation skills are routinely addressed throughout The Curriculum System, most specifically as part of The Evaluation System (Chapter 5), to improve a student's ability to evaluate his performance in a given situation.

The Eighth Habit: Tie Efforts to Principles

The field of educating students with autism is dynamic, with continually emerging developments and discoveries which can ultimately improve a student's success in the educational setting and beyond. With a disability so highly individual in terms of behaviors, severity, needs, and abilities, it may be difficult to selectthe most appropriate goals and interventions for each student. The tendency to "chase all rainbows" can ultimately throw educational efforts on a zig-zagging course from one intervention, to the next. While some developments are successful and exciting, others are disappointing and use valuable time.

Professionals are not alone in the frustration that can result, as Charles A. Hart, a parent of an autistic child and author of Without Reason (1989) explains:

> **Over the fifteen years that I have belonged to the Autism Society and read newspaper clippings sent to me by well-meaning friends and relatives, I have probably heard at least a dozen "miraculous interventions" that were supposed to solve the problems of people with autism once and for all.**
>
> **At one point, seven years ago, when biological research reported discovery after discovery, a friend suggested that we form a "cure of the month club." (Hart, 1990)**

It is important to remain open to the potential of new discoveries, while steadfast in direction. To maintain balance between the optimism of hope and the responsibility of reality, tie efforts to the principles underlying the habits of successful programming just described:

1) Work collectively with trust and respect. Seek knowledge and common sense, not control. Get a good team and work together to assist a student in reaching his/her potential to live and work interdependently.

2) Teach positive and never give up.

3) Consider the hope of new ideas with the wisdom of collaborative evaluation. Balance discovery in light of each individual student and family. Create a balanced and individualized educational program.

4) Teach similar skills simultaneously in a variety of environments.

5) Demonstrate and teach visualization.

6) Focus on goals and use them extensively, and

7) use self-evaluation with students, and to continually learn and improve collective efforts on a student's behalf.

Summary

The Curriculum System, described in the following chapters, is a collection of processes, guidelines, forms, materials, and instructional techniques focused on a goal of effective interdependence for students with autism and other developmental disabilities. Interdependence is the goal and the collaborative processes required to achieve it. Defining success for each student individually; The Curriculum System habitually incorporates successful principles to achieve the desired educational outcome for each student.

CHAPTER 2

The Collective Expert

Introduction

The field of special education is full of experts. Traditionally, professionals in education come to be considered experts for a variety of reasons. They may be considered an expert because: 1) they have worked with many children; 2) they have completed extensive research; and/or 3) they achieve exceptional results with their students. We need these experts. They provide valuable information and expertise in an area of education which has to be among the most dynamic and challenging - preparing students with developmental disabilities for the future. The Curriculum System is dependent on all of these experts, and one more.

This last expert must have a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of each student. This expert is needed to create for each student an educational program that is consistent with a student's current and future needs. This expert is not one person, but many people working together on a student's behalf.

Experiences emerging from the field of autism indicate collaborative and creative efforts between parents and professionals are not always easy. In a paper presented at the Autism Society of America's Annual 1991 Conference, "Learning to Collaborate: The Case of Professionals and Family Members Serving People with Disabilities," Cindy L. Capaldi writes:

> **Growing interest in forming partnerships is a valuable first step to shifting the focus of families and professionals away from maintaining power boundaries. With this change, building lasting solutions to problems facing people with disabilities gains priority. But despite sincere intentions, serious problems exist in changing from authoritative to cooperative problem-solving. Collaboration requires foundational changes in thinking processes. And, data collected recently from collaborative workshops indicates that both professionals and family members need skill-building in cooperative problem solving (1991).**

In a panel presentation at the same conference, topics covered indicated recurring obstacles in the parent - professional relationship, including "Honesty and Tact - Can They Co-exist?" and "Trust: a 2 Way Street" (Moreno et al., 1991). Despite the apparent difficulty, the need for cooperative efforts toward transition remain unchanged if the goal is a successful outcome.

Some people may not be natural collaborators. Many people feel more comfortable with more control, rather than sharing control with collective judgments. Working as a member of a team may be far more difficult than becoming a traditional expert as an individual. Therein lies the challenge, not the obstacle.

The Curriculum System requires that those working on behalf of students learn new ways of doing things to significantly and positively alter the future of each student. For each student, a Collective Expert is identified. A Collective Expert is a defined group of people working together on a student's behalf. A Collective Expert requires a commitment from each of its members - a willingness to share control, and a determination to apply successful principles and habits when working together. For these reasons, The Curriculum System identifies basic guidelines for each Collective Expert to follow.

For a Collective Expert, You Will Need:

There is one Collective Expert for each student. A Collective Expert should minimally consist of:

- the secondary student
- the parents/group home parents/legal guardian
- the teacher

These people may also decide to include any of the following as part of a student's Collective Expert to assist in making decisions concerning educational programming:

- an administrator
- a job coach
- a student's employer
- a close friend of the student/family
- social worker
- student advocate
- psychologist
- speech and language specialist

Suggestions:

1) Keep the Expert large enough to incorporate different perspectives, yet small enough to be flexible. If anything, err on the side of limiting the number of people. This is preferable to creating something more conducive to party status than problem solving.

2) Keep in mind a Collective Expert can decide to consult with anyone at anytime, making it unnecessary to include on a regular basis those professionals whose expertise is needed only occasionally.

3) Make sure the Collective Expert is clearly identified, written on a list with copies distributed to each member (Appendix B: Collective Expert Form).

Keeping a Collective Expert Effective

Balance

The effectiveness of a Collective Expert is threatened when not in balance. For example, whenever one member "pre-decides" a course of action before consultation with other members, the processes for decision making are rendered ineffective. Consequently, the expertise is strengthened with every collaborative effort to define and achieve goals. A Collective Expert must continually demonstrate an understanding that it is critically interdependent with each of its members.

OK, Who Messed Up?

Working collectively minimizes mistakes through checks and balances. When mistakes do occur, Proceed With Caution. The aftermath of mistakes may be fatal to a Collective Expert; it's okay to make mistakes, but critical to do it right. As part of one Expert, each person has an equally shared responsibility for mistakes. Right hands don't blame left hands for being less dominant or performing less work, and vice versa. History is full of proof that people tend to identify someone responsible - even with a collective failure.

It's not a mistake if it's perceived as gained experience instead of as a failure. Keep things positive, and keep going.

Take Care, Value Time

Collective Experts meet only when needed. Any member of a Collective Expert may call a meeting of its members at any time. Many contacts and decisions can be made by phone, or by a memo distributed to the Collective Expert. If a Collective Expert meeting runs past half an hour, absolutely if it runs past one hour, the Expert should feel very restless. Not many experts or effective people are inefficient, and the same habits of success that apply to individuals, are of magnified importance when people work together.

Have a goal for each meeting, expressed in a tight agenda. Get to the point. Limit anecdotes. Think, "tick, tock". Develop habits which focus and respond positively.

Value Collective Potential

Value the potential of collective efforts. These guidelines may help, though each Collective Expert may write and follow their own:

- **Share** (responsibility, control, action).
- **Think** (together).
- **Listen** (no predetermined solutions).
- **Be honest and direct.**
- **Trust and believe one another** (there really is such a thing as limited funds, and the student really does behave that way at home).
- **Do it** (thought without action isn't thought. It's non-recyclable brain impulses).

Summary

This manual is written for one audience and one audience only: the Collective Expert. People with autism and developmental disabilities require and respond to the best efforts of others, and those efforts must be collective. Certainly one professional, or one parent, or one administrator may own and read this manual. There is only one Expert who can take it from these pages to daily implementation and the very real achievement of educational goals...and it is that potential, that **combined** expertise, that this manual addresses.

CHAPTER 3

The Curriculum System Standards

Introduction

The Curriculum System Standards (The Standards) protect the rights and define the roles of those involved in a student's educational program. Beginning as a protection of student rights, The Standards expanded to include the rights of others in curriculum development and educational planning. The Curriculum System Standards are written in two sections, Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming and Standards for Community Participation in Transition Programming.

History of The Curriculum System Standards

An incident in a community based vocational training site initiated development of program standards to ensure student rights. A non-verbal, severely impaired student with autism was training in a factory supervised by his teacher/coach. During a conversation at break time, one of the employees asked the student a question, and the coach quickly provided the answer.

The coach did not notice that immediately the student's behavior became more negative and his table manners declined. The employees did notice, and complained to their manager that the coach had spoken in front of the student "like he wasn't there." The employees felt the student's response - the increase in negative behavior - was a direct result of the coach providing the answer for the student, instead of involving the student in the answer. The manager shared the employees' concerns with the teacher/coach, who responded by developing the Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming.

Following review and feedback by professionals and parents, the Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming were implemented on a daily basis. They had an unexpected impact, and resulted in surprising changes in student behavior. The relationship between teachers, staff, and students changed as the students came to realize they were having a direct impact on their daily lives.

Suddenly handed freedom with no experience using it, however, the students had difficulty understanding when requests had to be declined or other people had to be consulted for their opinion. Several student needs surfaced, resulting in staff and parent concerns. The students needed a functional understanding of their needs, strengths, and weaknesses to become competent

members of the decision making progress. They needed practice working with others on their own behalf. They needed to accept the input and influence of others on their new freedom.

Development of The Standards and their daily implementation created a definite turning point in the program. It was marked by instruction of new skills and greater student achievements. The Standards changed the course of development of each student's curriculum and this manual. With only minor revisions, they have stood the test of time while guiding decisions and transition planning.

Standards can be as individual as goals. It is important to realize the following standards were developed for secondary students with autism and developmental disabilities participating in transition programming at Jenison High School, in Jenison, Michigan. These standards are not intended to fit every program, or every set of students. It is hoped they can serve as a model to use in developing standards to meet the needs of educational programs in other communities.

Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming

Students participating in transition programming will be provided individualized opportunities to acquire skills for participation in the community at large to the greatest extent possible. As many, if not all, of our students will become the future consumers of adult community services, it is our goal to prepare them to express their needs, make decisions, and utilize staff and community resources to the greatest extent possible. In implementing this philosophy of integration and attitude of consumerism, the following Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming will be adhered to at all times.

I. All rights and protection provided all citizens.

II. All traditional ethical standards of education, including confidentiality and a student's right to privacy, including:

   A. Right of a student to refuse optional press coverage.

   B. Informed consent and signature of student on modified release forms prior to all publicity.

III. Protection of a student's rights as an educational consumer, including to the greatest extent possible:

A. Inclusion in educational planning and transition meetings with:

1. Preparation prior to the meeting.

2. Modified interpretation of presented issues.

3. Prior understanding of available choices to be made by the committee.

B. Individualized explanations (using modified materials if necessary) of available choices throughout the school year.

C. Opportunities to acquire the skills to express personal needs, requests for help, and desires to others.

D. Positive response by professional staff and/or the Collective Expert to expressed needs, and/or discussion and possible compromise with professional staff.

IV. Protection of a student's right to exercise personal choice to the greatest extent possible, including but not limited to input into:

A. Selection of general education classes.

B. Selection of vocational training site experiences.

V. Protection of a student's right to a well informed non-sheltered environment, including:

A. Communication and interaction with each environment prior to student placement, for example:

1. "Circles" (Forest, 1987) or similar activity in general education classes.

2. Placement of a staff person in each vocational placement prior to first student placement to:

a) Experience the social environment and required job skills.

b) Establish objectives and develop an Evaluation of Student Performance form (Chapters 4 & 5).

c) Prepare co-workers.

VI. Protection of a student's right to personal information to the greatest extent possible, including:

A. Student permission, where applicable, to share confidential information with potential learning environments.

B. Identification to the student of all people involved in his/her evaluation, and/or people to be informed of progress.

C. Modified explanation of all types of student evaluation.

D. Notification of occurrences of all evaluation procedures.

E. Regular access to a modified, if necessary, interpretation of data/progress in vocational training sites or general education.

VII. Protection of a student's right to input into decisions concerning each placement in general education and/or community based vocational training, including:

A. Right to all considerations and actions necessary to maximize student independence and performance in all areas.

B. Regular, scheduled opportunities to express likes, dislikes, and/or concerns over any placement.

C. The right to request collective consideration of termination of any placement.

VIII. Safety factors/issues will be evaluated for each student on an individual basis to:

A. Determine risks to student safety.

B. Determine possible action/precautions necessary to ensure student safety.

IX. Protection of a student's right to positive, "community approved" behavioral interventions, including:

A. Positive programming.

B. Right to freedom from negative public comment concerning student behavior and/or performance.

X. Protection of a student's right to make mistakes, including to the greatest extent possible:

   A. Opportunity to make mistakes.

   B. The right to experience, with support if necessary, the anxiety associated with mistakes.

   C. An ongoing opportunity (directly supported by evaluation and instructional techniques and materials) for student recognition of problem behaviors.

   D. The right to identify and use reasonable student solutions to mistakes/behaviors whenever possible.

   E. Staff assistance with problem solving when needed, not before.

XI. Individualized, modified presentation of all rights to maximize student understanding and participation whenever possible.

* * *

Defining "community" as parents, professionals, persons associated with businesses, general education students, and people of the community at large, the following Standards for Community Participation in Transition Programming protect rights of the community to representation and (possible) participation in community based programming. These Standards serve to recognize the potential and impact of instruction of students with disabilities outside the traditional self-contained classroom.

Standards for Community Participation in Transition Programming

With the people of the community directly affected by decisions regarding educational programming, these standards ensure their needs and goals will be represented, and their efforts to assist in educational goals will be supported. Working to reach a goal of a positive, inclusive learning community, the following Standards for Community Participation in Transition Programming will be adhered to at all times.

I. All rights and protection provided all citizens.

II. All traditional ethical standards of education, including confidentiality and the right to privacy ensured for each member of a community.

   A. Protection of a community's right to refuse optional press coverage concerning community involvement in a student's educational program.

   B. Consent to all optional publicity organized through the school/transition program.

III. Each community based learning environment, including general education, will meet the following criteria prior to instruction:

   A. Opportunities will be provided for the Collective Expert to determine learning environments appropriate for achieving student goals.

   B. Written program goals will be provided to each targeted learning environment.

   C. Student information, including information concerning the potential or probability for negative behavior(s), will be confidentially, accurately and honestly shared with relevant persons in each learning environment.

      1. Permission to share this information will be secured from a student and/or a student's legal guardian. (See Standards for Participation in Transition Programming, Section VI. A..)

   D. Safety factors/issues will be evaluated for each placement on an individual basis to:

      1. Determine risks to community safety.

      2. Determine possible action/precautions necessary to ensure community safety.

      3. Determine feasibility of student participation in a given instructional setting.

      4. Ensure a safe learning experience for all.

   E. Student goals will be identified for each learning experience, in writing, as the result of a continual opportunity for:

1. Input/review/contribution of the Collective Expert.

2. Possible input of other relevant persons, including: student coaches; general education teachers; adult community service providers; future providers of vocational support; case managers; other special education professionals, managers and employees of vocational training sites.

F. Ongoing objective evaluation of progress on student goals in a community based learning environment will include the opportunity for input from relevant persons, possibly including: managers and employees of vocational training sites; general education professionals; instructional assistants; the student; and parents (regarding impact of community based learning experiences at home).

IV. Protection of a community's right to appropriate preparation prior to student placement. (See Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming, V.A.)

V. Protection of the community's right to support as a member of the educational process, including:

A. Regular opportunity to express concerns or ideas concerning the transition program or a student's placement/progress.

B. Continual opportunity to identify additional student goals to assist in improving a student's progress.

C. Guaranteed staff and materials to maximize potential for student and community success.

D. The right to immediate consideration and response to any request for termination of a student's placement.

VI. Protection of the community's right to participation as a member of the educational process, including where considered appropriate:

A. Recognition of the relationship between a student and those in each learning environment, with demonstrated respect for their possible 1) shared ownership of student concerns and 2) desire to be included/consulted in decisions regarding their placement.

B. Invitation of relevant community members to Individualized Educational Planning Committee (I.E.P.C.) meetings and Individualized Transition Plan (I.T.P.) meetings.

C. Invitation of representative community members to serve on program governing boards and/or committees.

VI. A copy of the Standards for Community Participation in Transition Programming will be provided each learning environment.

Summary

This chapter defines the roles of those involved in a student's educational program, and protects the rights of all people involved in learning environments. In doing so, The Curriculum System Standards seek to establish environments conducive to learning in the school and the community. Ensuring the rights of all individuals and applying the principles presented in Chapters 1 and 2 establishes an opportunity to develop an effective and responsive educational program.

CHAPTER 4

The Objective Bank and Related Instructional Techniques

Introduction

Recently many curricula have been developed for instruction in the community. These curricula contain a wealth of information, goals, and objectives which are relevant and applicable to secondary students with disabilities. They are a valuable resource with the potential for improving instruction for students learning in non-sheltered learning environments. As will be demonstrated later, they can be incorporated into The Curriculum System, or used simultaneously with The Curriculum System as part of the educational program.

Commercial curriculums are written to be applicable to any student, in any community. Considering the highly individualized needs and behaviors of students with autism and developmental disabilities, and the specific learning environments in each community, commercial curriculums may require modifications to be effective. For example, few commercial curriculums will outline the goals for teaching a multiply-impaired student with autism to perform assorted tasks as an assistant clerk in a hardware store in Duncan, Oklahoma. Still, that is exactly what is needed for students with disabilities learning in their communities.

Considering the goals of commercial curriculums may be too general, the evaluation of student progress on those objectives may be ineffective, or unrepresentative of actual student progress. If the identified goals are too general, the evaluation process: 1) may measure a student's progress only in terms of the commercial curriculum used, not in terms of the student's performance in his/her community and 2) may not accurately provide the systematic detailed information the student, parents, and professionals require.

The Collective Expert's Curriculum

The forms, techniques, activities, and processes described in this chapter outline guidelines for developing an Objective Bank, and a specific and responsive curriculum for those "hard to reach" educational opportunities. Each Collective Expert may add, subtract, or revise this, and all, chapters of The Curriculum System. Understanding the curriculum, and the rationale behind the various forms and components, should assist a Collective Expert in deciding how to personalize it to fit their program and resources. It's a curriculum designed to be

tailored for individual students, parents, professionals, and their communities.

Characteristics of The Objective Bank

Central to The Curriculum System is the Objective Bank. This collection of objectives is developed by the people who will use it, and is continually expanded. In other words the Objective Bank reflects the exact needs of students, parents, professionals, and placements while continually growing along with a program.

An Objective Bank has certain characteristics, including:

- a greater investment of time than money, with most resources for its development currently available in any school.
- objectives from: other curriculums; general education courses and their modified curriculums (Chapter 9); task analyses of jobs (Chapter 8 and this chapter); and community based instruction activities.
- objectives contributed by students, parents, professionals and members of the community in response to new goals, behaviors, and opportunities. In this way, an Objective Bank is continually updated, containing the exact skills an individual student needs to learn in a specific learning environment in the community.
- a "student friendly" format, making possible the involvement of many students in the selection of goals and objectives.
- objectives written in a format to develop modified visualization skills (Chapter 1, and this chapter).

Objective Banks: Where and How to Start

A step by step description of how each of the above characteristics are developed and combined to form an Objective Bank follows.

To start an Objective Bank you will need:

1. **People**

Required: -special educators
-instructional assistants.
-an administrator who believes this will work

Optional: -parents
-general educators
-students
-members of the community
-the Collective Expert
-other professionals

Many people listed as "optional" above will most likely contribute later, but are not critical to initially setting up an Objective Bank.

2. Time to invest

Herein lies the major cost of an Objective Bank. Professionals will need to select objectives from existing resources, completed task analyses, and/or the general education curriculum. These objectives will need to be typed, one to a page, in a special format described in this chapter. In this way, starting an Objective Bank "recycles" existing curriculums and resources, coordinating, redefining, and updating their use.

3. Equipment and Materials

Equipment: -computer and word processing program
-printer
-three hole punch

Materials: -computer paper
-large, three ring notebooks (2-4 to start)
-looseleaf notebook dividers
-existing curriculums and resources

Optional: -plastic page covers

Selecting and Banking Objectives

This section describes step by step how to select and organize objectives into an Objective Bank.

Selecting Objectives

Objective Bank objectives state general steps; they do not break general steps of a task down into several smaller objectives. For example, an objective may read, "Student will wash hands before work," instead of eight or more objectives listing the several smaller steps involved in that process (Chapter 5).

To begin an Objective Bank, include objectives which are relevant for your community and your students. To do this, review and select relevant goals and objectives from existing curriculums. Select objectives addressing skills needed by students learning in the community, particularly those addressing functional, applied academics, behavioral, and social skills development. (Objectives will need to be restated in the first person, "I will...", and as general, basic, steps.)

Look at any previously completed task analyses from former vocational training and/or community based placements. Each general step is a possible objective. These objectives are likely to be specific to a certain learning environment in the community, and will therefore be placed in their own section in an Objective Bank.

A good way to start an Objective Bank is to start by focusing on one area of programming - for example, vocational training sites, general education placements, or community based sites. **In this chapter, writing and organizing objectives for vocational placements will be used as an example.** Once familiar with using an Objective Bank in one area, the same process can be used to expand to other areas (general education and community based instruction, for example). This will enable comparison of student progress across different environments.

Organizing a "Bank" for Selected Objectives

Divide one or two notebooks into categories for selected objectives. Suggested skill areas may include:

- Arrival
- Social Skills
- Communication Skills
- Break and Lunch Time
- Functional Academic Skills
- One section for each vocational or general education placement
- GUESSWORKS
- Great Habits (Chapter 10)

Coding and Typing Objectives

Objectives should be written in the first person, usually beginning with "I will...", following a special format. **Reading the section, "GUESSWORKS: Part of Each Objective in the Bank" in this chapter is recommended prior to typing and coding objectives.**

Divide and code objectives according to the list of categories at the bottom of the previous page. Develop a coding system which indicates the category, and assigns each objective in that category with a number. For example, the first objective in the Arrival section may be coded Ar-1. To simplify for student use, all objectives in an Objective Bank are referred to as goals.

A sample objective from an Objective Bank appears below (Figure #1, Form A). The sample objective: "I will wear an apron at work," is coded WG-4, referring to the fourth objective (4) in the Wilson's Grocery (WG) category (section) of the Objective Bank. Use enlarged print, larger than illustrated in Figure #1, Form A. Follow each objective with two statements: "I will do this myself" and "I will do this with help". (The rationale for this will be covered later in this chapter.) Type all objectives one to a page, using this format (Form A), or Form B presented later in this chapter (Appendix C: Sample Objective Bank Objectives, Form A and B).

FIGURE #1: Objective Bank Objective Format, Form A.
Type objectives one to a page.

(enlarged print suggested)

.....

GOAL WG-4

I will wear an apron at work.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I will do this with help.

.....

Finishing...

Divide and place the objectives into the appropriate categories (sections). Placing each objective in a protective plastic sheet will add to the durability, and allow for both versions of each objective to be housed back to back: one side, Form A, the other, Form B.

...almost. An Objective Bank is never REALLY finished...

Everyone critical (the Collective Expert) to a student's educational program is given the opportunity to select and/or contribute objectives to the Objective Bank at any time, definitely with each placement in a new learning environment.

Keeping an Objective Bank "Friendly"

In developing a curriculum for a community and a student, the goal is for everyone to be able to use it without a translator. For many students, as well as for parents, the vocabulary of commercial curriculums may not be easily understood. In writing the objectives for the Objective Bank, select vocabulary which will reach the majority of students who are able to read. This will ensure most everyone will be able to read and understand the intent of objectives.

There may be a concern that something is "lost" if a simplified vocabulary is used throughout a curriculum. The most obvious question is whether a certain amount of accuracy is sacrificed in simplifying vocabulary. Having written the first Objective Bank in professional vocabulary, the same fears were held by this author. Experimenting with a simpler vocabulary and forms quickly dispelled any concerns.

An event is an event, a behavior is a behavior, a skill is a skill. Changing the vocabulary only changes how we refer to the event, behavior, or skill. For example, a student is going to be required to wear an apron whenever he works at a local hardware store. The resulting objective in professional vocabulary might read:

"Student will wear the appropriate uniform when employed at the hardware store."

In simplified vocabulary, the same objective would read:

"I will wear an apron at work."

A word of caution. The above example is not typical of what often happens when vocabulary is simplified. Usually, the simplified version will require more words to maintain the accuracy of the same objective stated in professional terms. A few extra words and larger print are worth the resulting opportunities to involve students in selection of goals, and self-evaluation (Chapters 5 and 10).

Keeping it Friendly for More Advanced Students

Another word of caution. Students with more advanced skills are likely to be insulted by a vocabulary if it is too simple. In keeping the Objective Bank "student friendly", it's important to use a format for objectives which addresses their higher skill level. Therefore, a second version of the Objective Bank written in a more difficult vocabulary with standard print size, and providing an increased challenge may be developed. A sample of this second format (Format B) is illustrated in Figure #2, below.

FIGURE #2: Objective Bank Objective Format, Form B
Objectives are typed one to a page.

(standard print or slightly enlarged)

.....

GOAL WG-4

I will wear an apron at work.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I may need a little help with

_____ knowing when to put on the apron.

_____ finding the apron.

_____ putting on the apron.

_____ tying the apron.

_____ I will need a lot of help.

I will ask _____or _____to help me.

.....

Organizing Two Formats into One Objective Bank

In terms of organization, both versions (Format A and B) of the Objective Bank can be kept in one set of three ring notebooks. To do this most effectively, purchase plastic insert pages. Use one plastic page for each objective in the Bank.

Place Format A of a given objective back-to-back with Format B, and insert into one plastic page. In this way an easy version of a given objective will appear on one side of a page, and a more difficult version of the same objective will appear on the other.

