

Foundational Supports and Interventions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

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The Need for Foundational Interventions

- ▶ Foundational interventions are defined as those which provide core supports for all students on the spectrum.
- ▶ Current research focuses on interventions that are successful in a specific domain
- ▶ Individualized planning for students with ASD is testing schools ability to program for these students.

Introduction to Foundational Need for Supports and Interventions

- ▶ Unprecedented increase in prevalence of ASD
- ▶ IDEA and ESEA's push for SBR
- ▶ Lack of research in the field which interventions fall under the SBR category

Evidence Based Practices

- ▶ The Evidence-Based movement
- ▶ Lack of agreement on EBP
- ▶ ESEA requires evidence based supports
- ▶ No consistency currently in literature regarding how to define ASD related supports

Purpose of the Presentation

- ▶ What are the basic elements and procedures that are indispensable, crucial and fundamental for students diagnosed with ASD?
- ▶ What interventions should elementally be put in place within all classrooms and educational settings that will create the foundation for a successful environment for students with ASD?

Current Trends Addressed in the Literature

- ▶ Current trend in the rising numbers of students diagnosed with an ASD
- ▶ Current standard for EBR
- ▶ Foundational supports possibilities
- ▶ Professional development
- ▶ Rtl's model of foundational supports

What We Know

- ▶ No known cure for ASD and education has been deemed the best 'treatment'
- ▶ Students with ASD learn best when evidence based supports are used.
- ▶ Students with ASD must have interventions and supports that are individualized and address unique characteristics to be academically successful.
- ▶ Determining foundational interventions and strategies has become critical for educators to provide 'best practices.'
- ▶ Foundational interventions should be in place when the student enters the classroom for the first time.

Basic Categories of Foundational Supports and Interventions

- ▶ Collaborative Teaming
- ▶ Human & Other Resources
- ▶ Classroom Structure
- ▶ Academic, Pre-Academic, & Cognitive
- ▶ Social Skill Supports
- ▶ Challenging Behavior Supports
- ▶ Family Participation
- ▶ Communication Supports
- ▶ Sensory Supports

Collaborative Teaming

- ▶ Weekly or bi-weekly collaborative team meetings
- ▶ The team leader should personally be knowledgeable of and monitor student's instructional programs
- ▶ All team members to implement the program consistently
- ▶ Have a specified problem solving process in place
- ▶ Consistent follow-up on decisions made at team meetings by the team leader
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism this becomes a greater need as they age

Human & Other Resources

- ▶ Related-services staff (ie, Speech, OT, PT) to be involved
- ▶ One-to-one para-educator support
- ▶ Classroom-wide para-educator support
- ▶ A collaborative teaching environment (ie, class-within-a-class)
- ▶ Staff should have continuing professional development
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism this becomes a lesser need as they age

Classroom Structure

- ▶ Generic daily schedule for all students posted visibly within all classrooms
- ▶ Individualized visual schedule
- ▶ Clear organizational environment
- ▶ Overall environmental supports (eg, routines, physical structure)
- ▶ All staff members of the classroom to have clearly defined roles
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism this becomes a greater need as they age while students with higher functioning autism it becomes a lesser need

Academic, Pre-Academic, & Cognitive

- ▶ Appropriate criterion-referenced assessments need to be completed and utilized to determine target skills
- ▶ Clearly summarized data on IEP goals
- ▶ The IEP addresses all domains connected to students with ASD
- ▶ Individualized materials
- ▶ Individualized work tasks or work boxes
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism this require more intense academic, pre-academic, and cognitive supports

Social Skill Supports

- ▶ Individualized social skill IEP goals
- ▶ An individualized social skill curriculum
- ▶ Providing a peer network
- ▶ Staff not interfering with ongoing positive peer interactions
- ▶ Staff providing positive feedback to promote and maintain social interactions
 - Indications were that there was a need for social skill supports for all students with ASD

Challenging Behavior Supports

- ▶ A data collection system on challenging behavior
- ▶ A data collection system on the antecedent (ie, triggers for problem behaviors) of challenging behaviors
- ▶ Completing a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) for challenging behaviors
- ▶ Write a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) based on a FBA
- ▶ Use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism demonstrate an increased need for challenging behavior supports as they age

Family Participation

- ▶ School personnel to work with families on a non-educational goal (e.g., respite care, accessing community services, etc.)
- ▶ Respect the family requests for specific interventions and strategies
- ▶ Staff avoids using jargon and acronyms with the family while explaining technical terms
- ▶ Staff provides information about instructional strategies, community resources, and other topics as requested by the family
- ▶ A system in place for daily communication with the family
 - Indications were there is a need for family participation supports for all students with ASD

Communication Supports

- ▶ The student should have an alternative communication device outside of the visual schedule
- ▶ Have a collaborative staff working on the same communication supports
- ▶ Staff provide choices as a part of the communication supports
- ▶ The student should have access to the same type of alternative communication used during the school day at home
- ▶ have a full language evaluation based on his or her characteristics
 - Indications were that for students with classic autism there is an increased need for communication supports

Sensory Supports

- ▶ Have a full sensory evaluation completed
- ▶ Individualized sensory supports built into the classroom as needed
- ▶ Have regularly scheduled individualized sensory supports built into the school day
- ▶ Access to age appropriate sensory supports utilized as a PBIS
- ▶ Work weekly with the occupational therapist on sensory needs
 - Indications were that for students with higher functioning autism this becomes a lesser need as they age

Ending Thoughts

- ▶ Communication supports are an increased need for all students with ASD
- ▶ Collaborative teaming, human & other resources, social skill supports, and family participation are all foundational needs
- ▶ Academic, pre-academic, & cognitive, challenging behavior supports, communication supports, and sensory supports are more necessary depending on the functioning level of the student