

Writing IEPs With Expectations For Improvement For Students With Severe Multiple Disabilities

What is the stretch?

When writing IEP objectives, we need to include student specific statements that reflect measurement of progress. How will you know if the student has reached his/her objective? Once the objective is met, how might it change in order to stretch the student to the next level? Here are some examples of where and how you can build measurement into your student's IEP objectives:

- Degree Of Active Participation From Your Student.

How much assistance or prompting (physical and/or verbal) does the student require overall? Has the prompt level changed? (e.g., physical cue paired with verbal cue, to just the visual cue)

- Frequency Of The Behaviour

How often does your student perform the activity as desired? (e.g., How many times does the student request “more” for an interrupted favorite activity?)

- Accuracy Of The Behaviour

How precisely does your student perform the behaviour? (e.g., during switch work, how many “false hits” (hitting the switch involuntarily) occurred? Did your student point/gaze accurately at the picture choice to answer your question?)

- Appropriateness Of The Behaviour

Does your student demonstrate the desired behaviour in appropriate situations? (e.g., your student vocalizes when requesting attention, but is quiet during designated times within the classroom.)

- Duration Of The Behaviour

How long does your student engage appropriately in the desired behaviour? (e.g., does your student hold onto a spoon during mealtime for the desired length of time?)

Building Expectations For Progress Into IEP Objectives

Sometimes due to health issues, just maintaining the student’s level of ability may be considered a valid short-term objective. However, by including expectations to measure progress, we can note achievement in the accomplishment or generalization of that skill. Some examples include:

- through increasing levels of partial participation in activities
- through less prompting or facilitation required over time
- through generalization of the same skills to new people
- through generalization of the same skills to new activities or situations
- through generalization of the same skills to new objects
- through fewer false hits for some responses such as switch work
- the amount of time it takes the student to accomplish the task, may decrease (e.g., moving his head to mid-line to look at someone)
- the amount of time the student engages in the activity may increase (e.g., holding up his head)