The Evaluation of Student Performance Form

Whether a student uses Form A or Form B objectives, all selected objectives are placed on an Evaluation of Student Performance form (evaluation form) in sequential order. While there are two formats for objectives (Form A and B), there is only one format used for evaluation forms. A sample of objectives listed on (one portion of) an evaluation form is illustrated in Figure #3 on the following page. (The entire Evaluation of Student Performance form is described in detail in Chapter 6, with a full sample of an Evaluation of Student Performance form in Appendix D.)

Keep in mind:

- At this point, an evaluation form is tentative.
- Copies of the tentative form are distributed to members of the Collective Expert for feedback.
- The student reviews the tentative form, as part of the Collective Expert. He has the opportunity to select other objectives from the Objective Bank, or add some of his own.
- A final evaluation form is distributed to the Collective Expert which incorporates feedback from the tentative evaluation form.
- Once the evaluation form is finalized it is reviewed, step by step, with the student.

A Word About "Routine" Objectives

The sample list of sequenced objectives in Figure #3, may raise a question: Aren't some of the listed objectives steps in a routine, not actual goals? Especially for more advanced students, is it necessary to list all the steps of a task, even those the student performs easily as part of a routine?

Evaluation of Student Performance forms usually list all basic steps and skills involved in a placement - those which are routine, and those which are goals. The evaluation form will be used for activities which depend on all steps being listed. Three examples:

FIGURE #3: Objectives on an Evaluation of Student Performance Form. (See Appendix D for a complete form)

(may be enlarged for individual students)

GOALS FOR RALPH AT MR.WILSON'S GROCERY

ARRIVAL	BY MYSELF	WITH HELP	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
(AR-1) I will say "Hello" to people I work with	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(AR-2) If I am late, I will tell my boss why..	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(AR-8) I will hang up my coat.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(WG-4) I will put on an apron.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(WG-5) I will ask Mr. Wilson which job is first.	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(AR-9) I will start working.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
FACING SHELVES							
(WG-FS-1) I will look for messy aisles of groceries.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____

1. Assisting students in "picturing" themselves in a placement

Evaluation forms are used prior to starting a placement to communicate goals and expectations to a student. The staff member may sit down and review, step by step, the listed skills, asking a student to picture himself performing each step. Or, the student may visit a placement ahead of time, evaluation form in hand, to "walk through" the required tasks. The written objectives provide visual feedback which may assist many students with autism in understanding what is expected. The more steps listed, the more clear the expectations are communicated.

2. To see assistance from a student's perspective

While reviewing an evaluation form for a placement (described on the previous page), a student i also asked to make predictions about the assistance he feels he will need with each step or skill. This information is recorded with a check opposite each objective on the evaluation form. (Because this is a GUESSWORKS activity a check is made at the top of the evaluation form in the blank following "GUESSWORKS". See Appendix D: Sample Evaluation of Student Performance Form). This is kept for later comparison with a student's actual performance.

Later, the student's predictions are compared with his first completed evaluation form for that placement. Experience with Jenison High School students with autism indicates they often predict they will need more assistance than they actually do. This activity provides visual feedback to students regarding skills they possessed prior to the placement.

3. To evaluate independent/interdependent performance

Listing all basic steps and skills on an Evaluation of Student Performance form is important when determining a student's independence and interdependence in a given placement. Evaluation forms are summarized, resulting in a percentage of required skills which are completed by a student without assistance. If skills are omitted from an evaluation form because the student "already knows" the skill, the resulting percentage indicating skills the student performs independently will not be accurate. Also, for evaluation forms and summaries to remain accurate and comparable across time, it is important not to delete mastered skills from an evaluation form (Chapter 5).

Modified Visualization (GUESSWORKS) and The Objective Bank

Many components of The Curriculum System provide students with ongoing opportunities to practice successful habits. As the center of The Curriculum System, The Objective Bank is no exception. This section focuses on one habit, modified visualization - its importance to The Objective Bank and ultimately to student achievement.

Visualization and GUESSWORKS

As discussed briefly in Chapter 1, The Curriculum System modifies the skills required in visualizaion. This is accomplished through various instructional materials and techniques. While designed for different components of the

curriculum, making each unique, together these instructional techniques and materials are referred to as GUESSWORKS. All have a common element: guessing. This section describes how some of these instructional materials and techniques are related to the Objective Bank.

GUESSWORKS: Part of Each Objective in The Bank

In developing the Objective Bank, it is important to understand why all objectives are written in a special format. This format is illustrated in Figures #1 and #2. GUESSWORKS applies to both Form A and Form B of the objectives.

Objectives are written in the first person and are stated simply, with as "concrete" a vocabulary as possible. Beginning with "I will..." each objective is a statement of the desired skill or behavior.

Each objective in the Objective Bank is followed by statements from which the student makes a choice to predict the level of assistance he will need.

For example, Form A objectives state:

_____ **I will do this by myself.**

_____ **I will do this with help.**

Objective Bank objectives for higher functioning students (Form B) structure the opportunity for students to indicate in greater detail the assistance, if any, they predict they will need with each step of a task (Figure #2).

This format for writing objectives:

- encourages visualization of each step of a task.
- encourages visualization of a set of steps, once objectives are placed on an evaluation form (the "Evaluation of Student Performance" form, this chapter, and Chapter 5).
- encourages students to estimate their own abilities, and to plan for possible assistance (self-prediction of performance).
- is one of the first steps in self-evaluation.

GUESSWORKS: A Special Section of The Objective Bank

The previous section describes how GUESSWORKS is a part of every objective in the Objective Bank. GUESSWORKS also refers to a specil category of objectives in the Bank. **GUESSWORKS objectives directly structure guessing to assist students in 1) predicting a situation with social implications using rote academic skills, or 2) recalling past performance to make increasingly accurate assessments of ability and predictions of upcoming performance.**

For example, Objective AR-2, in Figure #3, indicates the student will inform his boss if he is late. For some students, this skill would be extremely difficult. A special GUESSWORKS objective designed to assist a student with this skill is shown in Figure #4. Rote academic skills, and structured guessing assist the student in determining if he is late or early, and in selecting an appropriate response before arriving at the hardware store.

GUESSWORKS, Form One

This first form of GUESSWORKS objectives (Form One) has characteristics which make it unique. These GUESSWORKS objectives:

- are coded with nubers from 1 - 199 for purposes of organization in the Objective Bank.
- are comprised of a sequenced set of rote academic and structured guessing skills.
- use the rote academic skills to assist students in anticipating and understanding social situations each day of training.
- require students to pre-select a social response based on an anticipated social situation.
- use the format of other objectives in the Objective Bank, requiring students to predict their performance and any needed assistance prior to the first day of the placement.

The following steps are used in writing GUESSWORKS objectives, Form One:

1. Identify predictable social situations

Identify situations with social implications that **predictably** occur in a given placement.

2. Complete a task analysis of "prediction"

Complete a task analysis of the academic skills used in making that prediction. Continuing with the example of being late for work, imagine someone late for work and the functional academic skills they may use...

- Check the time.
- Recall how long it takes to get to work.
- Determine what time it will be when arriving at work.
- Predict if arrival will be early, late, or on time.

...which result in social predictions:

- Thinking, "I'm going to be late when I arrive..."
- The boss will also be very aware of the time.
- What will be a good thing to say when I walk in late?
- Decide if there's an apology required here...
- Rehearse what to say upon entering work.

2. Write the steps in a simple, logical sequence.

Modify and write the steps as objectives in a logical sequence, ending with: a) an objective or objectives predicting the upcoming social situation; followed by b) a general objective requiring pre-selection of a response.

Figure #4, on the following page, illustrates a sample GUESSWORKS objective, Form One.

FIGURE #4: Sample GUESSWORKS Objective, Form One.

(Standard, or slightly enlarged print)

.....

GOAL GW 1, Form One.
(objective code)

GUESSWORKS SET 1: I will know if I am on time, early, or late for work.

(GW-1a) I will look at a clock when I leave for work.

(GW-1b) I will guess how long it will take to get to work.

(GW-1c) I will guess what time it will be when I get to work.

(GW-1d) I will guess if I will be early, late, or on time.

(GW-1e) I will look at a clock when I arrive to see if I am right.

(GW-1f) I will guess how my boss will feel about my time of arrival (the time I got there.)

(GW-1g) Before I go in to work, I will decide what I should say to my boss if I am late.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I will do this with help.

.....

To eliminate the need for staff to ask the student the above questions directly, attach an assignment to the front of a student's Evaluation of Student Performance form. List the objectives as simply stated questions for the student to answer in writing. The student completes this assignment just prior to leaving for a placement, or en route. Checking the student's assignment sheet later, staff check the appropriate blanks on the evaluation form opposite the related objectives on the evaluation form.

GUESSWORKS, Form Two

The second form of GUESSWORKS objectives (Form Two) is easier to identify and understand. These objectives assist students in setting goals for their performance each time they train. In a vocational placement, for example, these objectives may help a student set a goal for their work rate, a behavior, or in writing a more general goal for their next day of training. One example of a GUESSWORKS objective, Form Two, appears in Figure #5.

FIGURE #5: Sample GUESSWORKS Objective, Form Two.

(Standard or slightly enlarged print)

.....

GW 200, Form two.
(objective code)

(GW 200a)_____ I will remember how fast I worked last time (_____ minute time trial).

(GW 200b)_____ I will set a goal for how fast I will work today (_____ minute time trial).

(GW 200c)_____ I will check to see if I reach my goal.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I will do this with help.

.....

Like Form One, these GUESSWORKS objectives are defined by unique characteristics. GUESSWORKS objectives, Form Two:

- are coded with numbers ranging from 200 - 399 for purposes of organization in the Objective Bank.
- are usually comprised of a set of three sub-skill objectives.
- require a student to recall a specific aspect of immediate past performance each day of training.
- require a student to set a goal for a specific aspect of upcoming performance, based on immediate past performance, each day of training.

- require a student to check if the performance goal is reached.

- maintain the basic format of other objectives in the Objective Bank, requiring students to make a prediction about the level of assistance they will need.

Writing these objectives is a little easier than the first form of GUESSWORKS objectives. Follow the sample in Figure #5 on the preceding page.

These objectives are often restated on evaluation forms. Students fill in their goals near the top of the form. (See Appendix D: Sample Evaluation of Student Performance Form.)

Chapter Summary: Developing a Curriculum for a Placement

The best way to summarize this chapter, is to "pull it all together", using a step by step example. This section describes the development of a curriculum for a student with autism in a vocational training site in a grocery store.

Ralph at Mr. Wilson's Grocery

Ralph is a secondary student with autism. As the result of decision(s) by Ralph's Collective Expert, Ralph is to be placed in a new vocational placement at Mr. Wilson's Grocery in two weeks. The following steps are followed to incorporate the goals/expectations of everyone in developing a curriculum for Ralph's upcoming placement:

1. The teacher trains first, writing objectives

The transition teacher completes a task analysis by performing the targeted job (Chapter 9) and recording ALL the basic steps required, in sequence. Ralph already knows he needs to get a broom before sweeping, making that skill not an actual goal for Ralph, but more a step in a routine. Still, all the basic steps of Ralph's job are recorded in sequence, and all will eventually be included as objectives on Ralph's evaluation form.

2. The teacher uses Ralph's "student friendly" format

Because Ralph has a first to second grade reading level, the steps of the task analyses are written as Form A objectives.

3. The objectives are coded, and "banked"

Each objective is numbered, and placed in a new section of The Objective Bank, titled, Mr. Wilson's Grocery. Only objectives resulting from the task analyses of job skills unique to Mr. Wilson's Grocery, are placed in the section with that title.

Since Ralph is to be performing several tasks, i.e. sweeping, facing shelves, pricing, and bagging, each task analyses is coded separately, listing the training site first: WG - SW 1 (Mr. Wilson's Grocery, Sweeping, Step One).

Other objectives identified by the teacher as important but falling into a general skill area, for example, social skills, are written and coded and placed in the Social Skills section of the Objective Bank.

Note: Objectives never identify a student by name, for example as in "Ralph will stay away from the furnace at Mr. Wilson's grocery." Regardless of whether an objective is "Ralph specific", and may never apply to another student, objectives are stated as, "I will..." and never indicate proper names.

4. The Collective Expert is involved.

At the same time, the Collective Expert is invited to identify goals for the placement. Mr. Wilson is also invited to identify skills he feels will be of importance in his grocery. Mr. Wilson is shown an evaluation sheet from another placement as a sample of what will be developed for Ralph's placement in his store, and informed that any objectives he has for inclusion on a similar evaluation sheet for Ralph are welcomed.

5. Other objectives are selected from the Bank.

The teacher looks through other sections of the Objective Bank (Arrival, Social, Break Time, GUESSWORKS, etc.). Additional skills that are important to Ralph's job are selected. The number of each objective is written down as a reference to use when placing all the selected objectives in sequence of occurrence on the evaluation form.

Some skills Ralph needs to work on may not be listed in the general skill areas of The Objective Bank. These objectives are written, coded, and placed in The Objective Bank in the appropriate section.

6. Objectives are placed on a tentative evaluation form

All objectives are placed, with their code numbers, on an Evaluation of Student Performance form. Skills are placed in sequentia order, together providing a step by step description of routine steps and goals for Ralph at Mr. Wilson's grocery.

7. The student is involved in the process

In a support session, the tentative draft of the evaluation form is reviewed with Ralph. Ralph is invited to look through the goals in the "Bank". He may select, or express, other goals he would like to work on. Any objectives Ralph expresses himself are coded and placed in The Objective Bank. These goals are added to Ralph's evaluation form.

8. Tentative forms are distributed.

Copies of the tentative evaluation form are distributed to each member of Ralph's Collective Expert for their responses and input. A final copy of the evaluation form incorporating concerns, additions, and/or responses to the rough draft is completed, and again distributed (APPENDIX D: Sample Evaluation of Student Performance Form).

9. Ralph predicts his own performance...

Prior to the beginning of Ralph's placement, a staff person reviews Ralph's evaluation form with him to complete one GUESSWORKS activity. Depending on the length of the evaluation form, this may be accomplished in one, or a few short sessions. Each objective is read aloud, and Ralph is asked to guess if he thinks he will perform the objective with help, or by himself. Ralph's predictions are recorded with a check in the appropriate column. This assists Ralph in visualizing his first day at work, and in making predictions about his performance.

10. ..and later compares it to actual performance.

Ralph's predictions will be compared to his actual performance once he begins his placement and another evaluation form is completed by his coach. In this way, after several placements, Ralph may gain a more accurate and functional understanding of his own ability.

CHAPTER 5

The Evaluation System and Related Instructional Techniques

Introduction

A curriculum should enable professionals, parents and students to "compare apples to oranges and keep them from spoiling". That is, it should be possible to compare progress on similar skills practiced in different learning environments. Also, it should be possible to monitor retention of skills across time. For example, if a student with autism is consistently greeting students in a general education placement, but requires considerable prompting to perform the same skill in a vocational setting, the discrepancy in performance may hold important information. One system of evaluation can provide that information, whereas using different methods of evaluation for each learning environment may leave the difference in student performance undetected. To keep skills from "spoiling", periodic review is essential. The result should be an evaluation system that will potentially give a cohesive, broad, and inter-related picture of a student's educational program.

The Evaluation System is comprised of forms, processes, and instructional techniques which can be used as guidelines by The Collective Expert in achieving this type of evaluation for each student.

The Evaluation System is best defined through an understanding of its basic characteristics. The Evaluation System is that part of The Curriculum System which:

- makes it useful in a variety of environments. The Evaluation System enables teachers to use one curriculum and evaluation system to accurately measure and compare student achievement across several educational environments.

- systematically keeps The Collective Expert informed. The Evaluation System updates students, parents, and professionals on student progress within each skill area as often as is necessary.

- involves students in systematic self-evaluation through use of student-friendly forms, regularly scheduled support sessions and/or a support class, and instructional techniques designed to help students understand and use evaluation feedback.

- measures a variety of inter-related skills simultaneously. The Evaluation System measures communication, vocational, academic, social, adaptive, functional, and visualization skills. It also measures acquisition of successful habits.

- provides a systematic method to review priority skills across time. The Evaluation System ensures teaching a variety of skills, as well as measuring their retention and generalization across time. In transition programming, knowing what a student can do in vocational training sites is important. Just as important is knowing how long it will take the student to reach that performance again after an extended absence.

The Evaluation of Student Performance Form

Vocabulary Selection and Print Size

All evaluation forms use "student friendly" vocabulary and print size. In most cases, Form A print and vocabulary is needed to make an evaluation form "student friendly". A more advanced vocabulary and smaller print size is used for placements involving higher functioning students (Chapter 4).

Organization of Sections and Sequence

Objectives are listed on an evaluation form according to the general sequence of occurrence in a placement, often within Objective Bank categories. For example, GUESSWORKS or Arrival objectives are often listed first, in the approximate order they will occur (Appendix D: Sample Evaluation of Student Performance Form).

The First Page of The Evaluation Form

General Placement Information

The first page is divided by a solid horizontal line near the top of the page. Above this line is general placement information. This information can be either typed in, or for practice in completing forms, a student can fill in this information prior to each day of training.

Most of the requested information in this area is self-explanatory: Student, Placement, Coach, the Day and Date. Other items deserve a little explanation, and they are listed and described in this section. Throughout this section describing placement information, refer to Figure #6.

FIGURE #6: The Evaluation Form: General Placement Information

(Use enlarged print for some students)

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Evaluation of Student Performance

Student:_____ Time Slot:_____

Placement:_____ Activity:_____

Coach: _____ _____

Check the appropriate boxes: Date Reviewed:

GUESSWORKS___ B.LINE___ INTERIM___ EXIT___ _____ (Student)

Observation: LIVE___ VIDEOTAPED___ _____ (Parent)

Freq. of Summaries: _____

Criteria: _____See criteria column (CRI) Today is:_____

_____All 100% independent Date:___/___/___

G.WORKS___ B.LINE___ INTERIM___EXIT___

A check in the appropriate space indicates at what point in a placement the observation was recorded. A check in the blank following "G.WORKS" indicates the form was used for the GUESSWORKS activity which occurs prior to the placement. (See Chapter 4, the section "Modified Visualization and The Objective Bank.") "B.LINE" is an abbreviation for "baseline". A check in the following blank indicates this is one of the first four evaluation sheets completed for this placement. "Exit" refers to each of the last four evaluation sheets for a placement, with "Interim" referring to anything between the end of baseline, and the beginning of exiting data.

Observation: LIVE _____ VIDEOTAPED_____

A check in the appropriate space indicates the type of evaluation - was it completed live, or by review of a videotape?

Frequency of Summaries:

In this blank, the frequency with which information is to be summarized is indicated. **Frequency should indicate a specified number of days of training** (once every eight days of training), **not** a specified length of time (for example, once a month). Keep the schedule of reporting consistent per number of days of training (for example: every eight days of training). This will keep the reporting schedule consistent, and summary information accurate, despite absences and vacations.

Criteria: _____ **See criteria column (CRI)**
_____ **All 100% independent**

A check in the first blank refers to the criteria column, where the criteria for each objective may be listed. For example, if the goal is for a student to perform a skill with just one verbal prompt, "1V" is recorded in the criteria column in the blank opposite the objective listed on the evaluation form. A check in the lower blank indicates the goal is for the student to become 100% independent on all skills. **(For more information, see the description of the criteria column, "CRI," on page 48.)**

Time Slot:_____

Performance on objectives which are repetitive, or which occur in a placement for a long period of time may be recorded only for a stated amount of time. For example, performance on the skills involved in a repetitive vocational task may not be recorded for the entire training session, instead only for a ten to twenty minute period of time. Make sure the length of the time sample is consistent each day of training, while the exact starting and ending times may vary. This same time slot may be used to take a time trial to determine a student's speed on a particular task.

Activity:_____

The specific activity a student is engaged in at the time of evaluation is an important factor, and it can vary from one observation to the next. This is especially true in general education, where indicating the exact activity occurring during the evaluation can explain why information on some objectives cannot be recorded. In vocational training sites this can also be important. For example, if a student always sorts cans at a grocery store, it is important to note that the student was asked to perform a different activity when the can crusher was inoperable.

Date Reviewed:_____
(Student)

Date Summarized_____
(Parent)

This space on the evaluation form keeps a record of review of a student's progress with both the student and the parents/Collective Expert. The date the evaluation form is reviewed with a student in a support session or support class is noted on the line above "Student". The date information is summarized and sent to the parents/Collective Expert is noted on the line above "Parent".

Recording Student Performance

The vast majority of each evaluation form is devoted to recording student performance on selected objectives. This information is usually recorded by professional staff and used by almost everyone directly involved with the placement. Each form is divided by a vertical dotted line. The form is folded along the dotted line when working with a student on a self-evaluation exercise, so only the left side is visible.

Beginning under the horizontal line near the top of the first page of the form, a description of this part of the evaluation form follows. Refer to Figure #7 throughout this section.

FIGURE #7: Recording Student Performance

(Use enlarged print for some students)

(GW 200a) Last time I faced_____aisles in_____minutes.

(GW 200c) Today I will face_____aisles in_____minutes.

OTHER GOALS FOR RALPH AT MR. WILSON'S GROCERY

GUESSWORKS	BY MYSELF	WITH HELP	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
(GW 1a) Look at clock before leaving.....							
(GW 1b) Guess how long it will take to get to work..							
(GW 1c) Guess what time it will be when you arrive...							

Across the Center

(GW 200a) Last time I faced_____aisles in_____minutes.

(GW 200c) Today I will face_____aisles in_____minutes.

This space is provided on every evaluation form so students may record one goal related to their training. If possible, have a student review the previous goal, noting whether it was achieved, before making the current goal. Goals can focus on any skill or behavior. Record a student's goals on a Student Selected Goals form (Appendix E: Student Selected Goals).

The Left Side

Listed along the far left side of the page in parentheses are the code numbers for each objective, followed by objectives from The Objective Bank. These objectives are previously selected/reviewed for each student placement by The Collective Expert, and placed on a blank form on computer software. Objectives may be stated more briefly on the evaluation form to save space.

BY MYSELF WITH HELP

To the immediate left of the dotted line are two columns, one titled "BY MYSELF" and the other "WITH HELP". The general assistance given to a student for each objective is recorded in one of these two columns.

A check in the "BY MYSELF" column indicates the student completed the objective without any intervention, including glances and/or other subtle cues. The student performed the task **independently**.

A check in the "WITH HELP" column indicates the student received assistance of some kind to complete the objective correctly. A check in this column indicates there is additional information regarding the type of assistance involved (recorded to the right of the dotted line).

The Right Side

G V P

The area to the right of the dotted line contains detailed information recorded and used most often by professional staff. There are four columns, labeled "G" (Gesture), "V" (Verbal), and "P" (Physical), indicating the type of prompt used.

One vertical line records each prompt in the appropriate column. For example, if two verbal prompts are required to assist a student in performing a skill, a single line is placed on the blank to record each prompt, or "//", in the "V" column opposite the objective. A "√" is also placed in the "WITH HELP" column, to the left of the dotted line.

CRI

This column is used most often with students who are more severely impaired, who may require greater assistance and need higher levels of prompting. For these students, a goal indicating a certain level of prompting for specified objectives is established. This makes objectives realistic for a student, and goal prompting criteria may be revised periodically to reflect student progress.

To do this, baseline information (first four days of training) is recorded. A reasonable goal for decreasing the baseline prompting is determined, and recorded on one of the student's blank evaluation forms in the "CRI" (criteria) column opposite the objective. Several copies of this form are made and used for the placement until many of the "CRITERIA" goals for each objective are achieved, at which point new criteria are set. Copies of the revised evaluation forms are made with the new lower levels of prompting criteria listed.

For example, baseline information indicates a student requires an average of 3 physical prompts and 2 gestures to perform a given step of a task. It is determined that a reasonable goal is to decrease the required prompting to 2 gestures. On a blank Evaluation of Student Performance form already developed for the student, "2G" is written in the "CRI" column opposite the objective. Similar decreases in prompting are determined for other objectives based on baseline information.

Several copies of this evaluation form, with the criteria goals for prompting listed opposite the objectives are made and used to record data in the placement. In this way, the goal for the desired level of prompting can immediately be compared with a student's actual performance on the objective on any given day. As a student progresses, evaluation forms with the student's new revised criteria levels are periodically updated for the placement.

OOPS

On the far right of the page is a final column for recording OOPS data. The title "OOPS" is not an acronym, instead referring to an exclamation people use when they have made a mistake. OOPS is GUESSWORKS for the severely impaired,

providing a period of time for a student to 1) recall what usually occurs or is expected and 2) begin that activity independently.

The goal of OOPS as an instructional technique is to decrease prompt dependence. A carefully implemented educational intervention, OOPS uses time and the cessation of prompting as a naturally occurring cue. OOPS data is recorded in minutes and seconds (5:30) opposite the targeted objective.

OOPS should be used selectively. To target a skill that may improve with an OOPS intervention, begin by reviewing several completed evaluation forms from a student's placement. Look for skills that 1) should be showing a decline in required prompting levels, but are not, and 2) a student is physically capable of initiating and performing independently. Target no more than two objectives for OOPS interventions at a time.

On the next day of training, remain silent and cease all prompting when the student is to perform the targeted skill. Using a stopwatch, select a specific point in time to begin timing. Record the amount of time that passes before the student initiates the skill independently. Using the same procedure on subsequent days, record the time each day of training. The time required for the student to initiate the desired skill should gradually decrease over several days of training. When these times are charted, they will resemble an inverse learning curve if the OOPS intervention is successful.

Prior to implementing OOPS, select a maximum time to wait for a skill to be performed without providing the previously needed prompting. Seven to eight minutes may be needed the first couple of days. Consider the individual student and factors surrounding the placement in determining a reasonable maximum time to allow for a student to initiate a targeted skill.

