



Inclusion Solutions

A newsletter for educators who are doing amazing things!

Fall 2009 Edition

Upcoming DSG Trainings for Parents and Educators

Practical Solutions For Challenging Behaviors

September 10th
8:30 AM-11:30 AM
Kauffman Foundation

Practical Solutions For Educating Students With Down Syndrome

November 12th
8:30 AM-11:30 AM
Kauffman Foundation

More Than Shared Classrooms: Strategies for Educating Students With Disabilities Effectively

\$30 Registration includes:
lunch, copy of presenters
book and seminar. CEU's are
available for additional \$20.

Parent Session
December 5th
9:00 AM-4:00 PM
Kauffman Foundation

Educator Session
December 7th
9:00 AM-4:00 PM
Kauffman Foundation

RSVP for these
trainings by calling
913-384-4848 or emailing
info@kcdsg.org Seating is
limited, call today!



Many educators cling to the concept of beginning with the end in mind. While it may be the beginning of the school year, we are encouraging you to think about the end of the year for your graduating seniors! Doors to colleges are opening for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in many different ways all over the country.

Thinkcollege.net is designed to share what is currently going on, provide resources and strategies, let you know about training events, and give you ways to talk to others. The information is for transition aged students as well as adults attending or planning for college. It provides resources and tools for students, families, and professionals.

Across the country, people are interested in creating and enhancing opportunities for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities to attend college. There are over 130 programs already accepting students with disabilities. ***Are you preparing your student for college?*** They may be interested in dual enrollment initiatives that support high school students to attend college as part of transition, or working with adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities to attend college.

The resources on the website are designed to assist all those interested in creating quality, inclusive postsecondary options. We encourage you to browse the site and all its sections--you will find helpful resources not only in the professionals section, but also the parent and student sections as well.

For more information visit: www.thinkcollege.net

Goingtocollege.net contains information about living college life with a disability. It's designed for high school students and provides video clips, activities and additional resources that can help you get a head start in planning for college.

Through several interviews, college students with disabilities from across Virginia provided key information for the site. These video clips offer a way for you to hear firsthand from students with disabilities who have been successful.

Each module includes several activities that will help you to explore more about yourself, learn what to expect from college and equip you with important considerations and tasks to complete when planning for college. Share these with your parents, teachers and guidance counselor — you might just teach them a thing or two.

Going to College

A resource for teens with disabilities

Encourage your students
to visit this great site!
www.going-to-college.org

Video tutorials and
checklists will help your
student decide if college
is right for them

Emergency Response Plans Keep Students Safe

Students with Down syndrome may have difficulty attending to task due to short attention spans, easy distractibility and requiring longer processing time to respond to directions. They may elope or run off when no one is paying attention to avoid doing tasks or to access something they want such as the playground. Having an emergency response plan in place BEFORE the student goes missing will help alleviate stress and insure a safe return to the class. See the tips below to get started!



Involve parents in creating the emergency search plan as they are the experts on their child! Notify parents ASAP if their child has gone missing.



Determine which areas of your school pose the greatest hazard and search those areas first! (i.e. busy cross streets, parking lot, swimming pool, pond etc.)

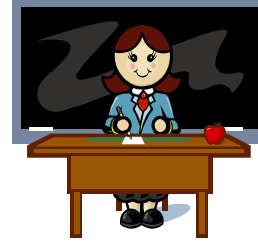


Create a code word which can be announced over the intercom to alert everyone to the missing student. (i.e. Code Adam)

Make a map of the school and designate search areas.



Ask educators and support staff to stop what they are doing when the code is announced and search the area they have been assigned and report back.



If the missing student has a sibling at school be careful about how information is relayed. (i.e. don't announce the name of the child missing)



Establish a specified time frame for searching before the authorities are contacted for help. Search times may vary depending on the danger involved.



Review and update the emergency response plan as needed. If the student continually elopes an IEP team meeting should be called to address this.



Avoiding Textbook Trauma!

Students with Down syndrome may experience difficulty when it comes to textbook reading assignments. Consider the following tips below to help your student succeed in reading and tracking text:

Pre-teaching Strategies for Text

Allow student to take home an audiocassette of material.

Provide extra time for the student to preview and discuss the photos, illustrations, captions, headings with an adult.

Preview bold faced print and italicized words and headings.

Furnish a weekly list of anticipated vocabulary in the text.

Generate chapter vocabulary lists for textbooks.

Offer the lists to therapists so they can reinforce the use of vocabulary words in their exercises with the student

Provide a list of discussion questions and ask the student to find the answers. Give page number clues as needed.

If possible, highlight the most important text and concepts in the book so the student can focus on that information only.

Read a paragraph aloud and then ask the student to paraphrase what they learned.

Tracking Difficulties

Partner the student with a peer to assist

Give specific instructions as to where the student should start reading in the text book. (i.e. page 10 middle paragraph)

Provide frequent oral cues when reading aloud

Seat student near the teacher so tracking can be monitored

Use a bookmark to help the student keep his/her place

Place a horizontal arrow running from left to right on an index card. This will aid the student with directionality.

Cut a window in an index card. This helps students focus on a few set of lines or a small area and avoid distractions

Provide the student a picture frame from construction paper to block out extraneous information on the page

Allow the student to listen to material and view pages while someone else reads text aloud.

