

Inservices For Classmates

It is important for classmates to be updated on the student's communicative behaviours and skills, so that they will better understand how to interact with him. It is helpful to talk about some of the queries that have arisen for classmates and brainstorm ideas as to how to deal with them. This activity could be incorporated into his "Personal Dictionary Chart" and posted somewhere in the classroom for classmates to refer to. The student's team has done a very nice job in scripting out acknowledgments and responses to his communicative behaviours in his Personal Dictionary.

All peers working with the student should be inserviced periodically to keep abreast of communicative and other changes. This helps to keep classmates pumped up and motivated to get involved again. (We all need reminders from time to time.) The following are some strategies to assist inservicing classmates:

Inservice On The Student's Personal Dictionary

The Personal Dictionary should be reviewed initially with the entire class so that they can ask questions. Then it should be made available either by laminating and hanging on the wheelchair or by posting it in large print somewhere visibly accessible by all in the class. This should be reviewed by all and updated twice a year to keep it current.

Questions to pose in an inservice to peers could include:

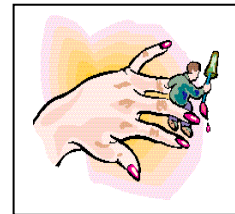
- Discussion: In what ways do you communicate non-verbally with your friends? (Discuss in small groups and then share with larger group.)
- Discussion: What kinds of behaviours (gestures, facial expressions, vocalizations, body tone, etc. have you noticed that the student uses to communicate? What do you think some of these mean?

What are some of the ways that your student communicates? List these here:

- Activity: Read out some of the behaviour descriptions and ask peers what they think the student is communicating. Select several, or write them out and place them in a box, hat or bin for peers to choose.
- Discussion: Ask peers, "How do you think we can let the student know that we understand what he is communicating?" Explain the response portion of the Personal Dictionary and try modeling it or role playing it with a peer.
- Activity: Journal Writing - Have peers take out their Personal Planning Journals or a piece of paper and respond to the following questions about the student's communication:
 - a) Recall: What did I learn or remember?
 - b) Reflect: What insights do I have about this information or experience?
 - c) React: How might this change the way I behave in the future?

Inservice On Using Our Hands

Discussion: We use our hands in many different ways. We all started to learn about our hands and what they do when we were young. We often learn by playing.



What are some ways that we like to play with their hands? One of the most important things we learned was using our eyes and hands together. What do our hands help us to do? (This inservice should be adapted for older students).

Activity: Hands tell us what things feel like (do this with your eyes open and eyes closed; e.g., bath - hot/cold; hard/soft; heavy/light).

Discussion: We also communicate or talk with our hands as well as our voices. (Provide some examples in a guessing game: stop; point; raise hands) Some people who can't talk with their voices learn to talk with their hands (e.g., sign language - more finished).

What do we do for ourselves and for other people using our hands? Classmates list activities they do (e.g., buttons, zippers, laces, Velcro straps, getting dresses, play, centres, etc.)

Hands also act as tools. We look after ourselves (e.g., toothbrush; hairbrush; etc.) We play games (e.g., Nintendo). We work (e.g., using pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, etc.)

Not everyone can use their hands in the same way.

Activity: Have some students take turns picking up small objects or other tasks with mitts and/or gloves on. (e.g., oven mitts, cloth gloves, rubber gloves, etc.)

For people who have a hard time using their hands, there are special tools called switches.

Activity: Demonstrate the use of the switch with a device (e.g., tape recorder, fan, light, etc.)

List some of the switches your student uses and how you might set this up for a demonstration:

Activity For Primary Students: Stand up and sing: If you're happy and you know it clap your hands... (alternates...wiggle your fingers; point your finger; fold your hands; rub your hands; pinch your fingers; etc.) Have classmates volunteer additional suggestions for things to do with their hands for the song.

Inservice About The Student's Skills And Goals

A discussion could begin talking about the goals of the class as a whole. Next, the facilitator could begin asking about each individual's personal goals. We are looking for parallels. These may be broken down into areas or categories.