The Last Page of an Evaluation Form

Each evaluation form closes with a special section, **"Comments About Today's Training."** It requires the staff and student to make a brief statement concerning the day's work, and to share any specific incidents or issues. Also, should other relevant individuals (manager, other employees, general education teacher and/or students) comment in reference to a student's performance or placement, there is space to record that information. This section:

- encourages immediate self-evaluation by the student (and often will quickly make staff aware of a change in student attitude before it becomes apparent in the placement);

- relays information to the transition teacher immediately;
- and keeps a record of the comments of members of the community.

Keeping Everyone Informed

Keeping the Collective Expert informed of a student's progress on a regular basis is important. Accurate and relevant information is needed in making decisions concerning current and future placements and the direction of a student's educational program. Also, having an objective picture of a student's performance in a given learning environment helps to quantify progress that otherwise may be difficult to document or share with others.

A critical part of The Evaluation System is the summarizing of data from the evaluation forms, and the distribution of that information to the Collective Expert at regular intervals. Regardless of the summary schedule, always use the latest four completed evaluation forms for a summary report. To report this information, a Summary of Student Performance form (summary form) is used.

For this entire section, refer to Figure #8: Sample Summary of Student Performance Form, Top Section.

FIGURE 8: Sample Summary of Student Performance Form, Top Section

.....

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Summary of Student Performance

Student: _____ Coach: _____

Placement: _____ Day(s): _____ Time: _____

Check one: Baseline: ___ Interim: ___ Exit: ___ Skill Tracking: ___

Dates of Summarized Evaluation Forms: _____, _____, _____, _____

.....

The Summary of Student Performance Form

Slight Variations May Be Slight Variations

A word of caution: the evaluation and summary forms are sensitive. Slight variations of a few percentage points can for the most part be disregarded unless over time they form a general increase or decrease in performance. Look for marked increases or decreases, or long term trends, when evaluating information from evaluation and summary forms.

Summary Forms: Starting at the Top

The information requested at the top of the page is basically self-explanatory: Student, Coach, Date of Summary, Placement, and Days/Hours of Placement. Other areas of requested information need further explanation, and are listed below.

The Summary of Student Performance Form is used to report four kinds of information: 1. Baseline Performance; 2. Interim Performance; 3. Exiting Performance; and 4. Skill Tracking.

Baseline _____

A check " ✓ " in this blank indicates the summary is reporting baseline performance. After the first four days of data collection (usually the second through the fifth days of training), data is summarized and distributed. This forms baseline information, against which later information will be compared.

Interim_____

A check " ✓ " in this blank indicates one of several interim performance reports. Interim information regarding a student's performance is summarized and distributed at regular intervals agreeable to all members of the Collective Expert. Information can be summarized after every 4, 6, or 8 days of training during a placement. Less than 4 may be too time consuming for staff, over 8 may leave parents feeling "out of touch". The schedule of reporting is largely influenced by the frequency of training in a given placement. Whatever the schedule of reporting, summarize only the last four days of training.

Exiting_____

A check " √ " in this blank indicates the summary report of a student's final performance in a placement. At the completion of a placement, the lat four evaluation forms are summarized.

Skill Tracking_____

A check " √ " in this blank indicates Skill Tracking information is reported. This information is reported on review vocational or community based learning placements, and also review (repeat) placements in general education. (See "Skill Tracking" in this chapter for further information.)

Dates of Summarized Eval. Forms:____,_____,_____,____

In this blank, list the date of each form included in the summary report being completed.

Summary of Student Performance Forms: The Middle Section

The middle section of the summary form is a chart used to report information summarizing a set number of evaluation forms, usually four. The headings of the chart are briefly described below. Refer to Figure #9: Sample Summary Form: The Middle Section when reading this section.

Skill Areas

The basic skill areas are listed down the left side of the summary sheet. Each skill area corresponds to the identical skill area on the Evaluation of Student Performance form developed for the placement.

 # Obj

The number in this blank indicates the total number of objectives in a given skill area times the number of opportunities to perform each one. Explained differently, this is the product of the number of objectives listed in a given skill area on the evaluation form, times the number of evaluation forms being summarized. For example, if there are five arrival skills listed on the evaluation form, and four evaluation forms are being summarized, the number in this blank would be (4 X 5 = 20) twenty.

FIGURE #9: Sample Summary of Student Performance Form: The Middle Section

(Print may be enlarged for some students)

Skill Areas	#Obj	#By Myself 1st Guess	#By Mysolf	%Ind	%Previously Independent
Arrival					
GUESSWORKS					
SKILL (SPECIFY)					
SOCIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
TELLING TIME					
BREAK TIME					
COIN MACHINES					
SAFETY					
OTHER (SPECIFY)					
TOTAL					

 # By Myself: My First Guess

The number in this column will remain consistent throughout a placement, as it is the total number of objectives in that section the student predicted would be performed without assistance (Chapter 4).

 # By Myself

The number in this column indicates the number of objectives completed independently in the skill area during the period of time summarized. To determine this number,

count the number of checks placed in the "By Myself" column in each skill area, on each of the four evaluation forms being summarized. Add these four totals.

% Independent

This number represents the percentage of objectives in a given skill area completed independently during the period of time being summarized. This number is determined by dividing the number in the "# By Myself" column, by the number in the "# Obj" column. Therefore:

$$\frac{\text{\# By Myself}}{\text{\# Obj}} = \text{\% Independent}$$

% Previously Independent

The number in this column is the "% Independent" number from the previous summary. This provides a comparison with previous performance, making everyone immediately aware if a student's performance is improving, declining, or leveling off. All three indications are important, especially in unpaid vocational experiences where a student's continued learning must be documented, as these placements must be terminated if a student's performance levels off for a period of time. (This column is left blank on baseline summary forms).

Total

The "Total" columns provide an objective look at a student's overall independence within a given vocational placement during the summary period. Columns are each totaled vertically, with the percentage determined as described above.

The Summary of Student Performance Form: The Comments Section

The reverse side of each summary form requires the student, coach, and transition teacher to make comments describing the placement over the summary period. A section is reserved for each to respond. Students complete their "Comments" section in a support session, after reviewing summary data (Chapter 12).

Distribution of Summary Reports

Prior to the beginning of each student placement, the Collective Expert determines who should receive summary reports.

Providing Self-Evaluation Opportunities

The rationale underlying student self-evaluation is that the most effective way for students to understand it is through structured opportunities to practice self-evaluation skills in reference to real experiences. Self-evaluation provides students with the opportunity to identify their own solutions to problems, and use their own ideas to improve their performance. Considering students with severe developmental disabilities, such opportunities must be structured, and the curriculum must allow for repeated practice.

Student solutions to weaknesses in their performance are often simpler and more effective than solutions determined by professionals or parents. In fact, it was an incident with a student which initiated the development of self-evaluation as an integrated component of The Curriculum System. That incident is described in the following section.

The Start of Self-Evaluation

A student with autism training in a large factory on a fine motor assembly task had difficulty staying "on task". His work was frequently interrupted by his need to continually check his watch when performing this task. The transition teacher recorded "on task" and "off task" data on the student's performance at the site.

The information indicated the student was "off task", checking his watch a majority of the time. This information was shared with the student's skill coach.

The transition teacher and coach shared the "on and off task" chart with the student. He became concerned by the "off" task checks, and asked what he was doing at those times instead of working. He was told he was checking his watch when each "off" check was recorded.

The student wanted to be "on" task. He decided he would take his watch off and place it within his easy view at his work station. This, he felt, would let him check the time without needing to stop to turn his wrist to check the time.

The teacher and the skill coach agreed, but both feared the plan would not work. The plan would still allow the student to continually check the time, and glancing at a watch placed on the table would take the student's eyes off his work. The student's plan also left open the potential for the watch to be forgotten at the plant.

The teacher and coach couldn't have been more wrong. The student independently, without any reminders, implemented his new plan to improve his performance. The student's performance rate was uninterrupted by his glances to check the time. He never forgot his watch at the plant, and promptly put it back on his wrist at the close of each day's training.

To the final day of the placement, the plan worked. It was the student's intervention; he thought of it, he owned it, and he made it work.

What is even more interesting is the teacher's solution to the problem. She had written a plan, and had it with her at the original meeting with the coach and the student. It was very complex when compared with the student's solution to his off task behavior. The teacher's plan would have involved implementation and monitoring by the coach, gradual fading of prompts toward a desired goal, etc.. In comparison, the student's plan was more logical, more direct, and far more effective.

Standards for Student Self-Evaluation

Student self-evaluation opportunities in The Curriculum System are defined by the following standards. A student's evaluation of his own performance should:

1. ...occur on a regular basis.

Self-evaluation opportunities should be a scheduled part of the educational program and routine. Self-evaluation activities may be completed with a group of students and individually (Chapter 12).

2. ...include a previous student understanding of evaluation procedures in general.

It is critical for students to understand evaluation procedures, and their role in the entire process. This can be demonstrated and completed through a variety of activities. (Chapters 4, 5, & 10).

3. ...use materials the student can understand.

Evaluation forms are designed to enable student involvement. All use "student friendly" vocabulary, and enlarged print when necessary.

4. ...encourage and use reasonable student solutions to improve student performance.

When a behavior is a problem, or student performance is not progressing, the student is involved in the first opportunity to solve the problem. By sharing information regularly and using a visual review of evaluation sheets, students are often motivated to improve their own "data". Students may become highly motivated to get as many checks in the "By Myself" column as possible.

5. ...involve practice in evaluating performance immediately, and later in a support session or a support class.

Students should minimally have contact with each evaluation sheet at the end of each training at each placement, and again a few days later in a support session or class. The process encourages immediate self-evaluation, and provides a guide for accurate recall and self-evaluation later. By using the same form in two environments, a tie between the two is established. The process focuses on helping students picture past performance, and encourages practice picturing an improved future performance the next time.

Evaluating Inter-Related Skills

As covered earlier, The Evaluation System can measure skills across a wide variety of environments because it uses the same evaluation process. This allows comparison of student performance on similar skills applied and practiced in different environments.

Objectives in the Objective Bank, and in The Evaluation System are separated by categories for purposes of organization. It is important to keep in mind objectives are not separate skills in reality. In fact, just the opposite - skills are highly inter-related and inter-dependent. Therefore, evaluation of skill acquisition should involve responding to information regarding strengths and weaknesses in specific areas by looking at all skills, in all areas.

Progress Deserves Investigating: Always Be Exceptionally Curious About Success

As parents and professionals, we naturally tend to invest a tremendous amount of energy and concern into a student's sudden decline in performance. A decrease in almost **anything** grabs our attention, while continued progress is met with a sigh of relief. Look at progress as a "wake up call"... i.e., **"Why is**

this progress occurring?" At the very least, always give progress the same undivided attention given failure.

The factors resulting in success for students with developmental disabilities, especially autism, are highly individual. These two paragraphs are a reminder to use the same techniques (listed below) for responding to a decline in performance, to respond to an increase in performance. The resulting information is every bit as valuable in making current and future decisions. Always be exceptionally curious about success.

Responding to Student Decline in Performance

For purposes of accurate evaluation and problem solving, when skills in one area decline or are not progressing, identifying why is critical. The solution to a decline in social skills, for example, may lie in focusing on visualization or functional academic skills - instead of directing all attention at social skills. The Evaluation System can assist in identifying why skills are not progressing (or why they are progressing) by using a few simple techniques.

Ask the Student

Admittedly, asking a student with developmental disabilities why certain skills are not progressing may not bring an accurate answer. Regardless, if a student has demonstrated even minimal ability to understand the basics of a self-evaluation process, he may well hold a solution to his own difficulty IF you can communicate your concern in a way he can understand. Student solutions are always worth the first try.

Considering the inter-relatedness of skills, a decline in one area may be indicative of progress or decline in another. A student may well be aware of factors making performance in a given area difficult. Asking a student why he's having difficulty in one area, or observing a student closely, may prove surprising and enlightening. Consider this example:

A severely mentally impaired, largely non-verbal student with autism was placed in a vocational placement in a large factory. Comparing current to previous summary reports, a definite decline was noticed in his independence in the area of safety skills. The safety skills showing a sudden decline in independence were those required in walking to and from the work station amidst the threat of moving hi-lows.

Because the student was lower functioning, much of his communication to staff was dependent on their observations of him. One factor which had been noted during this same

evaluation period was that a new student had begun work in this factory. The two students worked separately, but entered and left the factory together under the supervision of the coach.

The severely impaired student had demonstrated real concern for the new student, watching out for her as they entered and left the factory. His awareness of the threat of hi-lows to her demonstrated a genuine social awareness and generalization of consequences - i.e., he realized the same dangers which applied to him, applied to her as well. Still, the data indicated a decline in his independence in the area of his own safety skills.

The decline in performance in safety skills was isolated, that is, there were not similar declines in other areas of performance. By quickly focusing on the exact skills showing a decline and changes that may have affected performance, it was reassuring to discover an increase in social awareness was the most probable cause for the student's decline in safety skills.

Understanding what is affecting performance involves looking beyond the specific skills listed on the evaluation form, to the student first, for insights into his behavior. As in this example, it is important to note an isolated decline in one skill area may be influenced by factors not recorded on the evaluation form.

OK, When Asking the Student Doesn't Work...

Often a student may be unable to identify the reasons for his progress, or decline in performance. In these cases there are basically three places to look for answers: 1) the informal observations of his coach or others involved with a placement; 2) other skill areas within a placement; and/ or 3) the same skills in a different placement.

With the first option being fairly self-explanatory, a brief discussion of the remaining two follows.

Look to Other Skill Areas Within a Placement

A decline in performance may be related to other increases or decreases in performance in other skill areas. Look at the whole picture to gain clues. The clues can lead to more specific questions to ask the student, coach, or other individuals to pinpoint factors most likely contributing to a student's performance. Keep in mind a decrease in performance on one summary may be temporary and rectify itself by the next summary, though identifying the reason for the decline may provide valuable information.

Look at the Same Skills in Different Environments

Instruction of identical skills in different environments establishes a different relationship **within** a skill - the student's ability to generalize the acquisition of the skill from one environment to another. Looking at a student's acquisition of identical skills in different environments may result in insights into factors affecting a student's immediate and future performance.

If a specific skill is progressing in one environment, and not another, identifying the factors contributing to the first success may provide ideas for improving performance on the same skill in the second environment. Logically, an identical skill in different environments should progress at a similar rate. Realistically, this is not always the case. Having a system to compare skill acquisition across environments, professionals and parents are better equipped to understand a student and the factors influencing his successes and failures.

Student Curriculum System Notebooks

To keep things organized and ready anytime, information is kept in Student Curriculum System Notebooks. Each student has a three ring notebook which contains sections (identified by notebook dividers) for the following information:

1) **IEPCs, Transition Plans, Reports, Contracts with Vocational Training Sites:** Keep a copy of the latest IEPC and transition plan. Also, file copies of any vocational evaluation results and/or reports.

2) **Notes:** Keep copies of all correspondence to the Collective Expert, businesses, parents, general education staff, etc., regarding the stuent.

3) **Original Data Sheets:** Keep one copy of all Evaluation of Student Performance forms developed for a student's placements and educational programming.

4) **Completed Data Sheets:** Keep completed data sheets in sections divided for each placement until they are summarized. Evaluation sheets contain important detailed information, so they may be stored in another place once they are summarized for reference (recommended time to keep completed evaluation forms - one year).

5) **Summaries:** Keep a copy of all summaries for a given placement.

6) **Skill Tracking:** The Skill Tracking section holds completed Skill Tracking forms, completed evaluation forms, and summaries for any current Skill Tracking placement. Once the placement is completed, the summary form is placed in the appropriate placement section, and completed evaluation forms are stored (Skill Tracking is discussed in the following section).

7) **Support Sessions and Great Habits Class:** This section contains anything relating to group or individual support sessions, including: the Student Selected Goals form, support session assignments, and/or general education materials to review.

Measure Skill Acquisition Across Time: Skill Tracking

Skill Tracking is designed to track priority skills across time to ensure systematic periodic review of important skills. Applying almost exclusively to vocational or community based placements, Skill Tracking may occasionally be used if a general education course is repeated. Skill Tracking involves reassigning students to previous placements to check for skill retention, and/or to measure how much time is required for a student to "re-learn" previously acquired skills.

The Difference Between Repeat and Skill Tracking Placements

It is important to keep in mind the differences between a Skill Tracking placement, and a repeat placement.

Skill Tracking Placements

The goal of Skill Tracking placements is to determine which skills were retained, and record how long it takes a student to re-learn forgotten skills. A Skill Tracking placement ends when a student's performance in the site equals their level of performance on their exiting Summary of Student Performance for the original placement. Because the goal is to check for retention of previous skills, the student's last Evaluation of Student Performance form for the original placement is used throughout Skill Tracking.

Skill Tracking information is especially important as a student makes the transition from school to adult community services, when it is decided which type of vocational placements

hold the most potential for success. It is helpful if the school district can provide information not only concerning where a student was the most productive and independent, but also where he retained skills over periods of vacation.

Repeat Placements

In contrast, the goal of a repeat placement is to develop skills in a new skill area within the same placement, or to continue to build on a student's original performance. Repeat placements are usually the same length as the original placement. Repeat placements require new evaluation forms, listing the updated goals and objectives.

Carefully Inform Students

The purpose of Skill Tracking placements should be carefully explained and defined for a student. Identify the beginning and ending dates of the training, and demonstrate what is meant by "review".

An Example of a Skill Tracking Placement

A student completes a vocational placement at a chair factory. About three months, and again one year later, the student is again placed in the chair factory, in the identical job, for the specific purpose of checking for the student's retention of skills previously acquired. Because the placement is identical to the original placement, the same evaluation form is used, to allow for direct comparison of summary information to previous summary reports.

Frequency and Length of Skill Tracking Placements

It may not be possible to use Skill Tracking with all placements. When it is, vocational Skill Tracking placements may occur twice: 1) about two to three months after a placement closes, and 2) at least one year after the close of the first review placement. Skill Tracking placements to check retention of skills needed as a consumer of community facilities and services may occur more frequently.

The length of a Skill Tracking placement usually is between 6 to 10 days of training. Skill Tracking placements should maintain the same schedule: i.e., hours per day, time of day, and days per week, as the original placement. For example, for a placement which ran two days each week, the review placement would maintain the same schedule, and last one to two months. The length of the review placement required varies according to

individual students. More severely impaired students may require a longer review placement, than less impaired students. The data is a great guide, and will meet former performance and "level off" when a student has met his/her former level of productivity and independence.

Skill Tracking Forms Keep Skill Tracking On Track

In addition to the reuse of original self-evaluation and summary sheets, Skill Tracking involves the use of a Skill Tracking form (Appendix G: Sample Skill Tracking Form). Each student has a Skill Tracking section in his/her Student Curriculum System Notebook. The form is self-explanatory to complete, and is attached to a copy of the exiting Summary of Student Performance and the last (blank) Evaluation of Student Performance form for the original placement.

This form is used to record placement closings and to tentatively schedule Skill Tracking placements for the coming year(s). Each time a placement closes at least one Skill Tracking placement is tentatively scheduled for one of the coming years, and these plans are communicated to The Collective Expert for approval.

Summary

Evaluation in The Curriculum System serves two purposes. The first is to provide systematic opportunities for students to monitor and improve their own performance. Also, evaluation is critical in keeping the Collective Expert informed, providing objective data on which to base collaborative decisions regarding a student's educational and transition program.

CHAPTER 6

Assistance and The Curriculum System

Introduction

The entire "Assistance" section, Chapters 6 through 11, focuses on what parents, professionals, and in some cases the people of the community can do to help students with developmental disabilities succeed. The Curriculum System organizes assistance for students into four main areas: Environmental Assistance, Curricular Assistance, Social Assistance, and Assistance Through Support. Used individually or collectively depending upon the placement and individual student; the areas of assistance make a student's individual success possible and realistic.

For our purposes, The Curriculum System defines "assistance" as:

> **Reasonable, realistic efforts and materials which modify tasks, environments, curriculum, and/or feedback to meet the abilities and needs of an individual student, which also require student effort, self-evaluation, problem solving, and/or skill acquisition, to achieve identified goals.**

The first part of the definition requires "reasonable, realistic efforts and materials...". In other words, if a student is bothered by a flickering light, the student's work area may be moved away from the light or the light may be fixed. Plastic arrows might be placed on a factory floor to eliminate the need for an employee or coach to direct a student to the next area needing sweeping. A student may be provided with curriculum materials written at his level of understanding to address skills he needs to learn, while enabling his participation in the general classroom. Without dramatically altering the general education classroom or vocational work environment, certain accommodations may be made to enable the student's participation. Subtle, simple, and inexpensive alterations of an environment or curriculum set the standard to follow.

The second half of the definition requires student investment for the efforts of others to be considered effective assistance. Therefore, "assistance" in The Curriculum System is strictly limited to reasonable measures which make success possible for a student, without ensuring success regardless of student effort.

This part of the definition refers to a real danger of assistance. If given too quickly, too often, or too extensively assistance can have effects opposite the intent of the person giving help. Effective assistance does not typically save time or make a situation more convenient for others. Experience with students with autism at Jenison High School indicates too much help may result in students "sitting back". Students may develop a dependence on cues or prompts resulting in missed opportunities for learning. The person with the most invested in a learning situation should always be the student.

The Four Areas of Assistance

In reality, the four areas of assistance are not separate, isolated efforts on behalf of students. For example, efforts to establish groundwork among employees in a vocational training site for a student (Environmental Assistance, described below), is critical to a student becoming included socially when the placement begins (Social Assistance). For the purposes of organization, the four areas of assistance are listed individually.

The Curriculum System Standards (Chapter 3) define the involvement of students and the community in every area of assistance on a student's behalf. These areas of assistance should be regarded as efforts on behalf of students, which involve a variety of individuals, including the student.

Environmental Assistance

Environmental Assistance covers a wide variety of activities which establish learning environments, modify environments, and lay the necessary groundwork for an individual student and placement.

Environmental Assistance refers to efforts to:

- develop a wide variety of effective learning environments to provide a solid foundation and several options for developing individualized student programs.
- establish functional and meaningful learning environments consistent with each student's short and long range goals.
- make reasonable modifications prior to a student's placement in a learning environment which, if not modified, would result in significant student discomfort, anxiety, or distress.

- establish groundwork with the student, and the people in each learning environment prior to student placement.

Curricular Assistance

Curricular Assistance is often the most extensive, involving the efforts of professionals to provide the most effective curriculum based on general goals identified by the Collective Expert and the Individualized Educational Planning Committee.

Curricular Assistance refers to efforts to:

- create an effective short and long range curriculum for each student.
- determine long and short range student goals.
- determine objectives and evaluation procedures toward achievement of student goals.
- address student goals and objectives simultaneously across several environments.
- modify the general education curriculum to develop a meaningful, functional, and/or more easily understood curriculum for an individual student.
- track skills across time.

Social Assistance

Social Assistance focuses on providing students with needed help in identifying and appropriately responding to a wide variety of naturally occurring social situations through individualized interventions.

Social Assistance refers to efforts to:

- create a comprehensive, effective educational intervention to develop a student's social skills.
- help students prepare for, predict, and respond to upcoming social situations as independently as possible.
- help students accurately "read" and respond to social cues as independently as possible.
- help a student identify when help is needed.

- help students express wants, needs, and requests for assistance to others as independently as possible.

- help others to effectively interact with a student.

Assistance Through Support

Assistance Through Support focuses on providing each student and the people involved in each learning environment with needed, but not excessive, support. The goal of all support is to use non-interfering techniques which enable everyone in a learning environment to work as independently and inter-dependently as possible.

Assistance Through Support refers to efforts to:

- support the involvement and efforts of others on behalf of a student.

- develop a comprehensive system of support based on objective ongoing evaluation of the type and intensity of support needed for each student to succeed.

Summary

The Curriculum System identifies four highly interdependent areas of assistance. Success with one area of assistance is directly impacted by the effectiveness of efforts in another area. Each area listed in this chapter is discussed in greater detail in the following chapters: Chapter 7, "Environmental Assistance: Establishing Placements in Non-Sheltered Learning Environments;" Chapter 8, "More Environmental Assistance: Groundwork;" Chapter 9, "Curricular Assistance: Modifying the General Education Curriculum;" Chapter 10, "Assistance Through Accurate Support;" and Chapter 11, "Social Assistance and Social Reading."

CHAPTER 7

Environmental Assistance: Establishing Placements in Non-Sheltered Learning Environments

The Overall Picture

Teaching in the community opens up many opportunities, and creates some unique challenges. The classroom is so much bigger now. Whereas once all students were in the same room, they are now scattered in several locations. Everything is taught in a variety of environments: from the grocery store; to the classroom; to a general education class; to a vocational training site. The key to maintaining a cohesive educational program is to think of the variety of learning environments as segments of one classroom. The difference is teaching among the people of an entire community.

The goal in establishing placements in several learning environments is to coordinate and tie experiences together to create one individualized educational program. This program should reinforce itself through instruction of similar objectives in varied settings. There has to be a logical relationship between defined student goals, targeted learning environments, and a student's daily experiences at home and at school.

To simplify a classic "where do you start" phenomenon, the following guidelines may be helpful:

1) Look at defined student needs, goals, objectives - refer to the Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.), vocational evaluations, and any Skill Tracking needs (Chapter 5).

2) Identify and prioritize learning environments most likely to provide the "backdrop" to achieve identified goals.

3) For scheduling purposes, establish placements in the following order:

   a) non-sheltered vocational placements;

   b) general education placements;

   c) community based instruction and/or recreational placements; and

   d) time in the support classroom.

Referring to the list on the previous page, learning environments should generally reinforce one another from "the bottom up". For example, the support classroom provides the opportunity for students to practice skills identified as essential for success in all other learning environments. The other learning environments should relate to, and reinforce, student goals. **Addressing identified objectives in the widest variety of environments possible is important for providing opportunity for generalization of skills** (Chapters 4 & 5).

