

SWITCH ON PARTICIPATION

The focus of this workshop is practical. This inservice will provide teachers, EA's and/or parents with the time to practice different set ups with switches or the opportunity to problem solve with others.

Total time - 1 ½ hours.

Set Up - The workshop room is physically set up so there are 4 – 6 persons at a table. This is to facilitate discussion and setting up a switch activity.

Materials - You need to have, and be familiar with:

- a variety of switches (mainly Big Reds and Jellybeans if that is what is easily available)
 - several Ablenet Universal Mounting Arms (can use Slim Armstrong if necessary but does not have the flexibility for positioning the switch)
 - one Ablenet Powerlink or Switch Latch per table
 - a variety of common electric appliances which could include a hair dryer, blender, electric pencil sharpener, palm sander, water pik etc. Some battery equipment such as fans, an All-Turn-It-Spinner and toys would also be useful. Have materials and share ideas that are appropriate for children from K - 12.

Getting The Equipment - The switches, Powerlinks, mounting arms and All-Turn-It Spinner will be available from students in your district, from SET-BC (if you have an office close by), from your local CDC, from a loan bank in your district or, possibly, from PISP. Check out kitchens, basements, cupboards etc. for the appliances.

Opening Activity - 15 minutes

Encourage participants to sit at a table with people they don't know. Have each person use the worksheet to write and then share about his/her student who is using a switch. Share one idea from each table with the whole group.

Sharing By Facilitator - 10 minutes

Common questions/concerns that many of us have are:

- "My student hates hand over hand activities. What else can we do?"
- "My student spends a lot of time watching. How do we include her more in what is happening in class?"
- "My student is not doing Grade 4 math. How can he be included during math period?"

Discuss the concept of **active participation** both partial and full as it relates to us and give some examples.

Partial - doing taxes, car maintenance, dry-cleaning

Full - going shopping, cooking a meal, having a shower/bath

As any of us are learning a new skill, participation may at first be only partial and move towards full.

Activity - 5 minutes

Brainstorm as a large group both partial and full participation for us as adults.

Sharing By Facilitator - 15 minutes

The students we are planning for in this inservice have either poor ability to use their hands because of tone or weakness and/or little understanding that their hands are tools that can work for them. As part of the team, we each want our student to have frequent opportunities:

- for active participation - partial or full
- to work on skills

- to work therapy goals (PT, OT, SLP) into daily learning activities and routines

Using a switch is **just one way** of achieving that. Using basic appliances in creative and often non traditional ways your students can:

- work towards their goals
- be a contributor to classroom, school and community
- have fun

We have to take it one step at a time. We must have access first!! For reliable switch access an individual should use movement that is:

- voluntary both on and off the switch - often the latter is the more difficult
- repeatable
- easy/energy efficient
- has minimal or no accidental hits

Overhead - Location Of Switch + Position Of Student + Type Of Switch = Access

***** Getting reliable access can be anything from fairly easy to extremely challenging. We want our students to have the opportunity to participate with a switch regardless of the position they need to be in. This includes sitting in the wheelchair, standing in a standing frame, lying in a sidelyer etc. *****

You can't separate access from motivation. What is the switch doing for the student that he enjoys? Can she do a job for someone else - a peer, a family member, a teacher or the librarian so that she will feel good about helping others? Does it give him a voice? Does it bring her into more contact with her peers?

Every student benefits from having a "script" - a series of prompts/cues that the people around him are using consistently as he learns to use the switch. (See "Prompting For Switch Use - Sample Routine" in handout package.)

Demonstrations: - 10 minutes

1. different switches and how they work
2. an Ablenet mounting arm (see sheet in handout package)
3. an Ablenet Powerlink (See "Modes Of Control For The Ablenet Powerlink in handout package) and Switch Latch
4. setting up a switch, the Powerlink and an appliance

Activity (30 minutes)

1. Ask each group/table to set up a specific switch and appliance (pull names of appliances you have on hand out of a hat).
2. Have the group come up with at least one learning activity that a student could be working on with their set up (e.g. using a hairdryer to dry watercolor paint in art class so peers can move on to next paint color).
3. Each group should move around the room so they have an opportunity to see the other set ups. When participants visit another station they need to leave a new idea for a learning activity.

YOU CAN REPEAT THIS ACTIVITY AS OFTEN AS YOU WANT TO TURN THIS WORKSHOP INTO A LONGER BUT STILL "HANDS ON" ONE.