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Pupils with Intellectual Disabilities

Adaptive Behaviour

Erasmus+

Adaptive Behaviour

Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. **Give your pupils direct instructions and support their environment** with prompts and simplified routines (Grossi & Heward, 1998). For instance, make sure that you provide visual prompts that remind them that it is time to wash their hands.

2. **Create a behaviour support plan.** An example can be found here: http://www.pbsc.info/sab/PDFs/m3_u6_manual.pdf

3. **Use pictorial self-instruction** (Mithaug & Mithaug, 2003). Pupils will learn to complete academic assignments using a picture-based graphic organiser planner. Pupils will plan, complete, and evaluate their work by circling pictures according to the following categories: (a) Subjects to Work, (b) What I Will Do, and (c) What I Did. You can use this strategy to teach self-management skills.

4. **Promote self-determination by using Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI)** (Champers, 2007)**.** The SDLMI teaches self-directed learning to pupils in three units: (a) setting a goal, (b) taking action, and (c) adjusting the total or plan (Wehmeyer, Palmer, Agran, Mithaug, & Martin, 2000). Pupils are taught to solve problems using four steps: (a) identify the problem, (b) identify possible solutions, (c) identify possible barriers, and (d) identify consequences of each solution.

5. **Promote self-determination by involving pupils in educational planning and decision making.** These activities range from teaching pupils to use presentation software, such as Microsoft's PowerPoint, to present information about themselves during an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting, to the implementation of more systematic, curricular efforts that promote self-determination by teaching pupils skills to run their IEP meetings (see Wehmeyer et al., 2007, for a discussion of such programmatic efforts).

6. **Use simulations and other visual prompts to teach your pupils daily life skills.** For example, you can use your pupil's tablet to teach him/her about dressing, going to the grocery and other daily tasks.

School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

Class Divisions / Arrangements

1. **Inform teachers through staff meetings about the importance of keeping records about their pupils' progress;** for example they can keep a record on the progress of pupils who have difficulties in adapting their behaviour; interventions can then be designed based on the needs of the pupils.

2. **Make efforts to arrange weekly or fortnightly meetings between the parents and the staff** to discuss the progress of their children and to enhance the collaboration between home and school. This will help to monitor progress and to discuss issues that might be related to the social life of the pupil, such as marginalisation, social interactions with peers, behaviour at home, and self-esteem.

Pupil Support

1. **Establish an inclusive culture within your school** – This can be achieved through workshops and seminars with academics. It will help teachers to understand aspects of inclusion and apply inclusive practices, which will in turn contribute to helping pupils to learn adaptive behaviour skills.

2. **Collaborate with universities and in collaboration organise events/trainings at the university for teachers and pupils.** This will help teachers to learn about materials and practices in relation to adaptive behaviour skills, and apply these with their pupils.

3. **Inform teachers through staff meetings about the importance of keeping records about their pupils' progress;** for example they can keep a record on the progress of pupils who have difficulties in adapting their behaviour; interventions can then be designed based on the needs of the pupils.

4. **Provide training for teachers and SEN teachers from external agencies**, such as educational psychologist services and academics and relate these to ways that teachers can help pupils develop their adaptive skills.

5. **Provide ICT training to teachers,** so they can use the technology with their pupils. Teachers must be experienced in using ICT before they teach those skills to the pupils.

School Projects

1. **Use ABAS-2 (Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System) for evaluating the three general areas of adaptive behavior** (Conceptual, Social, Practical). This will help to:

- Determine how individual is responding to daily demands
- Develop treatment and training goals
- Determine eligibility for services and Social Security benefits
- Assess individuals with Intellectual Disability (ID), learning difficulties, ADD/ADHD, or other impairments
- Assess capability of adults to live independently

   [Reference:
   http://www.pearsonclinical.com/psychology/products/100000449/adaptive-behavior-assessment-system-second-edition-abas-second-edition.html]

Some commercially available tools might not be culturally appropriate for pupils in certain contexts, and adaptations or alternate versions may be more suitable.

Consider the risks of measuring a pupil's adaptive behaviour based on standards from the majority culture and failing to take into account the pupil's own culture. It is important to create a history log in which you record pupil's overall behaviour, history of family background, other health issues, skills and home background so as to be aware of the pupil's own culture.

Student Council

Where possible, ensure that further provisions are made for those pupils, such as additional support in the class with the presence of a teaching assistant.

Pupil Support

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Teacher Professional Development

1. **Provide ICT training to teachers,** so they can use the technology with their pupils. Teachers must be experienced in using ICT before they teach those skills to the pupils.

2. **Equip the school with tablets and personal computers** so teachers can use technology to teach to their pupils daily life skills such as going to the grocery store.

Supportive Literature

Definition: Adaptive behaviour is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that all people learn in order to function in their daily lives (https://aaidd.org). By definition, children with intellectual disabilities have substantial deficits in adaptive behaviour. In particular, children with adaptive behaviour tend to have deficits in the following skills areas: *Conceptual skills*, such as planning and organising and the use of abstract concepts; *Social skills*, such as overall behaviour, feelings about themselves, understanding others, solving problems, other people's influence, following rules and obeying the law and *Practical skills* including managing home and personal care, managing money, using the telephone, getting from place to place, staying safe and healthy, following schedules and routines, and maintaining a work life. These limitations can take many forms and tend to occur across domains of functioning. Limitations in self-care skills and social relationships as well as behavioural excesses are common characteristics of individuals with intellectual disabilities**.** Individuals with intellectual disabilities who require extensive support must often be taught basic self-care skills such as dressing, eating, and hygiene.

[Adapted from: Heward, W. L. (2013). *Exceptional children: An introduction to special education.* Pearson College Div.]

Websites & EU Reports

http://aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.WBD2LS197IU
https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/adaptive-behavior-life-skills/

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