The Optional Learning Environment

There is one additional learning environment: home. It is optional, entirely the choice of a student and his parents/guardian/group home provider. If this option is included, it can be incorporated into reinforcing skills addressed in the other learning environments.

Establishing Vocational Placements

Vocational training in the community provides a tremendous opportunity for students, professional staff, parents, and the community at large. Recognizing the needs of all people involved is critical to a student's success in a given placement. Placements in a general or special education class involve a constant set of people; the student interacts with the same people everyday. Not so in a community based vocational placement, where not only the task, but the people indirectly and directly involved, can change from day to day - or within a day's work. The dynamics of a community vocational placement compared to one which is self-contained were summarized best by Dorothy in the movie The Wizard of Oz, "I don't think we're in Kansas anymore." (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1939)

Listen to Harvey Mackay

Harvey Mackay is the author of two books, Swim With the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive (1988) and Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt (1990). He is also the owner of Mackay Envelope, an envelope manufacturing company. Mr. Mackay's list of accomplishments far exceed the limits of this paragraph.

Mr. Mackay's books are every bit as applicable to teaching in the community as a teaching manual. What follows is a list of a few of Mr. Mackay's titles most critical when working with businesses to establish (and maintain) vocational training sites. Mr. Mackay's titles are followed by explanations and examples which directly apply his advice to efforts on behalf of students with developmental disabilities.

"Your Company Is No Better Than Its Reputation in the Community" (Mackay, 1990)

Always think of the educational program as a company seeking to expand and improve. Education is the business of preparing young adults for the future; work as though there must be a lifetime guarantee. Never rest on a reputation, always seek to improve it.

"Deliver More Than You Promise" (Mackay, 1990)

Always. If you indicate a job developer will visit once each month, visit twice. If you promise to contact an employer twice each week while fading the coach, make three contacts. Answer calls from a business within twelve hours, immediately if possible. Make realistic promises you can absolutely guarantee.

"How to Stay Employed" (Mackay, 1990): **Be Exceptional**

An example comes from our experience with a young lady with autism who has worked for 3 1/2 years at our McDonald's in Jenison. Looking at factors like teamwork and cooperation, she is not what one would consider a model employee - however - she makes terrific, perfect, salads. When establishing vocational placements for students with disabilities, look for placements where a student may in **some way**, possibly only one way, prove to be an exceptional and indispensable asset. Maximize on that potential, as the result is students who realize genuine pride in their accomplishments and additional respect from their co-workers.

"Your Last Idea is Not Your Best Idea. It's Your Last Idea" (Mackay, 1988)

Last ideas lead to better ideas. Shorten the process by keeping an open attitude which watches for, and incorporates, the ideas of others. Consider the following example from a vocational training site where one idea, eventually led a student to communicate another even better one:

A severely impaired, nonverbal student with autism was training sweeping fabric scraps in the upholstery department of a furniture manufacturer. The student could perform the sweeping task within a small area, but required prompts to identify and move to new areas requiring sweeping.

To minimize the need for direct assistance from the coach, the coach and special education teacher had an idea. They placed large plastic fabric arrows on the floor directing the

student to the next area needing sweeping. As the student left each area, he was trained to pick up the arrow and place it in a special pocket on his supply cart. The arrow idea worked for several training sessions.

One day, instead of placing the arrows in the special pocket, the student threw them in the trash one by one as he completed sweeping each area. One assumption the coach could have made was that the student was breaking training. Instead, the coach assumed the student was indicating he no longer needed the arrows. The coach left the arrows in the trash, and the student worked successfully in following weeks without them.

Better ideas can be silent, and even the most severely impaired among us can have them.

"Spend Time in the Trenches" (Mackay, 1990)

Before sending a student and coach to begin training at a job, the transition teacher should perform the job first. One arrangement with a McDonalds' involved the transition teacher being hired and trained first, followed by the student training under the direction of the transition teacher.

While in training, the transition teacher made several mistakes. She spilled a large tray of twelve salads. On another occasion, she used the wrong lettuce to make the salads, requiring they be re-made. This same teacher, while learning to operate a simple bread bagging machine at a bakery, sent several slices flying in a variety of directions, but not into the intended bag. There is nothing like "doing it yourself" to provide renewed respect for the challenges facing students.

"Pantasize" (Mackay, 1988)

Before a student picks up a broom or assembles a bracket, set a mental moving picture, like a "mental movie", as to what each placement should "look like". What should it look like when the student is working? What should it look and sound like when the student arrives, takes breaks, and leaves the site? Visualize the smallest details. Whenever visiting the site, compare reality to the ideal picture. If it doesn't match, figure out why not and work collectively until it does.

"Why Some People Never Fail" (Mackay, 1990)

Harvey Mackay says, "Failure is an attitude, not an outcome." (1990) If a vocational site closes as the result of insurmountable problems, it can be a step on the way to success.

Experience brings everyone that much closer to "getting it right!" Evaluate what went wrong. **Evaluate what went right.** Try again, with improved odds for reaching student goals.

Additional Advice

Think, Plan, and Act Ahead

Most vocational placements should be **set up within one month of the initial contact.** The actual placement may occur a little later. Once an initial contact with a business has been made, keep things going. Don't rush or let events drag. Once an ongoing relationship with a business is established, some placements may be established within a few hours or days.

Suggestions for the first contact:

- Time that first call with consideration of the business' schedule. For example, don't contact McDonalds' between 10:30am and 2:00pm.
- Make initial contacts early in the work week, preferably on a Monday or a Tuesday.
- Ask for the personnel manager by name. If you don't know his/her name, ask the receptionist. When speaking to the manager for the first time, use his/her name **first**, "Hi, Mr. White, this is..."
- Within the **first few minutes,** identify the school district/organization you work with, not just your name and title.
- Keep the conversation short and to the point. **Briefly** describe the program and how the business will be involved in general. Be efficient, relaxed, and respect time.
- The goal of this call **is not** to establish a vocational placement. **The goal is to establish a face to face meeting with Mr. White.**
- Send a short note confirming the meeting.

Anticipate and Address Anxiety...

Concerns of businesses vary and are often well founded. For example, increases in lawsuits and liability insurance have created a new and expensive reality for businesses. Also,

businesses may have had negative experiences with other placement agencies. A variety of factors have affected a business long before a transition teacher enters the door.

It's important to know as much as possible about a business, the vocational program, the student, and the surrounding community prior to the first meeting. Researching a business ahead of time is time well spent. Thoroughly understand your project's answers to questions of liability, particularly in reference to unpaid placements. Know student rights in relation to paid, and unpaid placements. Know as much about the student you are seeking to place as possible. Share your concerns and ideas. Ask for ideas and questions. Demonstrate an understanding of the student, business, and community. **It is absolutely possible to advocate for everyone.**

Other ideas for the first face to face meeting:

- Do not overdress or underdress. Consider the dress of the professionals in this placement and dress accordingly.

- Rehearse key points to establish a general mental outline of important factors to cover in the initial meeting.

- Cover the following in a "to the point" conversation with the business:

  How will the student be supervised?

  Is this a paid or unpaid placement?

  Will school staff always be on site? Will the involvement of the coach fade over time? Will the business be consulted regarding decisions to fade the coach?

  Mention other businesses participating in the program.

...but Never Arrive with All the Answers

People who arrive with all the answers are initially amusing, eventually boring, and in the end, irritating. Considering the wealth of laws, rules, and regulations specific from state to state, placement to placement, those who do attempt to know all the answers run the risk of inaccuracy. Instead, know where to get answers, and use those resources.

Don't Omit "Bad News"

Involve businesses in specific concerns you have about a possible student placement. They may have the answer, or the concern may not pose a problem from their perspective. As a student placement progresses, share a student's progress with a business (with permission!!). Keep people informed, "on board".

Suggestions for describing a prospective student to an employer:

- Make sure you have guardian and student permission to share student information with an employer.
- Bring a photograph of the student, with permission.
- Be **honest** - do not hold back information that may be a factor in a placement.
- Demonstrate support for business concerns in relationship to including a student with disabilities in the workplace.
- Inquire whether the manager knows of any employees who might take a special interest in this student and who may appreciate the opportunity to work with the placement in some way.
- A student may "have the job" at the close of the meeting. Still, ask if an interview/meeting with the student can be arranged. If so, ask if the manager would like suggestions for the interview. If possible, do not include school staff in the interview.

Listen and Deny Nothing

Really listen...this is true always, but especially in pre-placement contacts. If this is the first time a business has considered working with the developmentally disabled, be cautious if a manager is enthusiastic to the point of disregarding logical concerns. Slow them down, and bring up concerns they are overlooking. Impulsiveness can be contagious, try to stay on a thoughtful and thorough course.

Other first time businesses may reflect concerns that seem based on old wives' tales or are typical of thinking in the late 1800's. Respect these questions, as they provide a great opportunity to share accurate information. **Proceed With Caution.** Avoid responses that start with, "Oh, that's an old wives' tale..." or "Not many people have those fears anymore because..." as that may embarrass the person whose cooperation you are seeking. Be alert. Recognize fears and/or apprehension

no matter how they are expressed; respond with a calm, matter of fact, positive confidence. Start your answer with something like, "Other businesses have had that same concern, and our experience has shown us that..."

The Five "Yes...But" Rule (John-Roger and McWilliams, 1991)

Listen for "Yes...but" responses. More than five such responses in one meeting may mean this is not the vocational placement to work with at this time. Force no one. Later, that same manager may call after observing or hearing of other successful placements. When fears seem too intense or numerous, try giving them your respect and some time and space. Given room and freedom to think privately, people can change their minds, sometimes within a couple days.

Keep this in mind from the book DO IT by John-Roger and Peter McWilliams, "The only thing more foolish than the person pouring forth a stream of 'yes-buts' is the person who continues to give good advice in the face of obvious indifference." (1991)

Think of "yes - but" responses as very large bricks. Too many bricks is enough for a wall. While always believing nothing is impossible, recognize the possibility that scaling this wall may be just that. Draw on judgment, consider approaching a different vocational placement before investing further effort challenging possibly insurmountable fears.

Understand the Who's Who of Responsibility and Control

It's critical to "get a (working) handle" on two concepts, responsibility and control. With each business, the amount of control and responsibility assumed by the program and the business will be highly individual. A good place to start; assume much of the control and responsibility while always sharing and asking for the input of the business.

Professionals have an in-depth understanding of the student, which is at most only half the needed information for success. The best expert on any business is that business. In bringing students and businesses together successfully, recruit the expertise and experience of others. Businesses and employees have a knowledge of how to make things work and get things done - a valuable resource when teaching in the community, modifying a task for a student, or working with a student's problem behavior.

Paid placements often result in the fading of the coach as the student gains independence in job skills. At this point, a business not only assumes more control, but must also be comfortable doing it. The level of the student's

interdependence with other employees is a critical factor in fading successfully. Whenever fading is decided, evaluate the readiness of the student and the business. Don't begin fading without the involvement of everyone affected by that decision.

Always Leave with the "Door Open"

Keep things positive, start to finish. Some businesses may choose not to participate. While it would be unnatural or dishonest to seem happy when "turned away", **always leave with the door open.** Stay friendly. Keep the door open as you leave, indicating an understanding for non-participation at this time (maybe not forever!).

Follow the meeting with a brief note to the business. Give disappointment a day or two recovery, then write a note to the manager. Thank the manager for his/her time and cooperation, inviting him/her to make contact at any time in the future should the business find itself in a position to participate with the program.

Establishing General Education Placements

General education placements can provide a unique opportunity for students to learn skills meaningful to them, while attending class with general education students. Don't let enthusiasm for the potential of these opportunities push good judgment aside when establishing general education placements. Take care and time. Remember Stephen R. Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, especially Habit #5, "Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood," (1989) when approaching a general educator about a possible placement.

General education placements are often established to relate to, and reinforce vocational placements. The basic principles are essentially the same for establishing vocational and general education placements, with slight differences in some of the details. Therefore, when setting up a general education placement, it may prove helpful to use some ideas listed for vocational placements. In addition, assuming the support classroom is located in a high school or college setting, what follows may also prove helpful:

Think, Plan, and Act Ahead

Approach general education teachers well in advance, at least 1 semester, and up to 2 years in advance.

Anticipate and Address Anxiety...

Anticipate the concerns and questions of general educators and hit them "head on". Do not be shy about addressing the possible negative aspects of any placement.

...but Never Arrive with All the Answers

Do not arrive with the entire plan for a student established. Present enough information so a general educatio teacher knows the placement has been thought through, but not cast in stone.

Listen and Deny Nothing

Be open and work cooperatively on ideas/concerns a general educator may have. Don't address negative concerns with "that won't happen...". Instead, respond with a few possible solutions, indicating the realistic likelihood of similar incidences actually occurring.

The Five "Yes - But" Rule (John-Roger and McWilliams, 1991)

This rule applies to those you may approach concerning general education placements as it does for vocational training sites (on the previous page). Stay alert and count "Yes - but" responses as if they are bullets being loaded into a gun. Exit when the chamber is getting full.

If the Light Turns Green...GO.

Scheduling can frustrate or render a transition teacher more flexible. When entering the realm of scheduling secondary general education courses, it may be necessary to try more than once to secure a spot in class. General education students sometimes have to wait to attend a popular class, so do students with disabilities. Lessen the need for panic by planning ahead. Plan ahead and accommodate opportunities which may present themselves ahead of schedule...i.e., if the light turns green, **GO.**

Define the Who's Who of Responsibility and Control

Take time to discuss and define who's who in terms of the two biggest factors between professionals with any general education placement: responsibility and control. It may seem logical that both responsibility and control should be shared equally, "50/50", between professionals right from the start.

If equally shared responsibility and control is the expectation right from the start, an unrealistic assumption is made that all professionals will experience the same ease working cooperatively with one another. These placements are doomed if they cannot "pull it off".

There is another formula for dividing responsibility and control that is not as common. The transition teacher assumes 100% responsibility, while the general education teacher assumes 100% control. This has some realistic and workable implications.

First, it consistently provides a great way to start all general education placements - for all students from the more severe to mildly impaired students. What typically happens is the responsibility and control eventually "even-out", with increasing collaboration and sharing as two, or more, professionals gain experience working together.

Second, with 100% responsibility and 100% control lying with two different people from the start, a unique relationship is defined which has a greater likelihood to be effective for a student if professionals have difficulty coordinating efforts. The placement can still succeed regardless of the professionals' opportunity or ability to coordinate with one another. The whole point of any placement is to ensure the greatest odds for success right from the first day.

Last, but Not Least...<u>Always</u> Come in the Back Door

Consider this opportunity: the principal of the high school learns of the transition teacher's plans to include students with disabilities in general education. Supportive of this idea, he invites the transition teacher to make a presentation at the next staff meeting to describe the program.

Proceed With Caution. In the opinion of this author, innovation and changes are usually better off "coming in the back door". Approach teachers one at a time, placement by placement. As the entire high school will not suddenly be submerged in the efforts of this program, why involve the valuable time of many with a presentation? Do not draw disproportionate attention to efforts on behalf of one or two students, to a group with the awesome responsibility of working to meet the needs of hundreds.

<u>Once the Learning Environments are Established</u>

Having established related learning environments for each student in line with established goals, the next step revolves

around groundwork. Effective groundwork is critical to the success of a student. In completing groundwork, the environment and those within it are **prepared** - not necessarily trained - for the student with disabilities.

Successful groundwork results in increased understanding of the student and program goals, and increased participation of the students or employees directly involved and impacted by the placement. Through groundwork: details and plans for a placement are finalized; needed modifications are made in the environment; and understanding and acceptance of those in the classroom and/or community is established.

The next chapter discusses the "how to" of preparing a nonsheltered learning environment for a student with developmental disabilities.

CHAPTER 8

More Environmental Assistance: Groundwork

Introduction

Once vocational and general education placements have been established, laying groundwork is the next step. The goal of groundwork is to increase the likelihood a student will be accepted, while sharing an understanding of student and program goals with those directly involved with each placement. It is also important to define the expectations held for those involved in a placement, and to clarify their role. (People tend to assume they will be far more burdened or responsible for a student than is actually the case.) In relation to its impact, effective groundwork takes a minimum amount of time.

Though the goal of groundwork is identical for a vocational or general education environment, the approach and techniques are very different.

In a vocational setting, the people with the most student contact will be the employees...a group of people changing with each shift and having a variety of adult concerns. They have families, children, and house payments. It is unlikely a student will be placed in a professional job which requires a college degree, therefore many of the employees surrounding a student will be those who work on an hourly basis. They may have concerns with a student displacing other workers, or may be insulted that a student with severe disabilities is performing a job similar to their own.

Though there are similarities, vocational and general education placements have many contrasts. General education placements are age-homogeneous. In a secondary general education setting, the general education students and teacher will have direct contact with a student one to two hours each day. Like the employees in a vocational setting, general education students have a myriad of other concerns: dating, grades, pressures, jobs, and family. In contrast to vocational sites, where a staff person is often assigned from the special education department to "coach" a student - students with disabilities may be more effectively supported in a general education placement via other techniques and materials (Chapters 9 and 10).

This chapter is a description of techniques for laying groundwork in vocational and general education settings. It is important to keep in mind these are guidelines - **ideas** - to combine with knowledge of the specific people and their environment in developing an individualized approach to groundwork.

Remembering Steven Covey's Fifth Habit of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (1989), "Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood," is critical when laying groundwork. Listen while talking, be sensitive while presenting, and make modifications as you proceed. A good rule of thumb lies in an often repeated phrase by Sgt. Esterhaus on the former television series, Hill Street Blues, "Let's be careful out there."

Groundwork for Vocational Placements

As mentioned earlier, when establishing secondary general education placements it's wise to "come in the back door". The same is true for laying the groundwork for a vocational setting. In this instance, get to know everyone involved before presenting a great deal of information concerning the upcoming placement of a student with developmental disabilities. Knowing the student is simply not enough...knowing the people who will surround your student is critical. Take the time to work and talk with the people of this new "classroom" in the community.

Do It Yourself

What Do It Yourself refers to is straightforward: before any student is placed in a vocational training placement, the transition teacher should do the job targeted for a student. It's important to work the identical shift planned for the student. Train for two or three days, not one. By performing the job before a student, the job developer:

- learns the skill targeted for the student;
- completes a task analysis;
- experiences firsthand the direct impact of the job, especially factors like fatigue and stress; and
- becomes acquainted with the people of the vocational placement.

In this chapter, the focus will be on getting acquainted with the people of a vocational training site.

Advice for First Time "Do It Yourselfers"

The job developer wakes up, puts on jeans and a T-shirt, and heads to the factory to get to know everyone and the job before a student placement. A bit of advice:

Allow Enough Time

Schedule two days, preferably three, to train in the targeted placement. Ask the manager to inform the employees of the general plans. Allow time for this to occur before beginning training. A letter from the job developer briefly explaining the upcoming placement, posted in the break room is a good idea.

Watch the Perky Behaviors

There's nothing more annoying than Mary Poppins doing a repetitive small assembly task. Nervousness coupled with the enthusiasm of the transition teacher may result in a potentially "irritatingly perky" outcome. Job developers may be naturally enthusiastic people; and positive, controlled enthusiasm is fine, but leave Mary Poppins or Dick Van Dyke at home.

Groundwork Can Be Laid Talking About The Honeymooners Re-runs. Really.

Even though the goal is to lay groundwork for the student, don't feel it is absolutely essential to share information about your student or program when talking with employees during breaks. The old saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do..." is a good place to start, as long as you don't try to be a Roman.

What should a job developer talk about at break time? The employees' topics. Maintain a low profile. Relax. Spend an entire break time listening to topics employees raise: re-runs of The Honeymooners, teenagers, what's happening Friday night, and sports. If there's an awkward silence, try bringing up a topic surrounding television, or the weather. Seek to find and talk about common experiences and concerns. Current events can backfire. Avoid politics. If they come up, listen. If employees ask for an opinion, use discretion in phrasing an answer.

Respect everyone's privacy and control to earn the opportunity to be gradually included. Wait until asked questions about the student and training program. It may not occur until day three, or ever, but wait. Experience with over 40 vocational training sites indicates not being asked questions is not a bad sign. A strong placement - where employees assume responsibility and concern for a student - can begin without a single question.

If asked for information concerning the program or student, don't break into a presentation suitable for the next regional conference. Brief answers are best. Silence following brief

answers gives everyone time to consider what has just been said, and may lead to suggestions, ideas, or additional questions.

Do not seek control. Be patient if it is needed. Don't jump ahead of what may seem like a slow moving car. Trust the control employees have of their break and their workplace. Respect their control of their desire to include a transition teacher and eventually a student and coach in their own way.

Find a Contact Person

As part of doing the job prior to the student, complete a mental "social survey". Informally watch for people who are likely to be among the first to include the student, and inform the coach of their names. Also, identify people who seem more skeptical or hesitant; these are not necessarily people to avoid, but instead are people who will approach and interact with a student after time, on their own.

Groundwork for Secondary General Education Classes

Prior to a secondary student with a developmental disability attending a general education class, one class session is set aside to lay the groundwork. The objective of this session is:

- to increase the general education students' understanding of the included student's developmental disability;
- to demonstrate the importance of the general education students' involvement; and
- to determine which students will serve as class or lunch "coaches" (general education students who volunteer to "keep an eye out" for the student with developmental disabilities).

This section of the chapter provides a description of the entire class session which establishes groundwork for including a student with a developmental disability in a secondary general education classroom.

Prior to Class

Establish a day and time - preferably within the first three days of class - for laying groundwork with a class and the general education teacher. It is critical the general education

teacher remain in the classroom during the groundwork presentation. Typically, the level of interest and support a teacher gives to the groundwork presentation will be assumed by the class.

Increasing the General Education Students' Understanding of the Student's Developmental Disability

It is important general education students have accurate information concerning the disability of the student who will be part of their classroom. This information does not need to be specific to the student, but can discuss the disability in general. It may be helpful to mention specific characteristic behaviors the developmentally disabled student has as part of the general discussion of the disability. Ask for questions often. Refer to movies, books, or television shows possibly viewed by the students which relate to the particular disability being discussed, and comment on their accuracies, or inaccuracies.

Demonstrating the Importance of the General Education Students' Involvement

An activity first presented by Dr. Marsha Forest (1987), called "Circles" is described here with a few modifications. Circles is an activity completed with general education students which illustrates the rationale for including a student with a developmental disability in their classroom, and demonstrates the importance of their involvement.

"Circles"

After discussion of the student's developmental disability, the transition teacher begins the "Circles" activity. The transition teacher completes the activity with chalk at the chalkboard, while the students complete it with pencil and paper.

Begin "Circles" following these steps:

1) The students will need a pencil and paper. Tell the students they will be making a series of four circles on their paper, one inside the other, warning them not to make any one circle too large.

2) Ask each student to draw a small circle in the center of their paper, and to label it with their name (Figure #10).

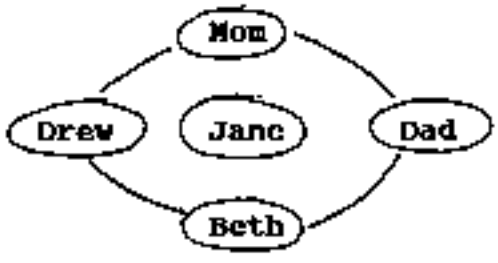
Figure #10: Student Name at the Center of "Circles"

Completing Circle #1

1) Ask students to draw a circle around the center circle with their name, and to place four small circles on this new, larger circle. This is Circle #1.

2) Ask the class to pretend everyone they know is in a burning house. They can take from that house the four people who are the most critical to them, the four people they need the most. Ask students to label each of the four small circles with the four names of these people (Figure #11a).

Figure #11a: Circle #1



3) On a different section of the chalkboard, write "Circle 1". **Ask the class if the people on their first circle are mostly family, or friends.** Ask them what traits these people have in common. If this draws no response ask -

Are these people they can trust?

Are these people who accept them for who they are?

4) Write the students' answers in a list, under "Circle 1" (Figure #11b).

Figure #11b: Common Traits of People in Circle #1

Circle 1
Family
Trust
Acceptance
Always there

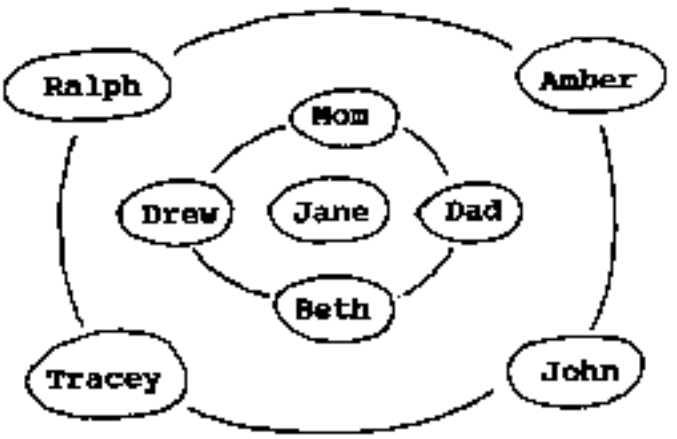
Typically, most Circle #1 people are family. They are people that can be trusted implicitly, and also people to turn to for help.

Completing Circle #2 -

1) Ask the students to draw another circle around Circle #1, with four smaller circles on it like Circle #1. This is Circle #2.

2) This circle is completed like Circle #1, with students writing in the names of people "next closest" to them (Figure #12a).

Figure #12a: Circle #2



3) Ask the same questions as for Circle #1, writing class answers in a list under the heading Circle #2 on the chalkboard (See Figure #12b).

Figure #12b: Common Traits of People in Circle #2

.....

Circle 2

Friends/Family
Trust
Tell anything to...
Long talks,
do many things together

.....

