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Inclusion Solutions

A newsletter for educators who are doing amazing things!

Fall 2010 Edition

FREE EDUCATOR TRAININGS!

Practical Solutions for Educating Students With Down Syndrome

Thursday, September 23, 2010
8:30 AM-11:30 AM
Continental Breakfast Provided
Kauffman Foundation Conference Center
4801 Rock Hill Road, Kansas City, MO 64110

Over 5,000 parents and educators have attended the **"Practical Solutions for Educating Students with Down Syndrome"** workshop and rated it as highly helpful.

Designed to help you understand how to successfully engage, instruct and enjoy your student with Down syndrome, this workshop will provide an overview of the specific learning needs characteristic of students with Down syndrome. The following tips, strategies and solutions relevant to pre-school through high school will be covered in this **FREE TRAINING**:

- How to improve student communication
- How to move your student towards independence
- The right placement with the right schedule
- How to change behavior
- Simple approaches to adapting curriculum
- How to build a productive parent/school partnership

Workshop attendees will obtain a better understanding of ways to effectively support and include their student with Down syndrome. This workshop is appropriate for **ALL** educators, parents, family members, paraprofessionals, medical professionals, and therapists who interact with students who have Down syndrome.

Down Syndrome 101 for Paraprofessionals

Thursday, October 28, 2010
8:30 AM-11:30 AM
Continental Breakfast Provided
Kauffman Foundation Conference Center
4801 Rock Hill Road, Kansas City, MO 64110

Are you a paraprofessional currently working with a student who has Down syndrome? If so, do you understand the unique learning profile of your student and how you can most effectively include, educate and enjoy your student?

DS 101 for Paraprofessionals which will cover the following topics during this **FREE TRAINING**:

- Common medical issues related to Down syndrome
- Communication issues and strategies for success
- How to improve social skills
- Processing time and memory issues
- Benefits of inclusive education
- Environmental issues which can hamper success
- Ways to adapt the curriculum
- Peer presentations to increase friendships
- Behavior intervention strategies
- Preferred teaching methods

Don't miss this chance to gain a better understanding of how the diagnosis of Down syndrome affects learning and how you can best support your student.

Seating is limited and you must register for these great trainings by contacting info@kcdsg.org or by calling 913-384-4848

Helping Your Students Manage Transitions Successfully

School days are filled with many different kinds of transitions. We often hear that a student acted out for “no apparent reason” but the reality is that you may have asked that student to manage more transitions than he/she could cope with. Transitions take place when students change what they are currently doing or when they move from one activity to the next.

Macro changes: change of staff, change of location (either in the classroom or in the school), change of subject, moving from individual work to group work, working with a different student and change of school

Micro changes: change of activity or expectation within a class such as changing from reading to writing, changing from writing to putting things away, changing from listening to responding to questions or telling a story. Also includes changing the pace of work, the amount of work or the materials to be used within a single lesson.

Internal factors that affect student’s ability to transition

- **Perception of the situation:** The student may perceive the change as harder, less pleasant, or less understandable. On the other hand, if the student sees the change as positive he will have less difficulty with cooperating with the change.
- **Motor planning:** Students with Down syndrome tend to need more time to process requests, both at a physical and at a cognitive level. If they are rushed they may not manage transitions successfully.
- **Attention/fixation on the task at hand:** Some students do not want to leave the task they are working on; especially if they are achieving success with the task.
- **Attention to the next task:** Other students will rush to the next task without properly finishing up on the previous task.
- **Motivation:** Some students don’t care about getting through “your” schedule, they may not understand why you are asking them to do yet another task. They may not want to cooperate because they do not understand the routine.
- **History of this situation:** If a student has had difficulty in a certain class/task they may be less likely to cooperate with the transition to that task. If they have had success, the transition will be smoother.

- **Communication skills:** Students with Down syndrome tend to have communication challenges that affect their ability to negotiate for more time or to ask for an explanation about why the change is happening. Often a refusal to cooperate is communicating that the transition is causing stress of some kind for the student.
- **Health:** Some students may be ill and not be able to tell you something is wrong. In this case they may be less cooperative with transitions. Many students with Down syndrome suffer from Obstructive Sleep Apnea which impedes their ability to cooperate due to lack of sleep.
- **Sensory challenges:** Some students who have sensory integration challenges, will have difficulty with any change as they are using all of their energy to cope with their sensory challenges. These students will have difficulty with transitions until they feel less overwhelmed within the classroom setting.