- Activity: Ask peers to discuss in small groups, then share with the larger group, some of the goals they are working on and the skills they may need to achieve these goals. List on the blackboard: Goals / Skills Needed
List some examples in a group discussion.
- Discussion: Talk about some of the goal areas that the student is working on (e.g., communication, being able to participate, use his hands, etc.). Ask the class if they know of some of the ways that the student is working on each area (e.g., communication - list these on the board. Some of these skills could include looking at peers when they greet him; making choices between two objects by looking at or reaching towards the object he wants; expressing himself through his vocalizing, facial expressions, gestures, etc. his needs and wants.) Repeat this process with emphasis on his beginning hand use and talk about the use of a switch for the student.
- Summarize and prioritize three or four of the student's learning objectives or skills for classmates. This is what the classmates will be reinforcing in each activity and interaction. These could also be reviewed with the class and posted in large print for easy viewing.

Inservice On The Student's Use Of A Switch

- Discussion: (Adapt this for older students) Start discussion by asking peers what kinds of activities can they do now, that they could not do 5 years ago, or even 2 years ago. "How does this make them feel?" What kinds of things do they still need help with from others (e.g., mom, dad, older brother or sister, etc.) such as driving somewhere, cooking a meal, etc.) Talk about how all of us like to feel that we can do something for others or ourselves. Sometimes we may not be able to do all of the activity ourselves, but some part of it (e.g., making cookies, mowing the lawn, etc.) Talk about how the student cannot use his hands the way that we do. His brain does not send him the messages that he needs to make his hands do the things that we do. But he can participate by using his switch to make things happen, help others, entertain himself, etc.

- Activity: Set up switch and ask if anyone in the class knows how to use it? You may try two kinds of switch set ups (e.g., BIGmack for voice output; or a switch attached to a Powerlink II and set up with a popcorn maker, etc.) Ask for volunteer to demonstrate.

- Discussion: How does the student use the switch? What is his job in using the switch? How does he participate? What can you do to help him in this activity? (Encourage him, hold the switch, hold his arm at the right place, etc.)

How could peers assist or prompt your student to use the switch, without doing it themselves, hand over hand? List the ways students can prompt below:

- Activity: Have peers work in small groups, to brainstorm as many ways to
 - use the BIGmack in the classroom, school, playground
 - use the switch attached to another piece of equipment to make it run

Share their findings with another group, and then try some of them out using the BIGmack in front of the class.

Inservice On Using Our Senses



Discussion:

Who has heard the word senses before?

What are our senses?

Hearing: How do you know when it is time for recess? How do your ears tell you?

Seeing: How do you know when it is safe to cross the street? How do your eyes tell you?

Smelling: How do you know when someone is making popcorn? How does your nose tell you?

Touching: How do you find your pencil in your desk if you don't want to bend over and look? How do your hands tell you?

Tasting: How do you know if you like something that you are eating? How does your tongue tell you?

Moving: Close your eyes. What position is your foot in? How do you know that? Open and close your hands until I say stop. Keep your eyes closed. Are your hands open or closed? How do you know that?

What do our senses tell us? (They tell us what our world and our body looks like, sound like, feels like, tastes like and smells like... and where our body is.)

Activity: Some people have senses that work differently than yours and mine. We're going to do some things so you can see what that might be like. You will work with a partner. One person in each pair will put on a blindfold. Bring your partner here to get a bag, then show them back to their desk. Hold it for your partner to take something out. Don't tell them what it is. Can they guess? How did they figure out what it is?

Switch places. Put on the blindfold. Come and get a different bag. Identify what is in your bag.

Discussion: What did you find in the bag? How did you know what they were?

How did you feel when you were blindfolded? (scared, helpless?)

How would you do your work if you could not see? (feel, move, listen?)

What did your partner do that was helpful?

What else might be helpful?

Do you have any questions?

Share Vision Strategies With Peers

The teacher of the visually impaired may be able to help update some of the considerations or guidelines with regards to his vision. It is also helpful to share with peers, some of the guidelines provided by your local teacher of the visually impaired.



For example:

- When asking questions, pair the object(s) with the question.
- Combine sound effects with the visual activity wherever possible.
- Bring your face into the student's visual field when talking to him.
- Give verbal feedback to the student about what his eyes are doing.

Your local teacher of the visually impaired may be able to provide ideas for an experiential workshop or inservice to peers in combination with sharing some tools and techniques to use with the student.

Some of the following questions, which when addressed through a functional vision assessment, can often assist those who work with the student (including his peers):

- At what distance should object, pictures or people be for the student?
- How does he respond to pictures versus objects?
- Does movement of the object or picture make a difference?
- What other sensory factors help the student with his vision?

This is a Personalized Living Document. List below the guidelines or factors that need to be considered when presenting your student with something you wish the student to use his/her vision. If you are not sure, have your vision teacher fill these in.