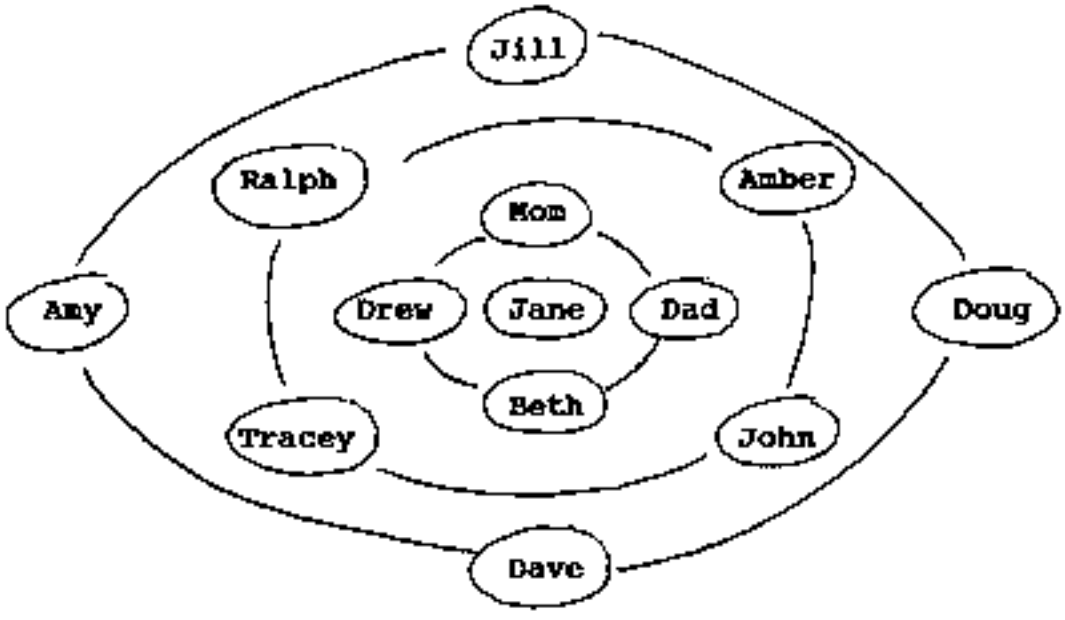
4) Typically, Circle #2 will contain close friends, and possibly some family members. These are people to "open up to" and trust with a personal concern.

Completing Circle #3

1) Draw another circle, using the same directions as for drawing and labeling Circles #1 and #2 (Figure 13a).

Figure #13a: Circle #3

.....



.....

2) Ask the students to write the names of four more people they will save from the burning house. It may become difficult for students to think of names at this point, and they may ask if pets can be listed. Stay with people.

3) Ask the same questions as for Circles #1 and #2, listing class answers on the board (Figure #13b).

Figure #13b: Common Traits of People in Circle #3

.....

Circle 3

Friends
FUN
Football games, larger group

.....

4) Typically, the people in Circle #3 are not close friends, but friends of a larger group. They are fun, people in a student's larger crowd at a party or football game.

Circle 4

1) Ask students to draw another circle like the first three, **warning students that the names to be placed on this circle will be different**168Hn

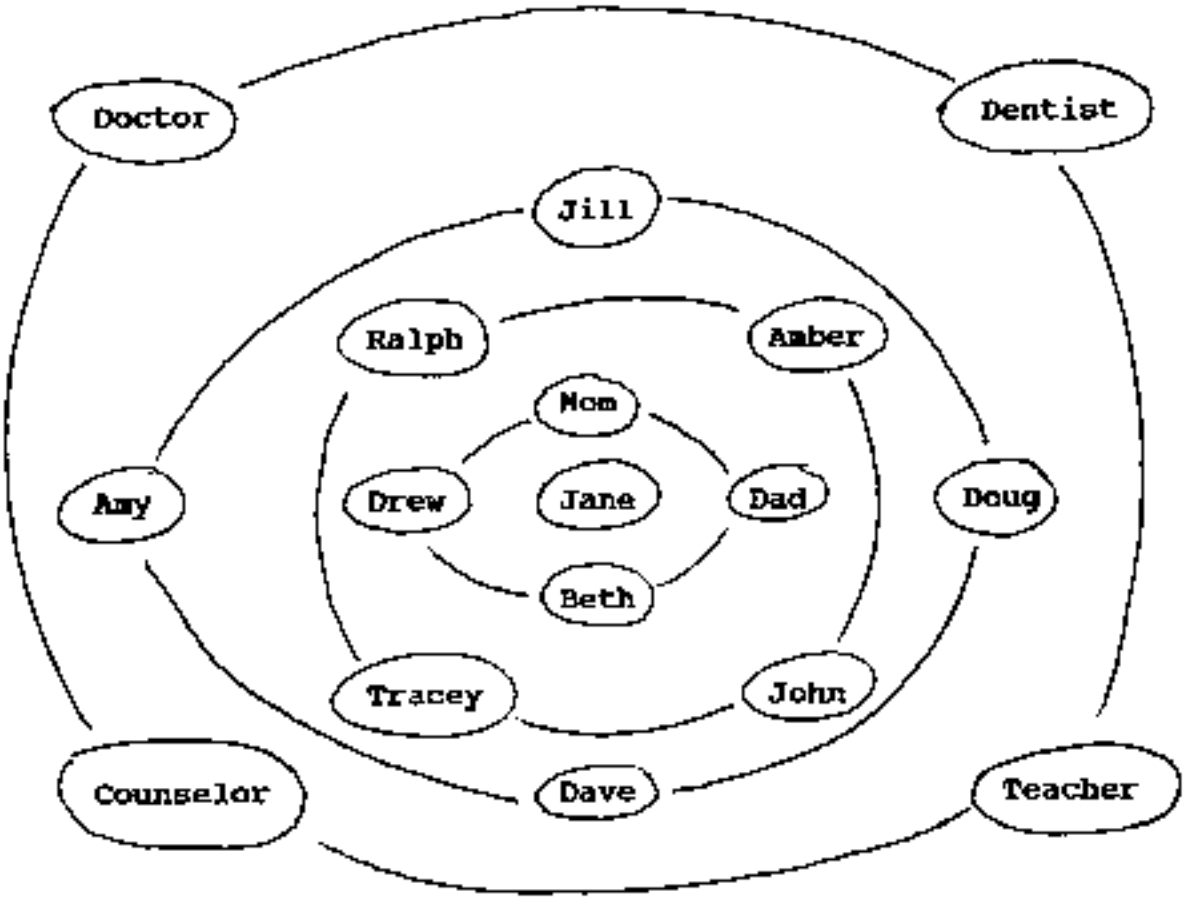
2) Ask students to write the names of three or four people they pay to interact with them - for example: a doctor, dentist, counselor, and a teacher. Ask the students to write proper names if possible. On the chalkboard write the titles as listed in Figure #14 (Figure #14).

The Hypothetical Deal

1) Explain to the students they are about to be presented with a hypothetical deal, and they should consider it seriously.

2) The deal is this: As a (general education) student, each will be given the most compassionate, wonderful teacher all day long. In return, each student will have to no longer have contact with the people of

Figure #14: Circle #4



Circles #2 and #3. (Erase Circles #2 and #3 from the chalkboard, while asking the students to look at the people in those circles on their paper.) They wouldn't see those people again. Would they do it?

3) General education students have always responded with "No" to the hypothetical deal at Jenison High School.

4) Return to the chalkboard (keeping Circles #2 and #3 erased), asking the class to watch as you add some people to Circle #4.

5) Draw additional small circles on Circle #4, adding a speech therapist, social worker, psychologist, and perhaps another doctor or specialist.

6) Explain that to a large extent, the circles on the board **now represent** the life of many people with autism (or the developmental disability being presented).

7) Indicate that by placing this student in their class, the goal is to provide the opportunity to add some friends to his Circles, like the people of Circles #2 and #3. Also mention the student being placed will be working on skills related to the class curriculum.

The Placement Exercise (Optional, and most applicable for general education placements involving students with autism)

Erase the "Circles" activity from the chalkboard. Indicate to the students they are going to participate in a second hypothetical situation, in which they are the special education or transition teacher.

1) Draw a small circle at the top of the chalkboard. Indicate this is a student with autism.

2) As a student with autism, ask the class what two areas of development are difficult for him (communication and social skills).

3) Draw two rectangles below the student - one to the left, the other to the right. Indicate these are classrooms.

4) In one classroom, write the number "5" to represent five students with autism in a self-contained classroom. Indicate these students also have difficulty with communication and social skills.

5) In the other classroom, write the number "28" to indicate the number of students in a general education placement. Indicate that these students do not experience the severe difficulties with social and communication skills associated with autism.

6) Ask the students to assume the responsibility of the transition teacher, indicating in which classroom they feel the student with autism will have the best opportunity for improving communication and social skills.

7) Students at Jenison High School have consistently indicated the general education classroom would provide greater opportunity for the student with autism.

8) Make sure students understand the goal of the placement is not only for communication and social purposes. Briefly mention the importance of the curriculum, and that it will be modified to assist the student.

Recruiting Coaches

There are two kinds of coaches, class coaches, and lunch coaches. Class coaches are general education students who agree to "look out for" a student placed in a general education class. They are not placed in the role of a tutor. Class coaches may sit next to the student with developmental disabilities, check to see if she is on the right page, etc., and agree to act as a friend to the placed student.

Lunch coaches are general education students who volunteer to include a student with autism in their group of friends at lunch. Lunch coaches are recruited from two places. First, lunch coaches may come from a class in which a studnt is placed. If there are no volunteers from a student's general education class (or for students with developmental disabilities not currently in a general education class), lunch coaches are recruited from Psychology classes. Lunch coaches may also serve as coaches for assemblies, football games, and school functions.

At Jenison High School, students volunteering to be lunch coaches have exceeded the number of students with developmental disabilities available. When this occurs, lunch coaches are placed on a schedule of rotating weeks.

Coaches are usually recruited at the close of the class session in which the groundwork is established, following "Circles" and the placement exercise. **A word of advice: do not ask for volunteers to be lunch or class coaches in front of the class. Tell students who are interested to give their name to the general education teacher at the close of class.** Contact the teacher later for the list.

Occasionally, no one will volunteer as a class coach. Experience has indicated that this is not necessarily a "bad sign". An entire class may cooperatively include the student from the start. Do not be concerned until there is reason for concern, when placing a student in a "coachless" classroom.

Send a letter to the parent of each coach explaining the program and their child's willingness to become directly involved. Coaches have the option to ask this letter not be sent to their parents. Most students are glad to have "good news" from school sent home, and it is a great way to inform general education parents of the program.

Typically, coaches tend to "fade" their involvement over time as other students become more involved. The student becomes increasingly competent in following the routine and completing classwork. By the end of a semester, it is genuinely difficult to observe a class and determine who is the actual coach. Often, the student with developmental disabilities receives assistance from whomever is closest when assistance is required. Over time, "coaching" becomes more natural.

The Social Acceptance Survey (Optional)

The Social Acceptance Survey (B. Gray, 1984) provides professionals with a "handle" on changes in student attitudes as the result of placing a student with autism or another developmental disability in a general education class (Appendix H: Social Acceptance Survey). The survey is a random series of statements regarding the degree of social distance an individual perceives as comfortable in relation to a person with a stated disability.

By administering the survey before a student is placed (at the close of the groundwork class session), and at the close of the semester or year, professionals can monitor changes in general education student attitudes toward the student with developmental disabilities.

Summary

In the future, working and learning in environments with people of all abilities may be so commonplace the need for groundwork may be eliminated. At this point in time, laying the groundwork prior to student placements (especially for students with low incidence disabilities) is an integral part of the success equation. Groundwork provides the opportunity to gather and share information, and to demonstrate the importance of the community in the lives of students with developmental disabilities. The groundwork presented in this chapter is just that - groundwork, not training - trusting and supporting the people of each learning environment to include the student in their own way. To date, limiting "training" and providing honest and accurate information has been a most effective means for bringing people together.

CHAPTER 9

Curricular Assistance: Developing an Expanded, Modified, or Simultaneous Curriculum

Introduction

In planning for placement of students with autism in general education, a wide range of factors must be considered. Central to these are the specific learning characteristics of students with autism (Wolthuis, 1990) and other developmental disabilities, and the components of successful programming designed to meet those needs. In moving implementation of a curriculum from a self-contained to a general education classroom, the goal is not to abandon, but to incorporate what is already known to be important when educating students with disabilities.

The immediate goal of any curriculum for students with disabilities is to provide the materials and environment necessary to maximize independence and competence in acquiring new skills. The underlying philosophy is that if a student can be enabled to work independently, or utilize needed supports within a general education class, he/she has an excellent chance to develop relationships based on his/her ability to contribute, rather than on empathy for his/her disability.

Prior to focusing on materials and techniques used to modify the general curriculum, it is important to remember programming for students with disabilities in general education should include the following:

1) Courses selected by the Collective Expert. Develop a system for course selection which involves the Collective Expert from start to finish.

2) Attention to needed modifications in the learning environment, if any.

3) Groundwork to establish natural supports.

4) Continual evaluation, and opportunities for self-evaluation of student progress.

Once the vocational and general education classes have been established, and the groundwork set, the next step is to ensure the student will be learning skills related to both short and long range goals. These skills may be taught through one of three modified curriculums. They include:

1. **The Expanded General Education Curriculum**

An expanded general education curriculum is exactly what it implies: the general education curriculum, expanded. With this type of curriculum, the student is capable of completing course objectives, and completes and passes assignments and tests without modification. To ensure functional application and generalization, skills often difficult for students with autism, the curriculum is expanded. The curriculum is expanded through: additional activities (often completed in support sessions); community based experiences; related vocational training; and ongoing evaluation.

2. **The Modified Curriculum**

A modified curriculum is based on the objectives and assignments given a general education class, with ongoing revisions in materials to enable a student to work more independently. Students working from a modified curriculum may be accountable for some, but not all, course objectives.

3. **The Simultaneous Curriculum**

A simultaneous curriculum is a curriculum written to address functional student skills, related to the content area indicated by a course title. The student works on functional skills directly related to his/her work or community experiences, within a general education class also involved in study within the same content area.

Guidelines for Developing Modified Curriculums

The following guidelines are used largely as standards to ensure a meaningful curriculum for students with disabilities placed in general education, regardless of the extent to which the curriculum is modified to meet individual needs. All guidelines may not apply to all placements, or to all three of the modified curriculums. Still, these guidelines should be considered to ensure a sound curriculum for each general education placement.

Determine the Functional Correlate

Most, if not all, high school courses are too difficult for students with autism. Many high school courses have a functional correlate; a set of basic life skills associated with the more advanced concepts presented in the curriculum. These combined basic skills (entered as objectives into the Objective

Bank and listed on an Evaluation of Student Performance form prior to a student's placement in a general education course) comprise the functional correlate of the high school course. Listed in Figure #15 are sample titles of high school courses and their possible functional correlates.

Figure #15: Possible Functional Correlates for Selected High School Courses

High School Course	Possible Functional Correlate
Government	Skills required to vote; make choices & comparisons; accept responsibility for self and others; etc...
Clothing and Textiles	Skills required to select and purchase a pattern and fabric, and to construct a garment start to finish.
Merchandising	Skills required to assist in store operations; skills for working with customers and co-workers, etc.

For example, the course, Clothing and Textiles, requires students to learn fabric characteristics, as well as other concepts too difficult for many students with disabilities. The functional correlate of Clothing and Textiles is the combined basic skills, or "hands on" objectives, required to actually construct a garment, start to finish.

The functional correlate is often referred to while modifying curriculum. For example:

1) Course selection

2) Developing modified materials

3) Evaluation and self-evaluation

The functional correlate is also used in bridging, the next guideline.

Bridging

Bridging refers to the selection of general education courses related to a student's community based vocational, recreational, or life experiences when planning their educational program. Placement is made in general education courses that reinforce a student's current vocational training or life experiences. Bridging is an important part of all three modified curriculums, encouraging generalization of skills from one environment to another.

Some examples help illustrate this concept. A student with autism placed in a regular education course, Retailing, is also placed in a community based vocational training placement at a local hardware store. Another student having difficulty with physical flexibility and picking up on naturally occurring cues, is placed in an Aerobics class. A student needing to develop free time interests for home is enrolled in a Clothing and Textiles class to learn to sew.

Modify, Don't Abbreviate

The tendency is to rely too heavily on the general education materials and program when modifying the curriculum. To accommodate for the student's disability and slower pace, the student may be instructed to complete only portions of the assignment given to the rest of the class. When this occurs, the result is an abbreviated rather than a modified version of the original curriculum. If the general education curriculum is too difficult, an abbreviated version will be just as difficult with less time for practice.

One danger of isolated abbreviated assignments is the potential impact on the students, especially students with autism. Many students with autism are compelled to complete assignments. Leaving an assignment after completing only the requested portion of it may be extremely difficult. They may feel frustrated, as though they have failed in completing an assignment, rather than feeling success in completing a portion of it.

For example, a student with autism may complete worksheets more slowly than his classmates, and requires continual assistance to complete each assignment. In response to the student's frustration, the student may be assigned a portion of the original worksheet. While this may be appropriate for occasional assignments, using this approach on a regular basis may result in an abbreviated curriculum that holds little value for the student with a developmental disability. By referring to the objectives of the functional correlate, it can be quickly determined if abbreviating a given assignment is appropriate.

Create Twin Activities

Twin activities are like their human counterparts: they look alike, but are often very different. The goal is to create educational materials for the student with disabilities that teach the objectives of the functional correlate, while mirroring class activity.

For example, if the general education students are to complete a written assignment at their desks, so should the student with a developmental disability. While he/she may be completing a packet with large print addressing concepts of the functional correlate, the rest of the class may be answering the questions at the end of the chapter in the textbook. The goal is to create simultaneous curriculums that result in twin activity: all are seated, with pen and paper, working independently.

Another example occurs daily in Retailing. The general education students work in the school store, checking out customers at the cash registers, checking in merchandise, taking inventory, and placing orders. During this time in the school store, a student with autism also assists with store operations: cleaning counters, vacuuming, loading the pop machine, and stocking and facing shelves. Again, all are working together for the smooth operation of the school store, while the activity of the student with autism is not so markedly different that it makes him "stand out".

Curriculum Intersections

Occasionally, the general education assignment involves group work, with potential for the student to socially interact. These activities may relate more to the student's social objectives than to skill objectives found in his functional correlate. These social opportunities center around academic activities of the general curriculum and are referred to as curriculum intersections.

Curriculum intersections may require special attention to enable a student with autism or other developmental disability to fully participate. Modified materials may not be necessary for the student to participate in curriculum intersections. Often, small adjustments can be made in the activity as it proceeds. For example, in the course, Individualized Writing, the class periodically breaks into small groups to critique each other's writing. Each student hands out copies of his/her work, and reads his/her work to the group. When the group critiques the work of the student with autism, their suggestions are based on his content, and his level of writing skills. In one instance, when the student had his turn to critique the work of others, he exclaimed, "Very good!" each time. Students in that group knew they could count on at least one rave review.

Other curriculum intersections require modified materials. These materials may differ from those designed to teach objectives from the functional correlate in two ways: 1) they may be created directly from the original assignment, not from the functional correlate, and/or 2) they may contain several concept and/or social cues, like a silent "teaching assistant" guiding the student through the assignment.

One example occurs periodically in Retailing. Students write scripts, then read them during role plays in front of the class. The use of specific selling techniques is demonstrated in this way. Since the student with autism cannot understand the details of the varied selling techniques, his modified assignment contains many concept and social cues to guide him in writing a script and participating in this role play activity with classmates.

The goal of any curriculum intersection is to maximize the opportunity for social interaction, so the student with autism can work competently alongside his peers without intense assistance from a coach. The student in Individualized Writing may not dramatically improve his writing skills as a result of the peer critique. In Retailing, the student will never know the name of the exact sales approach he used in his script. In a curriculum intersection, the general education course content is not important. What is important is for the included student to participate in the social aspects of the group activity competently.

Evaluate and Review

Students with autism are advised as to how they will be evaluated. Modified explanations and activities help ensure they understand to the best extent possible why evaluation is necessary and what methods will be used. Evaluation may include any of the following depending on the course and individual student: 1) videotaping; 2) self-evaluation by the student (from videotape or data); 3) gathering of objective data from videotape by the transition teacher or special education staff; 4) performance on modified assignments and tests; and/or 5) discussions with the student and general education teacher (Chapters 5, 10, & 11).

Videotaping is one of the most valuable evaluation tools. Students are periodically videotaped in their general education class. The camera is usually mounted on a tripod, and is left running for the duration of the class. The videotape is reviewed and evaluated by the transition teacher. (Portions of the videotape are transferred to traveling tapes that are sent home. In this way, a student with limited communication skills is assisted in sharing events from school with family members at home.)

Support in General Education Courses

Support varies in response to the abilities of the student and the general education placements involved. If the student can function independently and progress in skill development with a modified curriculum and class coaches providing needed support, additional staff are not needed. Modifying the environment in this way to enable the student to function and learn competently among his peers is the most preferred option.

Individual students, and certain courses, may require the placement of support staff in the general education classroom to ensure success. Caution must be taken, as excessive support, to the student and/or the general education teacher, may potentially be as damaging as inadequate support services. It is the responsibility of the transition teacher to determine and maintain the appropriate support required for each general education placement.

Support is dependent on the abilities of individual students, the curriculum, and the structure of each general education class. Ranging from laying groundwork, to providing a completely modified curriculum, to placing additional staff in the classroom, support is continually monitored to keep in line with student needs. In this way, students are enabled by an environment and curriculum modified to ensure their successful participation in general education (Chapter 10).

Ideas for Modified Curriculums

In addition to guidelines, experience is the best teacher when learning to modify curriculum at the secondary level. This section lists ideas discovered through that experience - "tricks of the trade" which have been very useful in modifying the general education curriculum.

Sequenced Curriculum Packets

Sequenced curriculum packets (S.C.Ps) are written by special education staff. They teach identified concepts and skills (objectives) as part of a student's simultaneous curriculum. (Occasionally, they may be used to supplement activities for students working from modified or expanded curriculums). Every packet contains five sections, beginning with Section A. Cues for correct answers fade as a student works from the first (Section A) to the final section (Section D). In this way, the student has to provide more of the correct answer on his own with each progressing section.

Sequenced curriculum packets have been found to be very effective for teaching some students new information. In addition, students have independently applied information from the packets to real life situations. S.C.P.s may be so effective they may "backfire", as the following example illustrates:

Todd, a secondary student with autism, was placed in a beginning Retailing course. The course covered merchandising and retailing concepts too advanced for Todd to comprehend. Still, it was felt that Todd could successfully participate in the course with a simultaneous curriculum. He learned to assist in the operations of the school store, The Cat's Corner. When the other students completed independent seatwork, Todd completed S.C.P.s which taught him the rules and regulations for working in the school store.

Todd had just begun work on S.C.P.s which discussed tardiness when a problem developed. Todd's mother informed the transition teacher that suddenly Todd was refusing to board his bus for school in the morning if it was a few minutes late - his reason being he would be late for his work first hour in The Cats Corner. He was convinced he had to be on time for work **no matter what.**

In response to Todd's rigid interpretation of the concept of tardiness, the staff quickly revised the S.C.P.s to include exceptions to the rules regarding being late for work. The revised packets were immediately successful in helping the student understand that sometimes events happen that are outside of our control, and in those cases it is okay to be late.

Compared with the success of other instructional techniques, Todd learned **and applied** concepts presented in S.C.P.s faster and more effectively. Their use was expanded to other areas of Todd's curriculum.

Todd has continued his work in merchandising classes, and currently is learning many of the terms and concepts once considered too difficult, through the use of S.C.P.s (Appendix I: How to Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets and Social Assistance Packets).

Break Pages

Break pages are pages inserted into a student's assignment to provide a "built in" break. To be effective, break pages have to be developed with the specific interests of an individual student in mind.

Break pages were initiated by Jeff, a secondary student with autism. Jeff was scheduled to travel with his Retailing

class to a regional exam, where he would take an exam (2 hours) with his classmates. The special education staff wrote an exam for Jeff to take at the regional conference based on the concepts he was learning through his S.C.P.s in Retailing.

There was concern Jeff would have difficulty attending to the exam for two straight hours. Jeff's transition teacher scheduled a support session with Jeff to give Jeff practice taking a long exam similar to the one he would take at the conference.

After completing five pages of the exam in the support session, Jeff began to lose interest. He took some baseball cards from his pocket and began looking at them. The transition teacher felt it would be inappropriate if Jeff were to look at his baseball cards during the real exam. On the other hand, it was inappropriate to expect Jeff to attend to a two hour exam. The solution?

The teacher borrowed the student's baseball cards, and copied them four to a page. On the top of each page, she wrote, "Take a break, then back to work!" These "break pages" were inserted (about one every six pages) throughout Jeff's formal exam.

At the conference, Jeff came across the first break page and was quite surprised. He looked for a few minutes, then continued work on the exam. Every time Jeff finished looking at a break page, he would glance ahead to see when the next break was coming. The break pages were effective in keeping Jeff on task, and he completed his exam with the rest of his class.

Be careful with break pages. Break pages may be developed around one or several student interests. Students may have ideas for activities to insert as break pages into their classwork, but avoid using pages which are so interesting a student never returns to the assignment. Monitor a student's need for break pages. Keep challenging a student to work and attend a little longer by gradually decreasing the frequency of break pages in a student's classwork.

Social Clues

Not social cues, social clues. Writing curriculum materials for a student provides a great opportunity for teaching social skills without staff prompting. Simply provide a student with social clues in the assignments written for her. For example, a student in Clothing and Textiles worked from modified sewing instructions re-written for her from the pattern directions. When assistance from an adult was critical, the modified sewing directions told the student to raise her hand, wait for the teacher, and in some cases instructed her in what to ask.

The possibilities for using social clues are unlimited. Occasionally try fading or dropping social clues from some assignments to check if a student still needs them.