Seven Habits of Highly Effective IEP Teams

By Eileen Hammar & Anne Malatchi

1. Be Proactive—Taking initiative does not mean being pushy, obnoxious, or aggressive. It does mean recognizing our responsibility, to make things happen. Fundamental in our efforts to become proactive members of IEP teams is adopting an attitude that is collaborative, facilitative, and responsible. To be proactive requires a shift in our thinking from a deficit-based model of education to a capacity model. Often, goals for IEPs are developed as a result of a label, or something that appears to be wrong – i.e., reacting to a behavior that others do not think is acceptable. Proactive goals and objectives are based on the premise that the entire team is responsible for making things happen. John will use a transition object such as a computer disk when it is time to go to computer class. The team realizes if John knows in advance it will soon be computer time, and can carry something with him to remind him where he is going, he will be less likely to exhibit challenging behaviors when asked to go to computer class.

2. Begin with the End in Mind —This habit is based on imagination-the ability to envision, to see the potential, to create with our minds what we cannot at present see with our eyes. Before developing an IEP, learn about the student. Be able to envision the future, the possibilities. What are his or her dreams? Nightmares? What are the learner's strengths and needs? Where does he or she want to live after school? What kind of job would he or she be fulfilling? It has been too easy in the past to look at the small picture instead of determining what the end of the journey will look like. Once that picture is clear, it makes sense to decide what he or she must be taught in order to get there.

3. Put First Things First —Create a clear, mutual understanding of what needs to be accomplished, focusing on what, not how; results not methods. Spend time. Be patient. Visualize the desired result. Prioritize! It is impossible for anyone, in one year's time, to work on everything they would like to learn. Having nine, ten or more goals and dozens of objectives on an IEP is akin to being set up for failure. What is urgent or most important in the coming year that needs to be addressed on the IEP?

4. Think Win-Win— Win-Win is a frame of mind that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win-Win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial and satisfying. Consensus building is a key element of effective, collaborative IEP meetings. Reaching consensus indicates that power and control has been shared. Demanding parents or dictating educators do not contribute to win-win solutions. IEP goals and objectives which are too general and not designed for progress lead to a lose-lose situation. How many times have you worked with a student who has the same goals and objectives year after year? Both the student and the teacher are frustrated. Something is wrong with the goal when there is no progress. Be specific in stating the desired results of the objectives, the guidelines for achievement, how accountability will be determined, and when to decide if the goal and/or objective is not appropriate.

5. Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood—Seek First to Understand' involves a very deep shift in paradigm. We typically seek first to be understood. Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. They're either speaking or preparing to speak. They're filtering everything through their own paradigms, reading their autobiography into other people's lives. In a truly collaborative IEP process educators will listen to and understand parents: parents will listen to and understand educators. All team members will realize the importance of listening to and understanding the student. The desired outcome is not for everyone to always agree but to understand each team member's view point. The power of this type of listening is that it gives the team accurate data with which to work. In order for this to happen, language at meetings must be jargon free. The final product (the IEP document) must be written in language that everyone working with the student can understand.

6. Synergize—Synergy works; it's a correct principle. It is the crowning achievement of all the previous habits. It is effectiveness in an interdependent reality - it is teamwork, team building, the development of unity, and creativity with other human beings. Effective IEPs are those that have been developed collaboratively by a transdisciplinary team. There is creative cooperation occurring at each step of the development process. All participants strive to work together, realizing it takes both parents and educators to educate students. It is unlikely that this will occur at one IEP event. The quality of the preplanning for an IEP is of equal value to the official meeting. The time devoted to the preplanning process will differ depending on each individual student.

7. Sharpening the Saw —This is the habit of renewal. It circles and embodies all the other habits. It is the habit of continuous improvement that lifts you to new levels of understanding and living each of the habits.

Celebration of success is one of the keys to effective IEP teams. These celebrations recognize the achievements we have made. They also energize us to keep on this collaborative journey with a student toward a life of his or her choosing.

Note: Quotes in bold and the seven basic concepts are directly from “7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Steven J. Covey. This article was published in the Fall 2003 issue of Outlook, the LDA of Michigan newsletter.



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We're on the web!
www.kcdsg.org



Step UP for Down Syndrome Walk October 24th Arrowhead Stadium 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

There are over 250 Down syndrome walks held worldwide to promote greater awareness of Down syndrome and raise much needed funds to help individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the professionals who serve and support them. Kansas City is proud to host one of the largest walks in the world! Over 7,000 people joined us at Arrowhead last year to celebrate Down syndrome. Will you be there this year to help us cross the finish line?

A majority of DSG programs and services are funded through walk proceeds. If you enjoy reading this newsletter, attending our social and educational events, visiting our website, participating in a community group, attending the holiday party or connecting with other families it is all made possible through the walk.

**Register to support the DSG today by visiting
www.stepupfordownsyndromekc.org**

Disability Awareness Trainings for School Nurses and Bus Drivers

DSG has partnered with the Autism community to provide disability awareness trainings for school nurses and bus drivers and aides. Is this something that would benefit your district? If you answered yes, we would love to come out and provide a presentation at your district! Presentations cover the following information:

- Down syndrome and Autism 101
- Common medical issues
- Behavior intervention strategies
- Setting the student up to succeed
- Where to turn for help
- Providing proper support



These 2 hour trainings are offered free to any school district who requests them (schedule permitting) as long as 25 attendees are guaranteed. Please call 913-384-4848 or email info@kcdsg.org for more information or to request a training.