

Inclusion Solutions

A newsletter for educators who are doing amazing things!

Winter 2009 Edition

Strategies to Improve Student Motivation

Many students with disabilities appear to be unmotivated when it comes to school work. The reality is they are likely overwhelmed, over stimulated, can't keep up or may have issues with low self-esteem or lack confidence. Teachers and parents can improve the motivational level of students if they step back and assess the situation and make some changes to teaching techniques or the student's environment. Remember that everyone wants to succeed and do their best but your students with Down syndrome may need some extra motivation to make the attempt. Try the following techniques to help develop a **can do** attitude, which will set your student up for success.

- Always build on prior knowledge to set the student up for success
- Praise and recognize ALL efforts to improve. Give verbal and non-verbal reinforcements.
- Provide opportunities for peer mentoring.
- Buddy up for social skill development and cooperative learning whenever possible.
- Use graphic organizers to assist the student.
- Give feedback for being on task, task completion, solid efforts and demonstrated improvement.
- Encourage independence and provide positive feedback when student works well independently.
- ALWAYS focus on the student's abilities NOT disabilities.
- Provide opportunities for the student to take risks in new learning situations.
- Give students opportunities to provide feedback on why he/she thinks you're happy with them.
- Always provide opportunities throughout the day for the student to experience success.
- Find what the student is passionate about and wrap the curriculum around that. (i.e. if he loves wrestling then have math problems focus on the number of wrestlers in the ring/match)



STARS
Special Teens Achieving
Real Success

DSG is proudly launched our STARS program in June 2009. STARS (Special Teens Achieving Real Success) caters programs and events to our teen population ages 12-18. Programs and events offered through the STARS program are intended to provide a supportive environment for our teens to enhance their skill set in regards to social, life and prevocational skills.

As an organization, we view this program as an ideal opportunity for teens with Down syndrome as it provides an environment which helps our teens achieve the independence they desire and deserve long after leaving the hallways of your schools. We see the STARS program as a unique offering by the DSG to usher our teens into adulthood.

To inquire about the STARS program please contact Rose O'Dell, DSG Teen Program Coordinator, at rose@kcdsg.org or 913-384-4848



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SAVE THE DATE!

**Educator Conference
Thursday February ??**

**Parent Conference
Saturday February ??**

KC Convention Center

DSG is partnering with DownsEd, International to host a conference so our members can learn more about how to support and educate their child/student with Down syndrome.

DownsEd works across the UK and around the world to improve understanding and to improve the quality of support and education for young people living with the Down syndrome.

Scientific research is at the heart of what DownsEd does. For 30 years, they have improved understanding of the condition and identified effective teaching methods that deliver marked improvements in speech, language and cognition. Their ongoing research programs continue to pioneer new ways to support development and learning for young people with Down syndrome.

Watch your mailboxes for more information on how to register for this exciting conference! To learn more about DownsEd visit:

www.downsed.org

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

I. Provide Multiple Means of Representation

1. Provide options for perception

- Options that customize the display of information
- Options that provide alternatives for auditory information
- Options that provide alternatives for visual information

2. Provide options for language and symbols

- Options that define vocabulary and symbols
- Options that clarify syntax and structure
- Options for decoding text or mathematical notation
- Options that promote cross-linguistic understanding
- Options that illustrate key concepts non-linguistically

3. Provide options for comprehension

- Options that provide or activate background knowledge
- Options that highlight critical features, big ideas, and relationships
- Options that guide information processing
- Options that support memory and transfer

II. Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression

4. Provide options for physical action

- Options in the mode of physical response
- Options in the means of navigation
- Options for accessing tools and assistive technologies

5. Provide options for expressive skills and fluency

- Options in the media for communication
- Options in the tools for composition and problem solving
- Options in the scaffolds for practice and performance

6. Provide options for executive functions

- Options that guide effective goal-setting
- Options that support planning and strategy development
- Options that facilitate managing information and resources
- Options that enhance capacity for monitoring progress

III. Provide Multiple Means of Engagement

7. Provide options for recruiting interest

- Options that increase individual choice and autonomy
- Options that enhance relevance, value, and authenticity
- Options that reduce threats and distractions

8. Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence

- Options that heighten salience of goals and objectives
- Options that vary levels of challenge and support
- Options that foster collaboration and communication
- Options that increase mastery-oriented feedback

9. Provide options for self-regulation

- Options that guide personal goal-setting and expectations
- Options that scaffold coping skills and strategies
- Options that develop self-assessment and reflection



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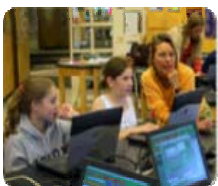
Universal Design For Learning Online Modules Available

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for designing curricula that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. UDL provides rich supports for learning and reduces barriers to the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all. The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) is now offering free online modules which introduce the theory, principles and application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to teacher candidates and in-service teachers. They provide higher education faculty with a multimedia, interactive online-learning environment that can be embedded in instructional methods courses.