Summary

The key to successful placements for students with developmental disabilities in general education courses is to incorporate what is known about educating students with special needs. Modifying the curriculum for a student with special needs provides the opportunity for that student to learn meaningful skills and concepts in a classroom with general education students. A professional may use any one (or combination) of three different modified curriculums (expanded, modified, or simultaneous) to educate a student with autism or other developmental disabilities in selected general education courses. These courses may be used as part of a broad educational program incorporating a variety of learning environments.

CHAPTER 10

Assistance Through Accurate Support

Introduction

Students with autism and other developmental disabilities often require initial or ongoing support to be successful in a vocational or general education placement. The demands of a general education curriculum often exceed the abilities of these students. In a vocational setting, a student's difficulty with communication and social skills, or the skills required for the job, may indicate the need for support. Regardless of the setting, students with autism and developmental disabilities must have available the support they need to achieve individual goals.

Support is often misunderstood, and therefore can be potentially misused by parents and professionals. Many equate the concept of "support" with "staff". Experience with students with autism at Jenison High School indicates excessive support may interfere with problem solving and the generalization of skills. While staff are a valuable resource, and absolutely essential in some situations, they are not the only form of support available to students. Through creative use of the wide variety of supports available, and ongoing evaluation of the most effective support for an individual student and placement, support can become an effective educational tool.

For the purposes of transitioning students to adult life in the community, The Curriculum System requires support services to be accurate.

> **Accurate Support: Any activity completed on behalf of a student, which is based on ongoing objective evaluation of the type and intensity of support required by a student, to contribute to the achievement of stated educational goals.**

Providing accurate support for students requires attention to a student's needs and abilities, and the type of placement. In this chapter, guidelines for determining and implementing accurate support for student placements in general education courses and community vocational placements will be discussed. As guidelines, they need to be creatively considered along with student information before initiating support for a placement.

Use The Evaluation System to Continually Evaluate/Update Support

The Evaluation System provides extensive detail concerning a student's performance, which directly impacts the level of support required. Valuable information regarding support may be gathered through review of a student's most recent Evaluation of Student Performance forms for a given placement, including:

- skills a student can perform without assistance;
- skills requiring the most intensive coaching;
- progress toward achievement of specific skills;
- skills which are not improving; and
- student, coach, and employer feedback.

Whenever Summary of Student Performance forms are completed, a review of needed assistance and support for a placement should be informally reviewed and revised as well. The evaluation forms hold a wealth of information which should signal the fading or more intensive involvement of a coach. A combination of fading during some times, and increasing involvement during others may also be indicated. Accurate timing is critical to accurate support. Ensure that support is "up to date" for each student, and that it is keeping pace with student achievements.

Other signals to change a student's level of support may be more direct, especially as managers and general education teachers feel their input is valued. An example comes from a vocational placement in Jenison. In response to the independence a student had achieved in his business vs. what seemed to be a slow fading process, the manager commented, "You don't need to have your coach here anymore...we'll take it from here."

In this case, the coach was not faded immediately. The transition teacher shared recent data with the manager. Before a student is considered for a "coachless" placement, a minimum of two Summaries of Student Performance must indicate a total independence rating of 90%. The transition teacher shared this information, as well as indicating a critical skill had to be achieved by the student before staff could fade completely: asking for assistance. Aware of this final challenge, the business worked to encourage the student to ask for needed assistance. Within two weeks the coach was completely faded.

Accurate Support for Students in General Education

Determining accurate support for students with disabilities in general education courses depends on the structure of the course, ability of the student, stated goals for the placement, and the general education teacher involved. All must be considered in providing accurate support to general education placements.

Support should be provided to both the general education teacher and to the student. Support for students follows guidelines organized into a Support Hierarchy for Students in General Education. Supporting the general education teacher and the student are discussed in detail in this section.

Contacts with General Education Teachers

Secondary general education teachers are very busy people who know what they are doing, and why. It is important that support services reflect that understanding. Contacts with general education teachers should be made at their convenience, usually during prep hours, on a predictable basis. Most face to face contacts should last less than ten minutes. Communication is often accomplished with notes back and forth between scheduled contacts.

One mistake made in providing support to general education teachers is to say, "Just stopping by to ask how John is doing...". The transition teacher has a responsibility to already know to some extent how John is doing, and should be walking through the door with more solutions than questions.

The transition teacher often provides support to a student and her general education class without ever attending class with the student. For information concerning a student's progress, special education staff rely on videotapes of class sessions, Evaluation of Student Performance forms completed from live and videotaped observations, and student performance on class work.

The goal is for the transition teacher to walk through the door saying, "These materials should help John learn that he needs to stay in the school store when it gets crowded. Any activities next week I should be aware of?" If the transition teacher has questions, they should be specific and to the point.

Support Hierarchy for Students in General Education

The following levels of support are intended for use as guidelines to follow when developing individualized support services for each student placement.

Level One Support

Level One Support is for:

- students whose abilities are too limited for independent completion of modified course work; and/or
- students placed in classes centered around hands-on participation requiring continual on-the-spot modification of the curriculum.

Support involves:

- contact with the general education teacher once every two weeks;
- a functional correlate comprised of individual objectives, placed on an Evaluation of Student Progress form for periodic monitoring;
- placement of a special education assistant in the general education classroom to assist the student; and/or
- a one half to one hour support session or class each week (described later in this chapter).

An example:

Kristin is a severely mentally impaired student with autism in need of a placement in general education to improve her flexibility and stamina. Equally as important, Kristin needs to respond to exaggerated social cues (Chapter 11) to improve her performance in her vocational training placement. In observing Aerobics, the transition teacher realizes placing Kristin without support staff will involve intense assistance from a student coach. This will affect the student coach's participation in the course. Therefore, the student is placed with special education support staff to modify, on the spot, the exercises and activities of the class.

The transition teacher observes live, or via videotape, once every two weeks. Progress on individual goals and objectives is recorded by completing Kristin's Evaluation of

Student Performance form for Aerobics during observations. This information is summarized on Summary of Student Progress forms and shared with The Collective Expert. Because Kristin cannot read, occasionally the transition teacher reviews videotapes of Kristin's work in Aerobics and the vocational training site with Kristin. Needed support is evaluated and updated.

Level Two Support

Level Two Support is for:

- students whose abilities require functional modification of the curriculum to independently (or with minimal peer coaching) participate in a course; and/or
- students placed in classes that are not individualized to the extent that would easily include a student with developmental disabilities.

Support involves:

- weekly contact between the general education and transition teacher;
- a one half to one hour support session or support class each week;
- a functional correlate comprised of individual objectives, placed on a Evaluation of Student Performance form for periodic monitoring (Chapters 4 & 5); and
- providing the student with a simultaneous curriculum (Chapter 9).

An example:

John is a student with autism placed in a Merchandising course that operates the school store. His abilities, and the structure of the class, require continual modification of the curriculum. The general education teacher determines which jobs associated with the operation of the school store can be performed by the student. Classmates coach him in the completion of those jobs. The seat work associated with the curriculum for the course is a simultaneous curriculum based largely on sequenced curriculum packets. The student independently completes these packets at the appropriate time.

The transition teacher or a special education assistant observe (live or via videotape) and record information on an Evaluation of Student Performance form. Once every four

observations, this information is summarized on a Summary of Student Performance form. Performance on assignments from John's simultaneous curriculum is continually reviewed. All information is shared with John and his Collective Expert. Needed support, and possible opportunities to complete general education assignments, are continually evaluated.

Level Three Support

Level Three Support is for:

- students whose abilities are close to general education students in the general class; and/or
- students who may occasionally need modified or expanded assignments; and/or
- students placed in a class with a highly individualized format which does not require significant modification of the curriculum for a student with developmental disabilities to be successful.

Support involves:

- frequent contact with the general education teacher, via notes or in person;
- support addressing a student's communication and social skills, or other behaviors or areas of concern;
- an expanded curriculum to assist the student in making functional application of concepts and skills taught in class; and/or
- a one half to one hour support session or support class each week.

An example:

Amy is placed in the secondary course, Individualized Writing. Amy has second grade reading and writing skills. A majority of class time is devoted to writing in journals or on assignments. Amy requires little modification of the curriculum. When students evaluate one another's work in small groups, Amy is included. The general education students comment on Amy's work by making suggestions appropriate for her ability.

Amy is easily supported by the individualized class format and classmates. The transition teacher monitors Amy's progress by periodically completing an Evaluation of Student Performance

form developed for this placement. Amy is videotaped about once each month in class for Social Reading (Chapter 11) activities to improve Amy's social skills in class. The transition and general education teacher communicate frequently via notes back and forth, and schedule meetings if needed. The Collective Expert receives Summary of Student Performance reports periodically.

Accurate Support for Students in Vocational Training

Contacts with Managers

Contacts with managers of vocational training placements should be brief, and to the point. Always have an agenda in mind, and keep focused on the student and the business. Information from evaluation forms often determine the agendas with meetings with managers.

If the reason for a meeting is to discuss a particular problem or issue, have a few tentative solutions in mind. First and foremost, ask for the ideas of the manager and/or employees once the concern is clearly shared. Often, the transition teacher has an excellent understanding of a student and why a behavior is occurring, and a manager has options that are logical, and meet the needs of the business and student. Combine the expertise.

Once an idea is implemented, and the success or failure of the idea is realized, send the manager a follow-up note. Thank him/her for their time on behalf of the student, review the solution that was decided upon, and share the outcome. Always follow-through and keep everyone currently informed.

Frequency of contact with managers is highly individual - both in terms of the student, and the business. Meeting too frequently may be a real disservice to a student, as will meeting too infrequently. Strike a balance, and continually evaluate changes in the need for contacts with each manager. **Individualize for a business as well as for a student.**

Support Hierarchy for Students in Vocational Training

The following levels are listed as guidelines to be individualized in regards to each student and placement.

Level One Support: Initial and Possibly Ongoing Support

Level One Support is for:

- students working in a placement for the first time; and/or
- students with an overall total independence rating on evaluation summaries of 80% or less (Summary of Student Performance), or an individually determined criteria appropriate to the specific needs of a student and business; and/or
- students training in an unpaid vocational training placement.

Support involves:

- continual presence of a skill coach on site;
- monitoring of performance on evaluation sheets each day of vocational training, with summaries of performance every four days of training, or as individually determined;
- visits by the transition teacher to the site twice each month, or as individually determined;
- contacts between the transition teacher and coach twice each month (on weeks opposite site visits by the transition teacher);
- efforts to fade the involvement of the coach as measured by the type and intensity of required prompting (Evaluation of Student Performance forms provide this information);
- efforts to encourage student independence and interdependence within a vocational placement by increasing efforts to 1) identify employees a student may ask for assistance, and 2) train the student to recognize needed assistance and who to go to for help;
- efforts to assist employees in communicating, understanding, and working with a student; and
- student participation in a support session or support class each week.

Level Two Support: Increasing Student Interdependence

Level Two Support is for:

- students who have learned the routines and skills associated with a job, but who still periodically require assistance from a coach, and
- students who have a total independence rating of 70% or higher on a minimum of two consecutive evaluation summaries, or a criteria determined to be appropriate to the specific needs of a student and business.

Support involves:

- development of a fading schedule;
- informing everyone, especially te student (in a way he/she understands) that fading is to occur;
- consideration/discussion of feelings surrounding fading;
- coach absence from the site for increasing amounts of time;
- clearly identifying employees able to provide assistance, or take responsibility for, a student during a coach's absence;
- completion of an Evaluation of Student Performance form during the time the coach is present, with a Summary of Student Performance form completed every four days of training (or as individually determined);
- visits by the transition teacher to the site (same frequency as Level One); and
- meetings twice each month (or as determined) between the coach and the transition teacher.
- student participation in a support session or support class each week.

Fading Coach Involvement

Fading refers to the gradual removal of a coach from a placement. It is used with students who have demonstrated they no longer need a coach present, and/or in situations where support for a student has been successfully transferred to

people on site. For this reason, Level Two Support pays close attention to evaluation forms. The transition teacher looks for decreasing (type and intensity) levels of prompting required by a student to be successful.

By recording information regarding prompting on Evaluation of Student Performance forms, coaches are continually aware of their own involvement with a student. For example, by recording data on a student's required prompts for each skill in a placement, the skill coach is simultaneously recording her own behavior - the number and type of prompts she provides. Skill coaches also indicate when assistance is provided by an employee, supporting emerging relationships of employees with the student.

In this way. fading begins from the first day of training, emerging as a more formalized process in Level Two. Level Two support involves gradually removing the skill coach from the vocational site for increasing periods of time. The fading process may hold some important implications which deserve consideration.

How Fading May Feel

Fading involves an emotional component - for managers and employees, coaches, teachers, parents, and students.

While aware of the eventual fading process from the start, managers and employees may lack confidence in fading as it presents itself as a reality. Fellow employees may begin to question the adequacy of their skills in working with the student. Managers may have had negative experiences with other programs fading too quickly, or literally disappearing once fading was announced. For them, fading may be interpreted not as a change in support services, but a permanent termination of contact with support staff.

Skill coaches have many hours of effort invested in a placement, and have grown closer to the student and the employees of the vocational training site. It's important to recognize the difficulty a skill coaches may have in fading their involvement - from their perspective. Also, skill coaches are well aware of even the smallest dangers and difficulties a student may encounter. Their feelings may rally in conflict - one, a desire to be protective, the other, a desire to see the student succeed "on their own".

Parents may feel a variety of things. Safety is a primary concern of everyone involved, but intensified for parents. The anticipation of seeing their child succeed on their own may be tempered by other previous efforts, programs, and promises of the past that seemed great, and failed. On the other hand, some

parents may be so enthusiastic the professional feels like "the bearer of bad news" in contrast, listing the concerns and cautions associated with fading.

Students may feel threatened - fading represents a change, even if it is gradual. Often in the fading process students have to master skills which, up to this point in time, have been the most difficult to achieve. For example, while a student may have mastered the rote skills involved with a job, the one skill needed for successful fading may be reporting to the manager when a job is completed for the next set of directions.

Many factors and issues surrounding fading may be anticipated and planned for ahead of time. If fading has been a goal from the beginning, and everyone has been involved in the placement from the start, the emotional barriers to fading should be minimal. Still, they deserve recognition and attention regardless of their intensity.

A prerequisite for successful fading is careful and comprehensive planning. What follows is a list of ideas that have proven effective.

Remember, anyone can initiate fading.

Accurate, objective information opens the door to cooperatively fading the involvement of a coach. By periodically sharing evaluation and summary forms with a manager, he/she will see the student gaining increasing independence. This project has had managers review the data and ask, "So why are you here?" The same holds true for parents and students. Fading does NOT have to be initiated by the transition teacher. If people have been genuinely involved in the training process, they will feel comfortable offering suggestions.

Collectively consider fading before deciding to fade.

Consideration of fading by a transition teacher should involve consultation with the Collective Expert and the manager. Discuss fading and the reasons behind it with several key people.

Write and distribute a fading schedule.

When a decision to fade is reached, type a tentative schedule for fading. Share copies with The Collective Expert for review (and possible revisions) prior to initiating fading. Take an individualized approach considering the student, and the business when developing a fading schedule.

For example, fading will require the coach to leave the site for increasing amounts of time each day of training. However, determining which time slots the coach will leave the site on each day is a process which considers factors affecting the student and business. Increases in the amount of time a coach is off site do not have to be implemented in sequential order. Perhaps beginning with one half hour of fading from the beginning of the placement, then the next day of training adding a half hour from the middle of the placement, will be the most effective.

A fading schedule lists more than just the dates and beginning and ending times that the coach will not be present. Fading schedules also list objectives that are still not completed, as well as concerns or problems which may occur during fading. The tentative schedule should be distributed to the Collective Expert at least one week prior to the start of fading.

Clearly identify people who will assist the student in the coach's absence.

Make sure several people at a vocational training placement are ware of the fading process. Identify a few (always more than one!) who are willing to "keep an eye out" for the student as he trains. Make sure the employees have a phone number they can call to immediately contact someone should a problem arise.

Prove that no one's packing.

Share the program's fading and "coachless" support services with an employer in person, and in writing. Make sure a business understands they may halt or alter the fading process at any time with a phone call. Describe what support services are provided when a student is working "coachless" - after fading is completed. Make it clear no one is leaving town, or abandoning responsibility for ensuring quality programming.

Level Three Support: "Coachless"

Level Three Support is for:

- students who have learned the routines and skills associated with a job, and who have an established support system within the placement, and/or
- students who have a total independence rating of 90% or higher on a minimum of two Summary of Student Performance reports.

Support involves:

- ongoing face to face contact with the employer occurring on a schedule determined by the employer and the school system.

- periodic monitoring of skills using the student's Evaluation of Student Performance form (for example, once every two weeks).

- completion of a Summary of Student Performance form everyfour completed evaluations (or about once every two months).

The Support Classroom, Support Sessions, and Great Habits Class

Support is a powerful educational tool which, if misused, can undermine student achievement. As indicated earlier, some of the largest misconceptions surrounding the education of students with disabilities in a variety of learning environments involve the use of support: specifically, equating "staff-with-student" with "appropriate-support".

In terms of identified student goals, staff-with-student is the easiest, but may not be the most accurate method of support. Evaluation may indicate the need for support using a variety of other techniques, materials, and activities. Support services should reflect objective ongoing evaluation and provide a variety of options: staff, materials, instructional techniques, and activities. This section focuses on several ways in which students with autism and developmental disabilities may be supported, in addition to, or in some cases instead of, the use of staff-with-student.

The Support Classroom

At Jenison High School, all students with autism have as their "home base" a "support classroom". This classroom is staffed by a special education teacher and instructional assistants who double as coaches (in vocational settings, and occasionally in general education courses) outside the classroom. This classroom provides ongoing support for the development of academic and/or functional skills required for success in general education placements, vocational placements, at home, and in the community. The support classroom provides the center for coordination of efforts throughout the program.

Additional support is provided by a transition teacher and assistant (who coordinate all vocational and general education placements). The transition teacher is responsible for support

sessions and a weekly support class. For each general education placement, students participate in individual support sessions with this teacher. Students in vocational placements are enrolled in a support class which meets once each week, Great Habits Class. Support sessions and Great Habits Class are detailed in the following sections of this chapter.

Support Sessions

In general, support sessions provide an opportunity for the student to improve the quality of his/her experience and performance in non-sheltered learning environments. Support sessions are held on a regular basis for students enrolled in general education courses (about one half hour each week per general education placement), and "as needed" for vocational placements. A wide range of materials, techniques, and activities are used to maintain or improve a student's performance.

Some Support Session activities ensure implementation of the Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming (Chapter 3). Listed below and on the next page, the numbers on the left refer to the specific standards (outline reference #s), with the corresponding activity listed on the right.

III.A. Preparation for participation in an upcoming IEPC, with an individualized explanation of the anticipated issues and choices.

III.B. Individualized explanation of available choices throughout the year.

III.C. Building skills to express desired choices; input into selection of general education courses (IV.A.); and vocational training (IV.B.).

These activities often involve communicating with a student at the computer. The transition teacher types in her questions or comments, and the student dictates or types in his responses.

Students can take a printed copy of the conversation with them. The transition teacher also keeps a copy in the Student Notebook (Chapter 7).

VI.A.- VI.E. Explanation of evaluation procedures, opportunities for self-evaluation, and/or interpretation of information from evaluation forms, summaries and completed assignments

VII.B. Opportunity for a student to discover/express likes/dislikes regarding a general education placement

VII.A. Review of curriculum, for example: a student may need assistance in studying for a test, or may try out new modified curriculum materials before using them independently in class.

X.A.-X.E. Review of videotaped sequences of the general education class and Social Reading activities (Chapter 11).

In addition to activities related to the Standards for Student Participation, Support Session activities are influenced by a student's current performance in his general education or vocational placement. Support Sessions may also include related activities from Great Habits Class, discussed in the following section.

Great Habits Class

Great Habits Class was developed for students with developmental disabilities placed in vocational training experiences in the community. The purpose: to work on common goals and habits associated with success as a group and as individuals, and to provide regular opportunity for students to review their own progress in vocational settings.

Great Habits Class meets for one hour each week, and is taught by the transition teacher. Like support sessions, many of the activities have their "roots" in the Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming, and the Modified Habits (Chapter 1). What follows is a description of some of the concepts and activities covered in this class.

Job Skills and Great Habits

Great Habits Class focuses on the traditional, and not so traditional, skills associated with this area. Traditional instruction focuses on job interviews, job applications, paychecks, etc.. Instruction in non-traditional skills is based in part on two books by Harvey Mackay, Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt (New York, 1990) and Swim With the Sharks (New York, 1988). Concepts related to work habits and success

activities created for students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Understanding and Using The Curriculum System

The Curriculum System was written specifically for students with autism, and has been effective for students with other developmental disabilities as well. It was also written for parents and professionals who work on their behalf. It is important students understand it's components and how it works to the greatest extent possible. This includes activities developed to assist students in understanding and using the Standards for Student Participation in Transition Programming, The Objective Bank, The Evaluation System and other components of The Curriculum System.

Goals

An important part of the Great Habits curriculum is learning to set reasonable but challenging goals. At the start of each Great Habits class, students set goals for their work in their vocational placement the following week (on the first page of their Evaluation of Student Performance form). These goals are recorded by staff on a record sheet for each student to keep track of the goals set by each student.

Students often set unrealistic goals at first. Typically, experience with unrealistic goals leads students to develop more accurate, realistic, and challenging goals over time. For example, Harrison, a secondary student with Down's Syndrome, sets a goal for completing 2,000 bracket assemblies in ten minutes. Instead of staff advising Harrison of a more realistic number to use for a goal (20), he takes the goal to work the next day of training. Harrison compares his goal to his actual performance, all of which he records on his Evaluation of Student Performance form. In the next Great Habits Class, Harrison sets a goal of 100 brackets. Over time, his goals become more realistic as he learns on his own to refer to his past performance before setting new goals.

To be able to set goals, students have to understand what goals are. Part of that understanding comes through the ongoing experience described above. Also, prior to setting their own goals, students participate in activities teaching them: 1) what a goal IS; 2) to determine an appropriate from an inappropriate goal (according to their own needs and abilities); and 3) how to set a goal.

Evaluation

Evaluation and self-evaluation are an important part of The Curriculum System, and an equally important part of employment. Students are taught about evaluation and it's value through a variety of activities. To assist students in understanding The Evaluation of Student Performance Form, activities include:

Evaluate the Teacher

Prior to class, an evaluation form is developed which lists steps the transition teacher will follow in teaching the class. Students are told they will be filling out this evaluation form at the end of the class, and will be required to indicate if the teacher required assistance, or did not require assistance, with each activity. In other words, the student's complete an evaluation form (with some assistance at first) based on the teacher's performance in class.

The activity can be simplified by: 1) the transition teacher exaggerating requests for assistance at first; or 2) stopping after each step listed on the form, and discussing as a group whether the transition teacher required assistance with that particular step; or 3) limiting the number of listed steps to two or three at first.

Self-Evaluation

Once students learn to evaluate the teacher, they progress to evaluating themselves. A few skills that are required during each Great Habits Class are listed on an Evaluation of Student Performance form. At the close of class, each student completes the form indicating if they required assistance with each skill by placing a " " in the correct column.

Summary Reviews

Once each month in Great Habits Class each student reviews with their coach the completed Summary of Student Performance form for their vocational placement. On the reverse side of each summary the coach and student write their comments regarding the last month of vocational training. After review with the student, summaries are distributed to each student's Collective Expert.

Job Site Trivia

Often completed immediately following the opening activity for each class (establishing goals for the coming week), this activity focuses student attention on the past week. Prior to class, the teacher writes specific questions concerning the vocational training sites for the previous week. Questions might include:

- **Did anyone begin a new job this week?**
- **Which students did I (transition teacher) visit this week? When did I visit?**
- **Why did Jeff have a change in his work schedule this week?**
- **Did someone learn a new skill in his/her job this week?**
- **Who worked in a placement for the last time this week?**
- **How did Jerry get to his job this week?**

Through Great Habits Class the skills needed in vocational training experiences are regularly reinforced and rehearsed with students. Students have an opportunity to learn both traditional and non-traditional skills related to success in the workplace. Students have the opportunity to become aware of other job placements. The format enables students and staff to identify and learn needed skills and goals, and to generalize their application to the workplace the following week.

Conclusion

The Curriculum System provides students and the community with support through a variety of approaches and materials. Avoid the equation of staff-with-student = support; use creative and collaborative efforts to develop appropriate support for each placement. Recognizing the differences in support for general education vs. vocational placements, and individualizing support not only in terms of a student but also a placement, will set the stage for a successful outcome.

CHAPTER 11

Social Assistance and Social Reading

Introduction

The experiences of secondary Jenison High School students with autism and other developmental disabilities learning in non-sheltered environments have consistently indicated social skills are among the most important for achieving success in the community. Social skills may also be the most elusive to teach. Considering the highly individualized needs of students in the area of social development, it would be naive to subscribe to one approach for addressing these skills.

For this reason, The Curriculum System is designed to be individual, flexible, and "eclectic" when it comes to social skill development. It can incorporate almost any approach or technique for teaching social skills into daily implementation of a student's curriculum. In addition, social skills are addressed through many components and activities in The Curriculum System, not just Social Reading (described in detail in this chapter).

The reader is cautioned in reading this chapter: Social Reading is just one technique among many, and has been found to be effective for assisting some students with autism and developmental disabilities in understanding and responding to social situations.

Social Assistance: A Definition

For the purposes of The Curriculum System, Social Assistance is defined as:

> **Social Assistance: All materials, techniques, and activities which assist staff in understanding a student's perception of a given situation, and/or assist students in predicting, "reading" and/or responding to social situations more effectively.**

Minimally, Social Assistance provides students with assistance in predicting, identifying and/or appropriately responding to a wide variety of naturally occurring social situations. In addition, Social Reading, particularly Videotaped Social Reading, may provide critical and valuable insights for others into how a student perceives a situation.

