PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

- Increase Understanding of Natural Environments and Participation-Based Therapy
- Gain Inclusive Preschool Therapy Techniques
- Gain Strategies for Coaching School Staff to Facilitate Communication

OUTLINE

- Natural Environments in Early Intervention
- Functional vs. Skill-Based Outcomes
- Inclusive Therapy Techniques
- Coaching Classroom Staff
**NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS IN EARLY INTERVENTION**

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**“NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS”**

- Term comes from Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Part C (IDEA, 2004)
- Refers to settings that are typical for infants and toddlers without disabilities, in contrast to traditional treatment settings
  - i.e., therapy in homes, daycares, libraries, parks, or other community settings rather than at a clinic or hospital
- DOES NOT mean the SLP moves the clinic to the home by bringing a bag of toys and materials into the home for therapy sessions


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**WHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS?**

- Routines-based intervention provides multiple functional and meaningful opportunities for caregivers to include communication activities throughout the day every day, rather than the child receiving 30-60 minutes of intervention per week
- Doesn’t require families to set aside special time or acquire special materials to target growth and development; takes advantage of what the family already has and what the family is already doing
KEY PRINCIPLES OF EARLY INTERVENTION

1. Learn best through everyday experiences with familiar people in familiar contexts
2. All families play an essential role in child learning
3. SLP primary role is to work with family members and caregivers
4. Interventions are individualized to meet the needs of the families' preferences, learning styles, and cultural beliefs
5. IFSP outcomes are functional and family-driven
6. A primary provider works with a transdisciplinary team to target child goals
7. Interventions must be based on evidence-based practice and state/federal regulations

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EVIDENCE BASE FOR PARENT TRAINING IN EARLY INTERVENTION

2. ASHA: Evidence-Based Systematic Review: Effects of Service Delivery on the Speech and Language Skills of Children From Birth to 5 Years of Age (2010)
Body Functions and Structures | Activities | Participation
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* Anatomical and physiological aspects of the body and how it is working. | * Physical tasks the body can complete | * The ways in which a person is involved in his or her environment and fulfills life roles


**ASHA RESPONSE TO ICF**

*Preferred Practice Patterns for the Profession of Speech-Language Pathology (ASHA, 2004)*

- Recommended conduct for SLPs in line with ICF and ASHA scope of practice from 2001
- Previous focus was on traditional medical model

Therefore, address “participation” in treatment

**SKILL-BASED VS. FUNCTIONAL: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?**

**Skill-Based Outcome**
- Write goal to focus on increasing performance on a specific task (i.e., produce accurate /k/ in medial position of single words)

**Functional (or Participation-Based) Outcome**
- Write goal to focus on increasing a child’s participation in a specific activity (i.e., use accurate /k/ to request a toy from a peer during free play)

Skill-based outcomes stem from the desired result (I want Johnny to speak more clearly...) and functional outcomes stem from how you know that result has been achieved (...so that his friends will understand him when he asks for a toy)
**ACTIVITY**

- Evaluate Goals from Early Intervention
  - Discuss if the goals are functional or skill-based

**WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING**

- Service delivery model for Natural Environments in EI:
  - Parent/Caregiver
  - SLP
  - Child

- Service delivery model for Natural Environments in preschool:
  - Paraprofessionals/Teachers
  - SLP
  - Child

**ACTIVITY**

- Write Functional and Skill-Based Goals for Preschool Students

- Note: Colorado Department of Education has a Functional Goal Writing: Preschool course that is offered a few times each year
THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Following the child’s lead to work off of their interests
Using materials that are already available around the classroom
Incorporating peers into activities to use them as models
Pulling students away from their activity to start a different adult-lead activity
Bringing games or materials into the classroom
Isolating students receiving therapy from classroom peers

NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS THERAPY

LOOKS LIKE

- Following the child’s lead to work off of their interests
- Using materials that are already available around the classroom
- Incorporating peers into activities to use them as models

DOESN’T LOOK LIKE

- Pulling students away from their activity to start a different adult-lead activity
- Bringing games or materials into the classroom
- Isolating students receiving therapy from classroom peers

CHILD PARTICIPATION IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES (ROUTINES)

Following Child’s Lead:
- How do you target (GOAL) in the activity the student has chosen?
  - Language
  - Articulation
  - Pragmatics

Classroom Activity:
- How can it be shaped to target your student’s participation?
  - Independent Reading
  - Morning Circle
  - Centers
  - Whole Group Literacy
  - Outside Time
  - Small groups
  - Snack
  - Closing
**DIRECT SERVICES WITH THE CHILD: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?**

- Therapy techniques are our specialty, what we’re trained to do. We feel most comfortable when we’re doing direct intervention, BUT…

- …Natural Environments tells us that direct intervention is not the main focus, SO…

- …direct intervention is our opportunity to solve the puzzle of each child, to identify the techniques that will best increase the child’s participation, so that we can then train others.

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**COACHING**

**CLASSROOM STAFF**

- Adult Learning Principles
  - Acknowledge the adult's current knowledge, values, beliefs, and experience
  - Provide multiple exemplars of targeted practices with immediate opportunities for caregiver practice
  - Integrate reflective learning opportunities through encouragement of ongoing reflection of practices

- Coaching to Support Professional Development for Early Childhood Teachers (CDE course)
  - Circle including
    - Relationship Building
    - Gathering data
    - Goal setting and planning
    - Coaching visits-Implement action plan and strategies
    - Evaluate

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**STYLES OF COACHING**

- **Office hours**
  - Set aside regular time on your schedule for teachers and paras to “drop in” with questions
  - Design brief lessons and invite teachers and paras to attend during regularly scheduled times

- **Para trainings**
  - Design lessons to be delivered in a longer professional development session or before/after school

- **3:1 model of service delivery**
  - Direct service for 3 weeks, indirect service for 1 week

**SPEECH-LANGUAGE COACHING**

- **From Research Articles on Caregiver Interventions**
  - Responsive Interaction
  - Expansions
  - Language Modeling
  - Milieu Teaching
  - Amount of Parent-Child Interaction
  - Language input
  - Language support strategies
    - specifying relations between objects and actions
    - expanding and recasting child utterances to add words and syntactic structures

- **Hanen Programs for Parents**

**Para Training at Inclusive Charter School**

- **Para Training Modules**
  - Module 1: Communication opportunities
  - Module 2: Questioning
  - Module 3: Cuing Hierarchies and Directives
  - Module 4: Initiating
  - Module 5: Copying vs. Scaffolding
  - Module 6: Language Expansion
  - Module 7: Language and Behavior
  - Module 8: Supporting Peer Interactions
  - Module 9: AAC Users and Communication Partners

**INTERVENTION COACHING**

- Make it Relevant to Your School:
  - Who could be coached?
  - When could coaching happen?
  - What would they know? What do they need to learn?
    - General language strategies
    - Use of Peer models
    - Cueing

- Focus on Natural Environments
- Work on Participation-Based Outcomes
- Target Inclusive and Routines-Based Therapy
- Coach School Staff to Increase Communication Opportunities

**KEY POINTS**

**QUESTIONS**
REFERENCES