External factors that affect student’s ability to transition

- **Environment:** Many students are affected by the noise and activity level in a classroom.
- **Who’s requesting the change:** Some students will respond to some people better than others; this includes all staff and peers.
- **How the request is made:** If a student feels threatened or embarrassed with a request or does not understand a request, the student may not respond.
- **Why the request is made:** Some requests “come out of the blue” and may not make sense to a student who is quite happy doing what he is currently doing.
- **What the task looks like:** If the task “looks” hard, the student may not cooperate with the change.
- **Who else is doing the task:** Most students will look around to see who else is doing the task, if he feels singled out with the task, he may resist.

To help your students it’s important you make PLANS for transitions. See the chart on the next page for tips and strategies which will help you minimize frustrations resulting from transitions.

By Carol Johnson, CDSS Information Manager

Transition Skills Checklists

It's critically important that students with Down syndrome be prepared to go out into the world when they graduate from high school. In addition to academic goals, your student should have IEP goals focusing on the following skills which will help them be successful out in the community and on the job.

Vocational Skills

Can your student:

- Get to and from class on time
- Perform work satisfactorily
- Work cooperatively with others
- Take break/lunch appropriately
- Follow directions
- Accept supervision
- Ask for help when needed
- Wear suitable clothing

Community Skills

Can your student:

- Use public transportation
- Shop for groceries/supplies
- Make/keep appointments
- Manage own funds
- Be safe in the community
- Know how to seek help

Domestic Skills

Can your student:

- Plan menus
- Shop for groceries
- Prepare meals
- Wash dishes and laundry
- Keep house clean
- Know when/how to answer door
- Dust/mop/vacuum
- Take trash out

Social and Personal Skills

Can your student:

- Use appropriate identification
- Greet people appropriately
- Manage personal grooming
- Be courteous
- Be responsible

Use appropriate voice tone

Recreation & Leisure

Can your student:

- Use free time appropriately
- Choose good activities
- Pick a hobby
- Be in a new setting comfortably
- Use community resources
- Order in a restaurant
- Express preferences in activities
- Call friends to make plans

Other Useful Skills

Can your student:

- Use a cell phone
- Dial 911 in case of emergency
- Take prescriptions as prescribed
- Use sunscreen/umbrella
- Make change
- Operate appliances

Are You Ready to Step Up for Down Syndrome?

Did you know that Kansas City is home to one of the largest Down syndrome awareness walks in the world? With over 7,000 attendees and \$450,000 raised last year we are going to need your help to raise the bar even higher!

The Step Up Walk is your chance to celebrate your loved one with DS while promoting greater awareness and raising funds for the critical programs and services the DSG offers to its members. It's an important opportunity for you to invite family, friends, co-workers to celebrate life with Down syndrome and learn more about DSG's important programs and services.

We invite you to walk with us and celebrate life with Down syndrome on Saturday, September 25th at Arrowhead Stadium. Participants are encouraged to register their family or team online and make walk fundraising pages featuring their personal experiences with Down syndrome and how their lives have been enriched. EVERY donation and registration helps support DSG's mission, programs and services.



Saturday, September 25th
www.stepupfordownsyndromekc.org





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Please forward your email to info@kcdsg.org if you wish to continue receiving this publication.

Make PLANS for Transitioning Students

P

- Prepare for changes in routines using visual and or verbal prompts
- Photograph activities and create booklets to help students “see” the schedule for the day
- Practice transitions such as walking to another classroom or getting books from a locker
- Provide accommodations on time to get to next activity as needed

L

- List the things a student needs to do to be successful then teach and reinforce these skills
- Layout the steps to complete a task in the order they are to be done
- Limit the interruptions in a routine, watch for too many changes in a short period of time
- Let the student have control over one aspect of the transition (how fast, how long)

A

- Anticipate what will happen in new or unstructured settings and plan accordingly
- Acknowledge that a situation may be stressful and find ways to make it less threatening by pairing a positive experience to the new experience (listening to music on an ipod while passing through busy hallways)
- Arrange for visits from new staff or students to take place in a familiar environment

N

- Note kinds and types of changes that bother a student and plan to avoid these during transition times
- Number the steps in a sequence of events, teach one step at a time. Show the final outcome you expect
- Notify parents of any macro changes that take place and have them keep you apprized of what goes on at home

S

- Signal to indicate the activity is coming to an end or a new activity will be starting soon
- Supply substitutes with the information they need on classroom activities or routines
- Arrange for visits from new staff or students to take place in a familiar environment