Social Assistance includes:

1) efforts to help the community effectively interact with the student (Chapters 8, 9, and "Social Reading," this chapter);

2) efforts to help students prepare for, predict, and respond to upcoming social situations as independently as possible ("GUESSWORKS," in Chapter 4, and "Social Reading," this chapter);

3) efforts to help students accurately "read" and respond to social cues as independently as possible ("GUESSWORKS," in Chapter 4, and "Social Reading" and related activities, this chapter);

4) efforts to help students identify when help is needed, and to initiate requests for help ("GUESSWORKS," in Chapter 4; Chapter 5; and "Social Reading," this chapter);

5) efforts to help students interact socially with others more effectively ("GUESSWORKS," Chapter 4; Chapter 5; and "Social Reading," this chapter).

The Chapter 11 Dictionary

The following definitions are provided to assist in understanding information presented in this chapter.

Social Reading: An approach to social skill development designed to: 1) assist others in understanding how a student perceives a situation; 2) describe staff perceptions of a situation to a student for comparison; and 3) assist the student in initiating his/her own more appropriate responses.

LIVE Social Reading: Social Reading completed live, as a situation occurs.

VIDEOTAPED Social Reading: Social Reading using videotaped social situations, often which include the student in the videotape.

Social Stories: Stories written for individual students in response to specific situations to reinforce Social Reading activities or to reinforce skills addressed through other social skills interventions.

Social Assistance Packets: Sequenced packets designed for individual students with gradually decreasing prompts, which focus on priority social skills or relevant social cues within a selected situation. Social Assistance Packets (S.A.P.s) are often used to support Social Reading activities (Appendix I: How to Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets and Social Assistance Packets).

Social Cue: A communication, behavior, or event which may elicit a social response.

Exaggerated Social Cue: Any social cue intentionally modified or dramatized to make it more easily recognizable.

Social Reading

The Rationale

Social Reading assumes that to teach "appropriate social responses" to a student could hold little meaning if others do not understand the student's perceptions, or the student does not understand what is occurring around him, and why. Prior to teaching appropriate social responses, Social Reading assists others in understanding a student's perception of a situation, while assisting the student in selecting and responding to social cues more accurately and effectively.

This rationale is similar to one of Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Covey, 1989). In his chapter describing the fifth habit, "Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood," he states "Seeking to understand requires consideration, seeking to be understood requires courage." Following but modifying this advice - approaching social skills first from the perspective of the student - can go a long way to assisting students in discovering their own more appropriate responses to social situations.

The underlying belief is that solutions students develop are most likely to be used, and to generalize to other situations, in the absence of supports.

This approach works toward three objectives:

1) understanding the perspective of the student,

2) providing more accurate information concerning a social situation to a student, and

3) supporting and reinforcing more appropriate student solutions to their own behaviors.

Social interactions and situations are dynamic; they often occur simultaneously and in great numbers. This renders social skills among the most difficult to address in an educational program. Working first to understand a student's perceptions, and assisting students in identifying their own social responses, may provide the best possible framework for generalization of social skills.

The Goal

The goal of Social Reading is to gain understanding of a student's perceptions of a given social situation, while increasing student independence in accurately "reading" and effectively responding to targeted naturally occurring social cues.

Basic Steps...

Social Reading activities vary according to a student's age and ability, following these basic steps:

1) **Target a specific situation.**

2) **Decide to use Live or Videotaped Social Reading.**

3) **Gather information.**

4) **Share observations, and support.**

5) **Responses.**

Identifying Target Situations

1. Start informal and positive (if possible!).

To develop Social Reading for an individual student, trying it first with a non-threatening or positive situation is a good idea. Target situations do not necessarily have to be those in which the student demonstrates difficulty or negative behaviors. They can also be those in which improvement of current positive skills is the goal, or where a student is performing satisfactorily.

2. Look at evaluation sheets.

To identify target situations, review Evaluation of Student Performance forms, checking for social skills which are not

progressing. Specifically, look for social skills which are not improving (or those which consistently require the same level of prompting and are showing little, if any, improvement), especially in situations where other skills are progressing satisfactorily.

3. **Target situations often target themselves.**

Target situations often are not difficult to identify. These are situations difficult or frustrating for a student, which result in inappropriate responses and behavior. They may be situations previously addressed with other social skills training programs, which continue to present difficulty.

Exaggerated Social Cues

As defined earlier, an **exaggerated social cue** is any cue intentionally modified or dramatized to make it more easily recognizable. Exaggerated social cues may be used to assist a student in recognizing and responding to important social cues in targeted situations. When considering using Live or Videotaped Social Reading with a student, building in exaggerated social cues may be helpful.

For example: a student is placed in a vocational task in a row among several workers performing the identical task at a table. Instead of using a coach placed at the student's side, providing physical prompts, the student is seated facing the row of workers. The visual cue is "exaggerated" as the student now looks at a row of five people all doing the same thing. Cues can be exaggerated with very minor modifications, and often bring good results. Fading of these cues may be accomplished by gradually altering the environment.

Exaggerated social cues may be one factor to consider when deciding on the most appropriate general education placement. A class in which everyone does everything together may be more conducive to success (especially for a student with autism) than a classroom with a variety of activities occurring in different parts of the room.

Live vs. Videotaped Social Reading

In deciding whether to use live or videotaped situations for Social Reading activities, or a combination of the two, consider the following factors:

1. Simultaneous steps, or step by step

Live Social Reading addresses the basic steps of Social Reading (listed previously) simultaneously, while gradually decreasing staff involvement.

Videotaped Social Reading is accomplished by reviewing a videotape of a targeted situation several times. The targeted situation is "read" step by step, beginning with gathering information, etc., instead of addressing these steps simultaneously (as in Live Social Reading). Fading staff involvement is usually not an issue with Videotaped Social Reading.

2. Feedback

Live Social Reading provides instant feedback for a student. The drawback is working among the distractions of a live situation, as it occurs.

Videotaped Social Reading provides delayed review and feedback. Students have the opportunity to observe themselves, in a setting removed from the situation presenting difficulty. Videotaped Social Reading usually is completed with a student in a support session (Chapter 10).

3. What you see is...

Live Social Reading can respond to a social situation occurring anywhere in the room. Live Social Reading will reflect more of the emotional content of the targeted situation.

Videotaped Social Reading is dependent upon what is captured on videotape. If a camera is mounted and left running unattended, students may be more relaxed, resulting in more "natural" activity. Video recorders often see more detail than live observations and are indisputably accurate. Still, the field of vision of a video recorder on a tripod is restricted. The "auditory field" is wider, and a video camera will pick up the sounds of activities surrounding (but not visually recorded by) the camera.

4. Potential distractions or interference

Live Social Reading may interfere with social interactions toward the student, as it requires a staff person to be close, and to interact, with the student. Live Social Reading may be visually more subtle in a room when compared to the presence of a video camera.

Videotaped Social Reading involves the use of a video camera, which may be highly distracting to the student and to others. The presence of a video camera may potentially change the targeted situation. This may be minimized by: 1) informing others of the general reason for the camera; 2) using it often, even to record "non-targeted' situations; and 3) using one of the new small video recorders.

5. Prompt dependence

Live Social Reading requires a staff person to work directly with a student in the targeted situation, increasing the possibility for the student to become dependent upon their involvement.

Videotaped Social Reading records targeted situations with a stationery camera, with later review by a staff person and the student. Without support staff in the targeted situation, the danger of a student's dependence on staff involvement is eliminated.

6. Scheduling

If a targeted social situation occurs at a given time each day, **Live Social Reading** is an option if a staff person is available to the student at that time.

If the targeted situation is random, videotaping one or more class sessions with a stationery video camera may be the best option in terms of staff time.

7. Staff

Live Social Reading is possible only if a staff person is available to the student each day when the situation occurs.

Videotaped Social Reading requires review of videotape of a targeted situation with a student. A staff person may have to set up a stationary video camera to record the targeted situation, although often media professionals can perform this task.

8. Mix and Match

Using **Videotaped Social Reading** in one setting, the general education classroom for example, and **Live Social Reading** in another may be the most workable option. Or, use Videotaped Social Reading exclusively, monitoring several learning environments to see if newly acquired skills are generalizing.

Be creative and use the best judgment of professionals and the Collective Expert.

Before Social Reading: A Hint to Parents and Professionals

The skills required by those assisting students with Social Reading vary depending upon whether Live or Videotaped Social Reading is used. **Basically**, a person "reads aloud" a description of observed events. **Realistically**, that may feel a little awkward. For that reason, general experience "reading" social situations is recommended prior to working with a student using Live or Videotaped Social Reading.

First, "read" by reporting observed behaviors and cues (reading for comprehension and interpretation may come later). The natural inclination may be to talk about how people feel about what is happening, and to immediately share those feelings with a student. Initially, describe a situation **objectively**, as though it is occurring in two dimensions. Focus on describing actions, not feelings. If feelings are mentioned, describe those feelings through observable, not implied, observations. For example, "The man is smiling," not, "The man is very happy."

A good way to practice reading social situations without involving a student or other people is to read television shows. Turn on the television and "read" aloud, in short, simple vocabulary, what is occurring. To learn to focus on observable behaviors, first "read" the activities of the characters with the **volume off**. (This is not to imply conversation should be ignored when "reading" a situation with a student. Conversation is also relevant, and should be reported also - especially as it relates to visually observable cues.) Television shows with a lot of fast changing social interactions will best prepare someone for reading social situations. The evening news, or news broadcasts showing live situations, are great for beginning practice.

Another idea is to "read" several live social situations "to yourself", as they occur. Once comfortable with reading social situations in general, mentally practice applying the guidelines listed for Live or Videotaped Social Reading described in the remainder of this chapter.

Live Social Reading

General Guidelines

Live Social Reading involves the use of a staff person in "reading"a targeted situation to a student as it occurs. Use the following guidelines for Live Social Reading.

1. Start with a goal of increasing student independence.

When using Live Social Reading, staff/parents work from the start to gradually fade their involvement. Increasingly, the student assumes responsibility for "reading" and responding appropriately to the targeted situation. To structure the decreasing involvement of staff, Live Social Reading is organized into four levels, with the basic steps of Social Reading (described earlier in this chapter) addressed simultaneously at each level.

2. Silence is an educational tool.

Live Social Reading requires those assisting a student to talk calmly and slowly; pause frequently when "reading" a situation; and to wait patiently for a student to answer questions. Social Reading may be difficult for students, and they will require more time to respond to questions. A good general rule is to wait slightly longer than is judged to be reasonable.

3. Support Live Social Reading with individualized materials.

Students working at any level may be provided with a) social stories and/or b) social assistance packets to reinforce Live Social Reading activities. (These are described in greater detail later in the chapter). Always praise and reinforce appropriate student responses, fading staff involvement as they become more frequent.

4. Remember these details.

- Whenever assisting a student in reading a live social situation, stay to the student's side and slightly back from the student.
- Talk softly.
- Use short, to the point sentences.
- Do not block a student's view.

<u>Level One</u>

Level One provides the student with an objective description of the targeted situation, or a structured opportunity for a student to observe the targeted situation. Provide the student with a running description of relevant cues in short, easy to understand sentences. To a large extent the

student observes, with opportunities to comment, though some comprehension questions may be asked. It is important for staff to **pause between statements** to allow a student time to comment in response to what he/she hears. This may provide insights into a student's perception of a situation. For example:

"I hear a buzzer." (pause)
"All the people are stopping. (pause)
"The people are walking to the break room." (pause)
"What did the people hear?" (pause)
"What are the people doing?" (pause)

Along with individualized judgment, use the following suggestions as a guide:

- Provide the student with a step by step description of the targeted social situation using a simple, ongoing verbal description as the situation occurs.

- Listen for student perceptions and interpretations of events as they occur.

- Check for comprehension and encourage recall using:

  - Silence. Remember to pause frequently and allow ample time for student responses.

  - Frequent verbal or written questions to check for the student's comprehension/perception of the situation as it occurs – **do not** ask questions concerning appropriate or inappropriate responses. At this level, the objective is simply to "read" the situation - with someone pointing out the relevant social cues.

  - Instant photographs (use to write a description with the student about what occurred), and/or student drawings (if drawing is an activity which is not difficult for the student). A word of caution: the excitement of an instant photograph can potentially distract from, or alter a targeted situation.

  - Write a checklist together, listing events as they occur(red). Use student-level vocabulary, and enlarged print if necessary.

<u>Level Two</u>

Level Two provides a student with directed questions. Much of the ongoing description of Level One is dropped. The focus is on asking short, detailed, directed questions which

encourage the student to begin describing the situation as it occurs. For example:

"What do (did) you hear?"
"What are people/employees doing?"
"Where are people/employees going?"

Also, ask simple questions concerning the implication of events, for example:

"What did the people do when they heard the bell?"
"What will the people do now?
"What should you do now?"

Along with individualized judgment, use the following suggestions as a guide:

- If the student describes something inaccurately, provide an accurate description as comparison, "I see...," as in Level One. Try not to argue with misperceptions. Instead, provide an alternate description of the situation as it occurs.

- By the time Level Two is reached, the situation will have been observed more than once. Consider if it would be appropriate to begin describing slight variations in the situation to the student (or bring them to the attention of the student through directed questions), or the things that, no matter what, have **stayed the same** (helpful for assisting students in keeping changes in perspective).

- Reinforce observations through continued use of social stories, use of the checklist from Level One (ask the student to check things off as they occur), and/or social assistance packets.

Level Three

In Level Three the directed questions of the staff fade to general questions, shifting even more of the responsibility for "reading" the social situation to the student. There may be overlap in moving from one level to another. For example, the more detailed and directed questions of Level Two may have to be used to assist a student in responding to a more general Level Three question. **Still, make sure time is allowed for a student to think and respond to any question. Remember, allow slightly more time for responses than seems reasonable.**

Begin by asking the student a general question to encourage the student to describe the situation. For example:

"Did you hear something?"
"What's happening here (in this room)?"
"Tell me what is happening."

Reinforce accurate responses and encourage the student to continue with general statements. For example:

"That's right, what else?"
"That's right. What should YOU do?"

Along with individualized judgment, use the following suggestions as a guide:

- If the student describes something inaccurately, provide an accurate description for comparison as in Level One.

- It may be necessary to "back up", returning to earlier levels, if a student continues to inaccurately describe/refer to a situation.

- Social stories and social assistance packets may be rewritten in response to new insights into a student's perception of a situation, to assist a student in accurately reading a situation.

- Reinforce observations through continued use of social stories, varied use of interactive or checklist stories, checklists, and/or social assistance packets.

Level Four

Basically, Level Four assesses student progress in picking up on the social cues and initiating appropriate responses, while fading staff involvement. Gradually fade staff involvement. Reinforce appropriate student responses. For example:

"Good! You heard the buzzer and started your break!"

Along with individualized judgment, use the following suggestions as a guide:

- Continue to use social assistance packets and/or social stories to reinforce and support the new more appropriate responses to the targeted situation, gradually fading the use of the stories.

- If the student has not begun to initiate appropriate responses, a more directive approach providing the student with responses and gradually fading staff involvement may be indicated.

General Guidelines

In contrast to Live Social Reading, Videotaped Social Reading is an activity completed later in time, in a setting removed from the targeted situation. Instead of everyone within the targeted situation present, just the student and a staff person work together to "read" the social situation. All that is needed is a quiet room with a video player and monitor, and paper and pencil (or, if available, a large vertical display pad of paper on a stand), or a computer to use for word processing. The atmosphere should be relaxed and non-threatening, with the student informed of the purpose of the activity with individual consideration for his/her level of understanding and ability.

Videotaped Social Reading is flexible - and can be used in a variety of ways, depending upon the student's difficulty with a given situation. For the purposes here, the basic steps will be described, followed by a brief discussion of sample variations. Keep in mind, these are guidelines and ideas meant to be merged with the knowledge and creativity of a student's Collective Expert.

As indicated earlier, Videotaped Social Reading addresses Social Reading step by step, in contrast to Live Social Reading which addresses the steps of Social Reading simultaneously. What follows is a description of each step in sequence.

Gathering Information

All steps will not be used in all situations. Social Reading rarely feels like a "clear cut" or "by the book" exercise: it isn't meant to be. Especially in this step, follow a student's lead while providing any necessary structure. Generally, start by "reading" the background, gradually "painting" the social picture in greater and greater detail.

The goal of gathering information is to gain clues to the student's perception of a situation. The tendency will be to immediately provide the student with more accurate information - to correct a student's perceptions - too early. In this step, the student describes the situation. The person assisting the student may decide to disagree or present more accurate information, still, keep it at a minimum at this point.

Use the following sequence in gathering information:

1. Select a section of videotape

Prior to the student's arrival, select the most relevant section of a videotape to use for Social Reading. **Leave a few**

minutes on either side of the selected video "clip" (2 - 3 minutes), so the student is not immediately faced with what may be the most difficult part of the targeted situation.

2. Identify the setting

Watch the target situation once together, with the sound of the videotape "on". Briefly identify the setting with the student. Label the setting at the top of the paper, for example, "Joe at Work". If a student has good writing ability, and can write quickly enough, ask the student to write as he talks. Otherwise, write the lists as a student dictates.

3. List objects

Watch the target situation a second time, with the sound turned "off". Ask the student to identify objects in the room. Write the objects down.

4. List people

Watch the tape (no sound) and ask the student to identify people in the room. Write their names.

5. List activities

Watch the tape again, asking the student to identify what people are doing (sound optional, depending upon the activity on tape). Write a list of what people are doing, listing their activities opposite their names on the paper.

6. List gestures

Ask if anyone is gesturing - telling people to do something by moving or looking at them a certain way (no sound). Write a list.

7. Look who's talking

Turn on the sound. Ask the student what the people in the tape are saying. Do not give the student clues or direct his/her attention to important communication. Ask the student to identify the communication that is occurring, as this may be the communication considered most important from the student's perspective.

Share Observations, and Support

The goal of this step is to acknowledge the student's perceptions as valid, while sharing another perspective. A student's ability to accept a conflicting perspective will vary. Pace Social Reading to match a student's attention span and ability, and to keep the activity positive and as relaxed as possible.

Follow the following sequence in sharing observations while supporting the student's perspective:

1) **Review and acknowledge the student's perspective.** Refer to the ongoing list developed in the first part of the activity. Point to main items on the list to review the student's description of the situation.

2) **Present another perspective.** Briefly describe the situation and offer another perspective. Keep statements short. Write main ideas down.

Responses

The goal of this step is to encourage the student to decide on more appropriate responses. Often, the student's new response will incorporate the perceptions of the targeted situation presented (in the previous step) by the person assisting the student. The student may begin this step independently upon seeing the situation more accurately, offering more appropriate responses without staff prompting.

Listen

Informal review of videotapes of Social Reading sessions indicates staff persons tend to focus on an agenda of what to ask next - to such an extent that important responses from a student are not "expanded upon" as they might have been. It is very important to listen closely to the student. The student's responses should indicate the direction of the activity, not a pre-set agenda. While staff may follow guidelines to keep track of the direction of the activity, a student's responses are the most critical factor in determining "what's next".

Write

If a student offers a solution to the targeted situation, have him write it down (new page!) if possible. If it is unrealistic or inappropriate, don't critique it yet. Re-read it step by step with the student. The student may modify it on his/her own.

Solutions are for students to keep

Encourage a student to take the solution with him. If writing has been done into a computer, print out the student's responses/solution. Identify to the student others that may receive a copy of the student's new responses/solution. Keep others informed of the student's solution so they may encourage and support the student in practicing the new responses.

Support students, and solutions

A student needs ongoing support when working on improving social skills. Reinforce new solutions with social assistance packets, or social stories which describe the new response.

No solution yet?

If a student does not come up with his/her own solution, try:

- writing a social story describing the student's and staff perceptions of the targeted situation ("Social Stories," this chapter).
- writing a social assistance packet, using the student's perceptions of a situation, but describing a more appropriate response, or two or three possible responses ("Social Assistance Packets," this chapter).
- repeating the activity at another time, after taking the time to identify what worked, and what didn't. Make modifications for individual students.
- using the insights gained through Social Reading, retry a former, different social skills intervention or training program with modifications.

Variations of Basic Social Reading Activities

As mentioned earlier, individual students and situations will require Social Reading modifications. A few variations that can be made in response to given students/situations are listed here:

Changes in Routine

Changes in routine often present difficulty for students with autism, as well as for other students with developmental

disabilities. While following the basic Videotaped Social Reading sequence of steps, incorporate the following modifications:

- Videotape the targeted situation (one which changes occasionally) on a few different occasions.

- In reviewing these video clips with the student, list the objects, etc., (writing/listing) focusing on what has not changed - the room, several objects in the room, the people present, the time on the clock, etc..

- The goal is to visually illustrate and prove through the written lists where the change occurs, and to identify other things that stay the same, regardless of the change.

- A special format for social stories can also be used to assist students in understanding changes in routine. (See "Interactive Social Stories," described later in this chapter.)

(See "Social Reading: A Case Study," at the end of this chapter for a more detailed example of Social Reading addressing changes in routine.)

"Sorting" Cues

Students with autism often give highly literal interpretations to vocabulary. This can affect their ability to follow directions accurately. They may follow a direction so literally that on the surface it appears they are misbehaving or "off task." These students may need assistance in learning to sort social cues to follow directions as they are intended.

Consider this example: A student has a goal listed on his Evaluation of Student Performance form for a general education class which states he will listen to the teacher when she is talking. The assumption of the goal is that the student will listen when the teacher is talking in front of the room. Once the lecture is finished, of course, it is assumed he will work on the modified assignments in his notebook as the teacher circulates the classroom assisting students.

The student's literal interpretation is to listen when the teacher is talking, regardless of the intent of her communication. Therefore, the student ceases to work whenever he hears the teacher's voice, regardless of whether the communication from the teacher is relevant to him.

The student must learn to "sort" the cue of the "teacher talking"; to listen to the teacher when she is talking to the entire class or to him. The student must also learn he may continue to work in his notebook when the teacher is talking to individual students or small groups.

To assist this student in sorting social cues, the basic sequence of Social Reading (Live or Videotaped) is used, incorporating any or all of the following ideas:

- First, closely preview the videotapes or directly observe the class. Look for cues a student may be able to focus on to learn to listen in class at the right times.

- Re-write the objective more literally (and place on the student's Evaluation of Student Performance form), while working with the student on the identification of relevant social cues.

- When gathering information, draw the student's attention to who the teacher is talking to and different points in time. This can provide important information on the student's perspective concerning "when to listen".

- Review a few situations where the teacher is involved in various types of communications with students. For each one, ask the student questions which focus his attention on cues which will help him distinguish when he must listen to the teacher.

- A page with a written reminder to the student can be placed in his notebook just ahead of her modified assignment. A simple message reminding him to make sure the teacher is not talking to the class (or him) before beginning his written work may be all that is necessary.

Stories with Student Authors

Some students may be able to dictate or write independently a story about a targeted situation. The student writes a story about the situation by viewing videotape (which allows for review several times to check for details); from memory; from notes recorded by staff during live or videotaped review of a targeted situation; or any combination. This may give insights into the student's perceptions - what she perceives as relevant, etc.. The staff may write about the same situation at the same time to later compare with the student's story.

Experience Expands Social Reading

Experience with Social Reading will give rise to many variations in response to certain situations. In addition, the

students and/or situations for which these activities are effective will become apparent, as will modifications to individualize the activities to meet the needs of each student.

Activities and Materials to Support Social Reading

Social Reading activities are supported by a variety of materials - all providing objective, visual descriptions and/or feedback in regards to social situations. These materials further assist students in identifying the relevant cues in a targeted situation. Descriptions of two types of support materials, Social Stories and Social Assistance Packets are discussed in this chapter.

Social Stories

Social Stories are written for individual students in response to specific situations. Social Stories may be used to personalize or emphasize social skills covered in any social skills training program. Originally used with elementary students, social stories may be written for secondary students also (with care given to maintaining the interest level while using student-friendly vocabulary).

Writing Social Stories

Social stories are written in a special, but individualized format. To write social stories use the following guidelines:

- When writing a social story, write well within a student's comprehension level, using vocabulary and print size appropriate for a student's ability.
- Usually, social stories are written in the present tense, as though someone is describing the events as they take place.
- Social stories may be written in the future tense, to describe an upcoming situation to make it seem less threatening. Relating aspects of the anticipated event to a more familiar event, setting, or activity may be helpful.
- Describe the situation matter-of-factly, from the perspective of an objective onlooker. Do not assume the reaction of the observer. From this objective viewpoint, social stories assist/reinforce/support students as they learn to focus on relevant cues.

- The student is not necessarily pictured or illustrated as part of the story, as the stories are most often written as though the student is an observer, not a participant.

- Social stories may be illustrated with photographs, illustrations, or student drawings.

- Social stories often describe one aspect or one step of a social situation per page, to allow the story to be used as a curriculum story, or an interactive story (two special formats for social stories described in the next section).

Interactive Social Stories and Changes in Routine

Interactive stories are social stories which actively involve the student in practicing certain skills without the confusion of the actual situation surrounding them. At the hands of creativity and efforts to individualize, the possibilities are endless.

One example: Each page of a story describes a step of a daily routine. Each step of the routine is described on its own sheet of paper. At the end of the story, is a checklist of the steps comprising the routine, and the student "checks off" each completed step contained in the story.

By removing any selected page of the story, a step of the routine is eliminated. First, the student is given the opportunity to remove a page, causing the character in the story to "forget" a step of the routine - which the student indicates when he reaches the final checklist and does **not** place a check by the missing step. The character receives "help" from the student as the student replaces the missing step and checks off the missing step.

Later, staff may "pull" a step from the story in the same way (by removing one of the pages). By paying close attention, the student identifies the forgotten step as he completes the checklist. The student must now request help from the teacher to replace the missing step into the story.