Multiple Means of Representation

The content is represented in multiple ways including text, audio clips and video. This provides learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge.



Multiple Means of Action and Expression

Online activities, discussion questions and lesson plan assignments allow students to express their understanding in different ways. This provides learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know.



Multiple Means of Engagement

Text, audio, video, activities, additional resources, information, links to more information and to other web sites allow students multiple ways to engage with the content. This allows educators to tap into learners' interests, challenge them appropriately, and motivate them to learn.

Visit <http://udlonline.cast.org/home> to view these presentations

Ten Tips for General Educators

Small gestures help students with disabilities participate, learn and succeed in the classroom.



Promote socialization.

Seat students with students! Adults sitting with students may inhibit peer interactions. Encourage paraeducators to sit off to the side or away from students.

Speak directly to students.



Resist temptations to talk through paraeducators. Direct greetings, questions and explanations to the student.



Greet students everyday.

Get to know your students. Saying hello to a student requires no prep time and helps the student feel like a member of the class.

Assume responsibility.



YOU are the teacher. Do not delegate this important role to others, even when other professionals accompany a student in the classroom.



Expect success.

Expect everyone to learn and participate in the classroom. Share this expectation with students and staff members. Remember that participation and learning occur on many levels. Adjust the demands of an activity or assignment to match student ability.

Ask content questions daily.



Continually monitor student participation and learning. Your observations provide useful insights and help the special education staff evaluate curriculum modifications, and individualize lessons.

Share your lessons and plans.



You are not alone. When you share your plans, the learning specialist can adapt or modify the content to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Vary instructional methods!



Make learning an active experience for ALL students. Create cooperative learning groups. Encourage partner learning. Provide students with a variety of resource materials, projects, workshop formats, and experiential activities. Have students demonstrate mastery in a variety of ways.

Share your ideas and feelings.



It's okay to express your fears and opinions. Phrase concerns in specific terms. Instead of saying "I don't think this student belongs here!" Try "How can I make this Shakespeare dialog meaningful for this student?"

Treat students equally.



Maintain behavior expectations and disciplinary methods for ALL students in the classroom. Share your expectations with other staff members and caregivers.



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We're on the web!
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Looking for social skill strategies specifically designed to help kids with developmental delays? Model Me Kids® developed a library of videos where kids model and narrate behavior during school, on a playdate, building friendships, confidence, understanding emotions, and birthday parties. Each skill is detailed and put together in short clips, using real situation then broken down step by step and reviewed using a storyboard. These videos are helpful for teacher, parents, and therapist alike.



Model Me Kids® was founded by Susan Klein, an ABA Therapist trained by Community Services for Autistic Adults & Children, and staffed with professionals with experience in Speech Language Pathology, Psychology, Early Child Development, Counseling, and other professional who work with the developmental disability community.

www.modelmekids.com



Many kids struggle with issues such as bullying/teasing, shyness, anger and frustration management, personal space issues, or general social awkwardness. This web site is designed to support kids of all abilities who struggle with these issues. Social Smart Kids was created with the objective to provide online support for kids, including those with special needs, who have challenges in social development. Social Smart Kids has a philosophy that making and keeping friends involves three participants, the child, the potential friend, and the parent or other adult in the child's life.

Parents who become involved in their children's social lives have an opportunity to teach social skills and can make a major difference in helping to solidify friendships. Parents can: provide social opportunities, coach your child prior and during social event, provide structured activity, encourage group play, guide fantasy play, and more.

The founder, Nadine Briggs, a mother of a child with Down syndrome and typical developing son, believes parent involvement in developing social skills can improve social appropriate behaviors. Some of the services and products offered by Social Smart Kids are seminars, social skill plans, discussion cards, advocacy, online advise, books, videos, and e-newsletter.