The Education of Students with Special Needs

Human Growth and Development
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Who qualifies as a child with special needs?
Understanding Special Needs

Heredity and environment influence the special needs in individuals.

• Hereditary factors include the genetic history and make-up of a person.
• Environmental factors affect the fetus after conception or the child after birth.
The Nature of Special Needs

A disability is any condition that prevents, delays or interferes with a child’s normal achievement and development. A disability may be classified as one of the following:

• Developmental
• Learning
• Physical
• Sensory
Developmental Disabilities

Some goals for the care and education of children with developmental disabilities are as follows:

• Expanding language skills
• Increasing attention span
• Learning self-help skills
• Mastering basic concepts
Learning Disabilities

• A learning disability involves a disorder in understanding or using spoken or written language.

• A child with a learning disability may be unable to listen, think, speak, spell or do mathematical problems.
Strategies for Working with Disabled Children

The following strategies are suggestions for working with learning-disabled children:

• behavior modification
• multi-sensory training
• task analysis
Educators who care for children with physical disabilities need to learn about each child’s special needs.
Sensory Disabilities

Educators who work with visually impaired children can aid their development in the many ways.
Sensory Disabilities

Educators who work with children who have hearing impairments need to be aware of each child’s individual needs.
Educators who care for children with communication disorders need to learn about each child’s special needs. The following guidelines apply to children with speech impairments:

• Accept and reinforce all attempts by the child to use speech
• Be a good speech model
Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Hyperactive-aggressive

• Defiant toward adults
• Destruction of property
• Inability to stay with a task or wait to be rewarded

Anxious-withdrawn

• Ability to be easily frustrated
• Excessive dependence on adults and peer leaders
• Fearfulness
GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN TEXAS

Texas Administrative Code on Gifted/Talented Education

State Plan

click on picture

click on picture
Educators providing services to G/T students must have the following:

• In Texas, minimum of 30 hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.

• Completion of G/T supplemental certification test.

• Additional hours annually of professional development.
Effective Instructional Practices for Teaching Positive Behavior

• Classroom expectations are clearly presented as related to school-wide rules.

• Classroom expectations are taught, reviewed and promoted throughout the school day.

Source: Instructional Decision-Making Procedures: Ensuring Appropriate Instruction for Struggling Students Grades K-12 (2014 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency)
Effective Instructional Practices for Teaching Positive Behavior

• Teacher provides verbal (or other) reinforcement for achieving academic goals and for meeting behavioral expectations.

• Teacher refrains from using reprimand.

• The classroom is arranged to minimize distractions.

Source: Instructional Decision-Making Procedures: Ensuring Appropriate Instruction for Struggling Students Grades K-12 (2014 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency)
Before a student is referred for a special education evaluation, documentation of clear and consistent behavior management interventions across the school and/or classroom must be made.

Source: Instructional Decision-Making Procedures: Ensuring Appropriate Instruction for Struggling Students Grades K-12 (2014 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency)
Evidence-based Interventions for Behavior

• Forming an intervention plan
• Providing documentation
• Monitoring
• Reviewing

Source: Instructional Decision-Making Procedures: Ensuring Appropriate Instruction for Struggling Students Grades K-12 (2014 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency)
Working with Children Who Have Special Needs
Roles Of Special Needs Professionals

• Appreciation of individual differences
• Arranging the environment
• Assessment
• Encouraging cooperation
• Encouraging independence
• Encouraging positive interactions

• Mainstreaming/Inclusion
• Schedule planning
Instructional Strategies for Classrooms

Best practices in instructional strategies include the use of three types:

• Direct instruction used for the entire class
• Small group instruction for a portion of the class
• Differentiated instruction for an individual student
Modifying Your Instruction to Accommodate the Special Needs Students

The developmental areas of importance can include:

• attention and memory
• concept development
• functional use of objects and symbolic play
• pre-vocabulary/vocabulary
• self-direction
Modifications versus Accommodations
# Strategies for Optimizing the Development of Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Development</th>
<th>Emotional and Social Development</th>
<th>Physical Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helping infants develop the concept of object permanence.</td>
<td>Helping infants develop independence. Promote positive behavior, self-esteem and self-control.</td>
<td>For infants, providing a safe environment to encourage crawling, walking and independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging vocabulary development.</td>
<td>Helping toddlers develop confidence in recognizing emotions in others.</td>
<td>For toddlers, encouraging large and small muscle development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping toddlers to investigate cause and effect relationships.</td>
<td>Encouraging confidence and expand independence.</td>
<td>Encouraging good nutritional habits.</td>
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Strategies for Optimizing the Development of Preschoolers with Special Needs

All states are required to report data to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs on these child outcomes:

• Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
• Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy)
• Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs

Source: The Early Childhood Outcomes Center, November 2009
Strategies for Optimizing the Development of Special Needs Children in the Early to Middle Childhood Stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation Accommodations</th>
<th>Response Accommodations</th>
<th>Setting Accommodations</th>
<th>Timing and Scheduling Accommodations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Providing an audio tape</td>
<td>• Allowing for verbal responses</td>
<td>• Providing preferential seating</td>
<td>Increasing the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way that time is organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Providing in large print</td>
<td>• Allowing for answers to be dictated to a scribe</td>
<td>• Providing special lighting or acoustics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reducing the number of items per page or line</td>
<td>• Allowing the use of a tape recorder to capture responses</td>
<td>• Providing a space with minimal distractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The University of North Texas in partnership with the Texas Education Agency

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What else should you know?
The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

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Review

1. Who qualifies as a child with special needs?

2. What are four examples of environmental factors which can create special needs in children?

3. What is a disability?

4. Provide four examples of effective instructional practices for teaching positive behavior.

5. What are examples of strategies for optimizing the development of infants and toddlers with special needs? Preschoolers? Early to middle childhood stage?
References and Resources

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Textbooks:

Websites:
• Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004
  The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.
  http://idea.ed.gov
• Texas Education Agency
  Special education: About one of every eight Texas public school students needs special education services. A wide array of services and support are available for these students and families.
  http://tea.texas.gov/Curriculum_and_Instructional_Programs/Special_Education
• Texas Woman’s University
  Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Inclusion and Mainstreaming.
  http://www.twu.edu/inspire/least-restrictive.asp
References and Resources

• The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
  The outcomes team of the ECTA Center provides national leadership in assisting states with the implementation of high-quality child and family outcomes measurement for early intervention and early childhood education.
  http://ectacenter.org/eco/

• University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
  http://resources.buildingrti.utexas.org/PDF/Instructional_Decision-making_Procedures.pdf

• U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
  The law requires an employer to post a notice describing the federal laws prohibiting job discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, equal pay, disability or genetic information.
  http://www.eeoc.gov/employers/upload/poster_screen_reader_optimized.pdf

• U.S. Department of Justice
  A Guide to Disability Rights Laws.
  http://www.ada.gov/cguide.pdf

YouTube™:
• A day in the life of a Special Education teacher
  This is a profile of the SCB, or school community based special education program at James Hubert Blake high school in Montgomery County, Maryland. A team of teachers, administrators and specialists come together each day to support and teach these students.
  http://youtu.be/qh1meBo_m1w