Through this process, a student learns to handle "forgetting" by asking for help first within the safer, less stressful context of reading a story. By reading the story several times, the student learns the routine described by the story as well, and may identify and handle forgotten steps more appropriately when actually completing the targeted routine.

Curriculum Stories

Many students, particularly those with autism, have difficulty applying academic skills to "real life" situations. The value or impact of a social story can be expanded by using a format to allow the insertion of a variety of related academic pages into the story, without changing the story line. The result is a curriculum story.

Curriculum stories incorporate various aspects of the academic curriculum into the social story, and keep social stories (which may need to be re-read a few times to be effective) interesting. Social stories can be written so curriculum pages can be easily inserted throughout the story. One example: after a description and photograph of children in line, a math insert may ask the student to count the number of children (or the number of girls, boys, or smiles) standing in line in the photograph on the previous page.

Academic curriculum inserts can address a child's specific academic objective, encouraging application of writing, math, or guessing skills, for example. Curriculum stories use targeted social situations (or any situation) from a child's specific life experiences as a "backdrop" to demonstrate the functional application and relationships between academic concepts and everyday life.

A Generic Social Story

Generic social stories can be useful in providing support staff with the needed confidence to write a social story. If social stories prove effective for a student, it may be difficult for a teacher or parent to keep up with the demand. One solution: the teacher or parent writes a generic story, an outline, and the support staff individualize and bring it to the final copy. With a generic story as a starting point, it is easier to write a final individualized story than to write a social story from "scratch."

Generic stories should be kept on file, as often similar situations are difficult for students with autism and other developmental disabilities. A generic story may be applicable to another student at another time.

What follows is a sample "generic" social story. This generic story would have to be individualized, possibly: referring to specific situations an individual student would recognize; describing the differences in similar situations which may require slightly different responses or behavior; modifying the vocabulary or the size of the print; limiting the amount of written copy (often just one or two sentences) on each page; including photographs from the student's experience

photocopied into the story; and/or providing spaces for a student to draw pictures to accompany the story. The options are endless. This generic story is about the lines people stand in. It could easily be made into a curriculum story without much difficulty.

A Sample Generic Social Story: LINES

There are many kinds of lines for people. There are standing lines, walking lines, slow lines, and group lines.

Most of the time, standing lines are for waiting. Standing lines stay in one place for a while and they wait. Standing lines wait for different things. Sometimes, standing lines wait for everyone to come and get in line. Or, standing lines wait for the right time to start moving.

Standing lines don't always just stand. Some people get tired of standing, and they move - they scratch their head, or fiddle with their shirt, or touch other people when they move around.

Standing lines usually become walking lines. Everyone who was standing, starts walking. In a walking line, you follow the person in front of you. Walking lines are for safely moving many people from one place to another. Walking lines are used in some schools to move students.

Slow lines are lines that move once in a while. People in slow lines stand, they walk a few steps, and stand again. Sometimes, the lines of people in a grocery story are like this. Sometimes, the lines at McDonalds' are like this.

Social Assistance Packets

Social assistance packets bring attention to relevant social cues in a targeted social situation. They are written in the format of sequenced curriculum packets as described in Chapter 9.

To write a social assistance packet, keep the individual student and situation in mind. Packets should be written so a student can, as much as possible, complete the packet independently or with minimal assistance. Some packets are more directive, others are more open-ended and flexible. Design a packet with the desired outcome in mind, following the format for sequenced curriculum packets (Appendix I: How to Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets and Social Assistance Packets).

Invested Time

Writing Social Assistance Packets and Social Stories takes time. Which often raises the question, "Who has time to do this?"

The answer is easy. Keep in mind, social stories and social assistance packets are not written for every social goal for every student. They are written in response to targeted social situations - often those in which other interventions have been unsuccessful. Also, they may minimize the need for support staff in the classroom if a student develops his own solutions and generalizes new social skills; freeing staff time while building student independence/interdependence within a non-sheltered learning environment.

Social Reading: A Case Study

Mark is a secondary student who attends the program for students with autism at Jenison High School. For part of his day, he attends a general education class, Retailing, which teaches students basic marketing skills while they operate the school store. He also is placed in a vocational placement at a local video store, where he places returned videos back on the shelf, and "shelf reads". A variety of Social Reading techniques are used to address specific behaviors and difficulties in each of these placements.

Disruption of the General Education Classroom

At the same point in time, Mark is demonstrating behaviors in Retailing which are disruptive. He continually interrupts. When the teacher addresses a general question or a casual comment to the entire class, Mark shouts the answer in return. In an assembly with half the student body, Mark shouts a comment to the speaker concerning the change in the day's schedule as a result of the assembly. He runs to the door whenever someone stops by the classroom - jumping over chairs, pushing past students - **anything** - to ensure he is the one to answer the door. He is upset by substitute teachers in the classroom.

While he has been verbally reminded of more appropriate responses several times, he rarely uses these responses on his own, requiring reminders by other students or his Retailing teacher. Mark repeatedly promises to work harder to "quit interrupting", "relax", or "work harder". Mark has many students who care about him in his Retailing class, and a Retailing teacher with a lot of patience and concern.

Intervention for the General Education Classroom: Social Reading and Social Assistance Packets

To address Mark's behaviors in Retailing, Videotaped Social Reading is used, supported by social assistance packets. Mark's difficulty with substitute teachers is addressed by having Mark review 5 videotaped clips - some with, and some without, substitute teachers. Mark is assisted in identifying those things which are the same in each clip (the classroom, classmates, and objects); people and things which do not change regardless of who is teaching.

A videotape of the assembly in which Mark interrupted provides an opportunity for Social Reading. In reviewing the tape with his transition teacher, Mark repeatedly identifies himself and the speaker as being the only people present in the assembly. Even with the transition teacher drawing Mark's attention to the 500 other students and faculty in the room, Mark insists the speaker is talking just to him. With this understanding, the transition teacher realizes that the term "interrupting" holds little meaning for Mark who does not recognize the implications or importance of the other people in the assembly. Following the steps for Videotaped Social Reading, Mark is assisted in recognizing the other students in the room, and their response (laughter) to his behavior. Mark concludes, "I can stop it."

Mark makes a list of new things he is going to do in his classroom, instead of interrupting, on the large pad of paper used with the activity. Mark takes the paper which lists his new behaviors to his Retailing teacher, and asks if he can post it on the wall by his (Mark's) desk as a reminder not to interrupt.

With the potential for injury with Mark's insistence on answering the classroom door, directive social assistance packets are used to bring that behavior immediately under control.

Mark's behavior in Retailing improves. He raises his hand and does not interrupt. If he is not called on, he remains quiet. At assemblies, he remains quiet as part of the audience. Mark remains in his seat when someone comes to the classroom door, allowing whichever student is closest to answer it. Mark's response to substitutes improves, and he reports to classmates: "We've had five substitutes this year. FIVE SUBSTITUTES!...this is not the end of the world."

Mark's Retailing teacher requests social assistance packets for other behaviors which occasionally arise during the remainder of the year. Mark remains as a student in Retailing.

A Threatened Vocational Placement

Mark has been working well for several months without a coach at the video store, but now begins to show behaviors which threaten his vocational placement. While he has always demonstrated some of these behaviors at this placement, they never occurred in the frequency or intensity as they do now. He is shouting across the store, turning on the store radio, placing long distance calls, attempting to carry too many videos at one time, misplacing videos, and is less likely to follow the directions of his employer.

Interventions to correct these behaviors have all ultimately failed. Mark is placed on suspension from his job on a Wednesday through the following Monday. To maintain the placement Mark's behavior must be brought under control by that time, as the manager of the video store generously agrees to give Mark one more chance.

Intervention for the Vocational Placement: Social Assistance Packets

Mark and his transition teacher discuss the meaning of his suspension, carefully listing with Mark in writing the behaviors which need to change. Mark agrees to work harder, and is upset by the suspension. Because Mark will lose his job if his behavior is not markedly better on Monday, the transition teacher writes highly directive social assistance packets which clearly define the inappropriateness of Mark's behaviors, and the new responses he must demonstrate instead. Mark completes the social assistance packets 5 times before returning to work.

Because the transition teacher does not have time to write packets for all the problem behaviors, she writes packets for only those that are the most critical. Driving the student to his job the following Monday, the teacher asks Mark what he will do differently at work. In response, he lists all the new behaviors covered in the social assistance packets. The teacher verbally reviews with the student the other behaviors he must also correct - those not covered in the social assistance packets Mark completed.

The manager reports at the end of the student's work on Monday that several behaviors have changed dramatically, while others are still a concern. The transition teacher notes those behaviors which have improved are those covered by the social assistance packets. Behaviors not covered in the packets, but verbally discussed with the student immediately prior to the student's work that day, remain a concern. Before the next day of work, social assistance packets are written for all problem behaviors.

The student's performance improves considerably, and he remains employed at the video store until his employment is terminated as the result of a decision by his Collective Expert.

Summary

Social skills are by far one of the most important factors determining success for anyone living as part of a community. This chapter describes one approach to use to help students more accurately perceive social situations, and to help others understand the perspective of the student. The assumption is that this increased understanding will lay the groundwork for bringing a student with developmental disabilities and his community closer together.

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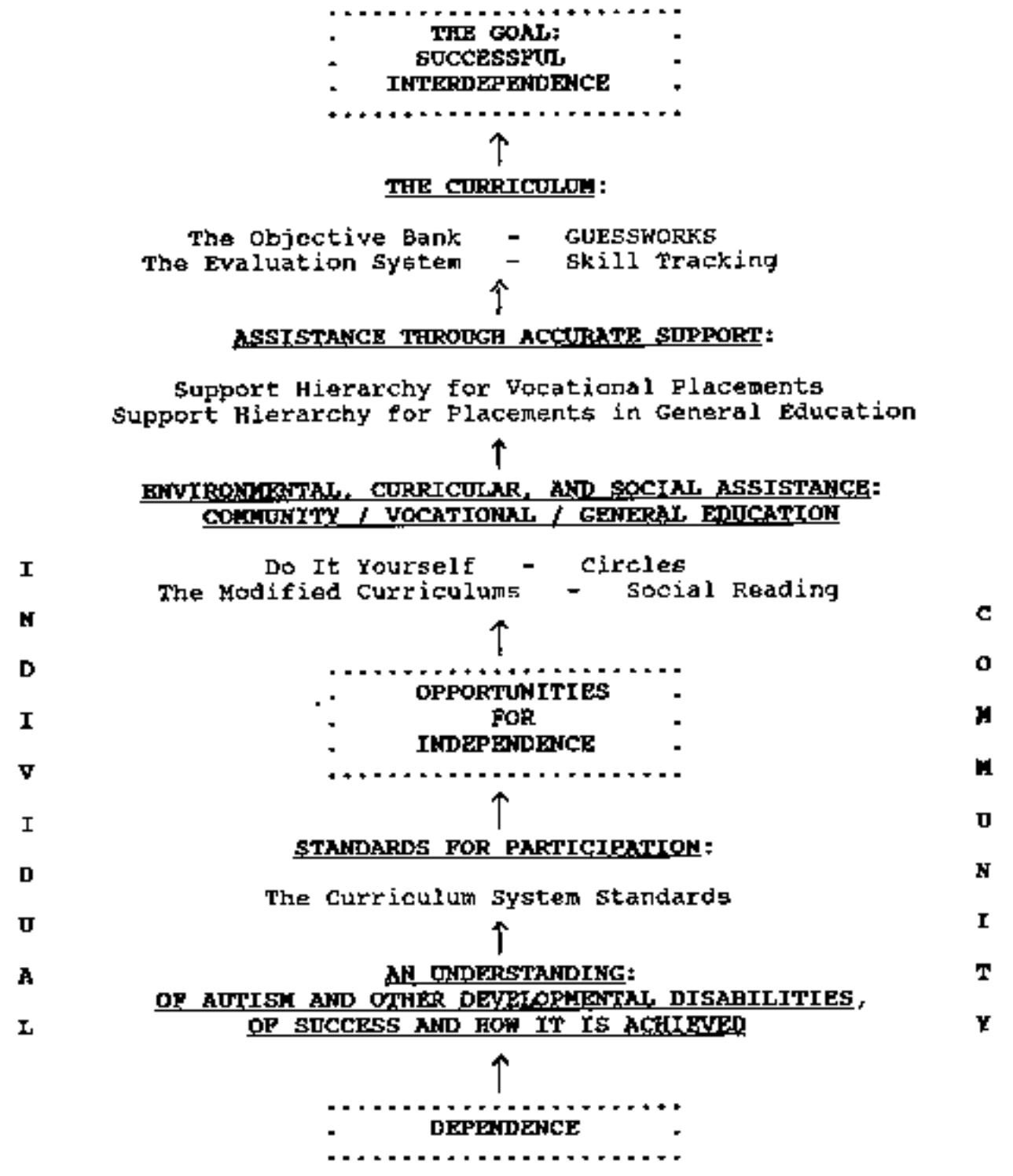
THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X A

The Curriculum System Flow Chart



THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Education Outcome

A P P E N D I X B

Collective Expert Form

Collective Expert for ________________________________
(Student Name)

Student Address: ____
____
______________________________ **Zip Code:** ____________
Phone Number: ______________________ **Birth date:** ____________
Social Security Number: ______________________________
Teacher: __________________ **Coach:** __________________

Member Name: ______________ Phone: Work ________ Home ________
Relationship: ____
Address: ____
____
______________________________ Zip Code: ____________

Member Name: ______________ Phone: Work ________ Home ________
Relationship: ____
Address: ____
____
______________________________ Zip Code: ____________

Member Name: ______________ Phone: Work ________ Home ________
Relationship: ____
Address: ____
____
______________________________ Zip Code: ____________

Member Name: ______________ Phone: Work ________ Home ________
Relationship: ____
Address: ____
____
______________________________ Zip Code: ____________

Member Name: ______________ Phone: Work ________ Home ________
Relationship: ____
Address: ____
____
______________________________ Zip Code: ____________

A P P E N D I X C

Sample Objective Bank Objective: Form A

Sample Objective Bank Objective: Form B

GOAL WG-4 (Use enlarged print)

I will wear an apron at work.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I will do this with help.

GOAL WG-4

I will wear an apron at work.

_____ I will do this by myself.

_____ I may need a little help with

_____ knowing when to put on the apron.

_____ finding the apron.

_____ putting on the apron.

_____ tying the apron.

_____ I will need a lot of help.

I will ask _____or _____to help me.

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X D

Sample Evaluation of Student Performance Form

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Evaluation of Student Performance

Student: _____ Time Slot: _____

Placement: _____ Activity: _____

Coach: _____ _____

Check the appropriate boxes: Date Reviewed:

GUESSWORKS___ B.LINE___ INTERIM___ EXIT___ _____ (Student)

Observation: LIVE___ VIDEOTAPED___ _____ (Parent)

Freq. of Summaries: _____

Criteria: _____See criteria column (CRI) Today is: _____

_____All 100% independent Date: ___/___/___

(GW 200a) Last time I faced_____aisles in_____minutes.

(GW 200b) Today I will face_____aisles in_____minutes.

RALPH'S GOALS AT MR. WILSON'S GROCERY

GUESSWORKS	**BY MYSELF**	**WITH HELP**	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
(GW-1a) Look at clock before leaving.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(GW-1b) Guess how long it will take to get to work..	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(GW-1c) Guess what time it will be when you arrive...	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(GW-1d) Guess if I will be early, on time, or late.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____
(GW-1e) I will look at a clock when I arrive to see if I am right.....	_____	_____	__	__	__	____	____

Page 2: Ralph, Mr. Wilson's Grocery

	BY MYSELF	WITH HELP	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
GUESSWORKS (cont.)							
(GW-1f) Guess how my boss will feel about my time of arrival.....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(GW-1g) Before I go in to work, I will decide what to say if I am late.....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
ARRIVAL							
(AR-1) I will say "Hello" to people I work with....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(AR-2) If I am late, I will tell Mr. Wilson why...	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-4) I will wear an apron..	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-5) I will ask Mr. Wilson which job is first....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(AR-9) I will start working..	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
FACING SHELVES							
(WG-FS-1) I will look for messy aisles of groceries...	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-2) I will follow directions for facing shelves....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-3) I will move groceries forward.....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-4) I will take empty boxes to the back room.....	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-5) I will face the cereal aisle the right way...	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-6) I will face the paper aisle the right way...	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-7) I will face the soup can aisle the right way...	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____
(WG-FS-2) I will face shelves using two hands.....(168)	_____	_____	_	_	_	____	____

Page 3: Ralph, Mr. Wilson's Grocery

	BY MYSELF	WITH HELP	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
SWEEPING							
(WG-SW-1) I will get the broom and dustpan.....							
(WG-SW-2) I will find places that need sweeping.....							
(WG-SW-3) I will put the dustpan down.....							
(WG-SW-4) I will sweep using area method.....							
(WG-SW-5) I will sweep scraps into a pile.....							
(WG-SW-6) I will sweep the dirt onto the dustpan.....							
(WG-SW-7) I will put dirt and scraps into wastebasket							
(WG-SW-8) I will not begin sweeping in clean areas.....							
(WG-SW-9) I will move to new areas needing sweeping.....							
(WG-SW-10) I will put the broom and dustpan away							
BREAK TIME							
(BT-1) I will begin break on time.....							
(BT-2) I will go to the break area.....							
(BT-3) I will use break time appropriately.....							
(BT-10) I will return to work.....							
(BT-11) I will find and use the restroom when I need to.....							

Page 4: Ralph, Mr. Wilson's Grocery

	BY MYSELF	WITH HELP	G	V	P	CRI	OOPS
COIN MACHINES							
(CM-1) I will get money for the snack machines....							
(CM-2) I will put the right coins in the slot.....							
(CM-3) I will press the right button.....							
(CM-4) I will get my snack out of the coin machine...							
SAFETY							
(SA-1) I will follow safety rules.....							
(SA-2) I will look for yellow WET FLOOR signs.....							
(SA-6) I will be careful around wet floors.....							
(WG-6) I will stop facing shelves so customers can pass by or reach items							
SOCIAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS							
(SC-6) I will follow directions.....							
(SC-1) I will stay calm when frustrated.....							
(SC-4) I will know when I need help.....							
(SC-3) I will ask for help if I need it.....							
(SC-5) I will answer questions.....							
(SC-7) I will follow rules...							
(SC-9) I will stay the right distance from people..(170)							

Page 5: Ralph, Mr. Wilson's Grocery

Ralph's Comments about today's work at Mr. Wilson's Grocery:

Coach Comments:

Mr. Wilson's / Others' Comments:

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X E

Sample Student Selected Goals Form

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Student Selected Goals

Staff Use Only: Record from the Evaluation of Student Performance form the date and goal for each day of training.

Name: _____ Placement: _____

Date	Goal

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X F

Sample Summary of Student Performance Form

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Summary of Student Performance

Student: _____ Coach: _____

Placement: _____ Day(s): _____ Time: _____

Check one: Baseline: ___ Interim: ___ Exit: ___ Skill Tracking: ___

Dates of Summarized Evaluation Forms: _____, _____, _____, _____

Skill Areas	#Obj	#By Myself 1st Guess	#By Myself	%Ind	%Previously Independent
Arrival.....					
GUESSWORKS...					
SKILL (SPECIFY)					
SOCIAL/ COMMUNICATION					
TELLING TIME.					
BREAK TIME...					
COIN MACHINES					
SAFETY.....					
OTHER (SPECIFY)					
TOTAL.....					

Please refer to back for student, coach, and teacher comments.

Student's Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Coach's Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Teacher's Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X G

Sample Skill Tracking Form

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM: Skill Tracking

Student_____ Placement_____

Beginning and ending dates, original placement:_____-_____

Original Coach (if any)_____

Other related placements occurring with original placement:

1. General Ed. Course:_____Dates_____
2. Vocational Placement:_____Dates_____
3. Community Based Instruction:_____Dates_____
4. Support Activities:_____

_____

Attached: 1. Blank Evaluation of Student Performance form from the original training___

2. Copies of completed B.line___ and Exit summaries___

Skill Tracking Placement	**Tentative Dates**	**Actual Dates**
First	_____-_____	_____-_____
Second	_____-_____	_____-_____
Third	_____-_____	_____-_____

Information below refers to S. T. Placement: #1___ #2___ #3___

List changes/new factors since original training (if any):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Coach_____ Collective Expert Informed (date)_____

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM

Success as an Educational Outcome

A P P E N D I X B

Social Acceptance Survey

Directions: Please answer the following questions honestly. Indicate the answer that most closely matches your feelings with a check. Do not write your name on this paper. Thank you!

1. What elementary school did you attend?_____

	YES	NO
2. Have you ever attended a class with a person with autism?	____	____
3. It would be okay with me to have a brother or a sister with autism	____	____
4. I would like a person with autism to attend my school	____	____
5. I would like a person with autism to sit next to me in class	____	____
6. I would like a person with autism to live in my neighborhood	____	____
7. I would like a person with autism in my class	____	____
8. I would like a person with autism as a friend	____	____
9. I would like to be a "coach" in class for a person with autism	____	____
10. Do you feel there are classes other than this one that a person with autism might attend	____	____

11. If you answered "yes" to question #10, please list classes you feel a person with autism might attend.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

A P P E N D I X I

How to Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets and Social Assistance Packets

How to Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets and Social Assistance Packets

General Guidelines

Write Sequenced Curriculum Packets (S.C.P.s) and Social Assistance Packets (S.A.P.s) following the same format. Each packet usually contains five sections, A, A-1, B, C, and D. Sections are about 4-6 pages each, making packets 20-25 pages long. Each packet teaches a related set of vocabulary, concepts, or specific behaviors.

Other guidelines include:

- **Write in student-friendly vocabulary.**
- **Use double or triple spacing.**
- **Use student-friendly print size.**
- **Incorporate the use of social clues, break pages, or other ideas to assist an individual student.**

Guidelines for writing each section are described in this appendix. The examples are taken from a packet written for a student at Jenison High School in a Retailing course. This packet was developed to teach the student one of several rules regarding work in the school store, "The Cat's Corner." Accompanying tests and assignments were also written based on these packets. The student learned a modified version of the entire "Cat's Corner Handbook," all the rules for working in the school store, through these packets.

(Examples are from the first pages only of each of the five sections in the packet, "Store Hours and Employee Schedule."

Section A Guidelines

This section is an introduction to the selected concepts/vocabulary. Simple statements containing the answer in capital or boldface letters are followed by statements requiring the student to provide the correct answer.

Title the first page with:

- Subject or placement
- Reference to concepts addressed in the packet
- Section A: Introduction

Other guidelines include:

- "Lead" the student to writing the correct responses in the blanks.
- Ask for one word, or a response involving a few words or a short sentence.

For example:

CAT'S CORNER

STORE POLICIES
Policy 1: Store Hours and Employee Schedule
Packet A: Introduction Packet

Directions: Read the sentences. Write the correct word in each blank to complete the sentence.

To find out when the store is open, look at the paper on the wall that lists the hours. It is called the **SCHEDULE.**

The paper on the wall that lists the times the store is open is called the _____.

Your teacher is the **STORE SUPERVISOR.**

Your teacher is the _____ _____. The Store Supervisor's name is Mrs._____.

Section A.1

Section A.1 is **identical** to Packet A, except vocabulary and concepts are no longer capitalized or written in boldface. Therefore, in the above example, "schedule" and "Store Supervisor" should be written similar to other words.

Section B Guidelines:

This is the first review of the concepts and vocabulary presented in the introduction. This section requires the student to "fill in the sentence". The answers should still be pretty obvious. A few other words may be in competition with the correct answer.

Title each page with:

- Subject or placement
- Reference to concepts addressed in the packet
- Section B: Fill in the Blank #1

For example:

CAT'S CORNER

STORE POLICIES
Policy 1: Store Hours and Employee Schedule
Section B: Fill in the Sentence #1

Directions: Read the sentences. Choose the best answer. Write the correct word in each blank to finish each sentence.

1. To find out when the store is open, look at the paper on the wall that lists the hours. It is called the _____.

schedule wall hat clock

2. Your teacher is the _____ _____.

school principal school janitor school supervisor

Section C Guidelines

This is the second review of the concepts and vocabulary presented in the introduction. This section requires the student to "fill in the sentence", or to respond to true and false questions. "True and false" should follow the format of the sample, and should be taken from the multiple choice questions of previous sections. Blanks can require one word, or a response involving a short sentence.

Title the first page of this section with:

- Subject or placement
- Reference to concepts addressed in the packet
- Section C: Fill in the Blank and True & False

For example:

CAT'S CORNER

STORE POLICIES
Policy 1: Store Hours and Employee Schedule
Section C: Fill in the Sentence and True & False

Directions: Read the sentences. Choose the best answer. Write the correct word in each blank to finish the sentence.

1. To find out when the store is open, look at the paper on the wall that lists the hours. It is called the _____.

chart **report** **calendar** **schedule**

2. The Store Supervisor is my teacher, Mrs. Clark. This is _____.

true **false**

Section D Guidelines

This is the third review of the concepts and vocabulary presented in the introduction. This section is written in a "fill in the paragraph" format, with possible answers printed at the top of each page. It also requires matching of vocabulary or concepts with correct definitions or statements.

Title the first page of this section with:

- Subject or placement
- Reference to concepts addressed in the packet
- Section D: Fill in the Paragraph and Matching

For example:

CAT'S CORNER

STORE POLICIES
Policy 1: Store Hours and Employee Schedule
Section D: Fill in the Paragraph and Matching

Directions: Read the sentences. Choose the best answer. Write the correct word in each blank to finish the paragraph.

schedule **report** **paper** **Store Supervisor**

school principal **cashier** **stock person**

Sometimes we need to know if the Cats Corner is open. On the wall is a paper that lists the hours the school store is open. It is called the _____. Mrs. Clark, is the _____ _____ _____. It is her job to put the schedule on the wall.
