

Developmental Disabilities: Faces Patterns Possibilities

Alphabetically Speaking, What Do We Mean?

General Terms

AAMR

American Association on Mental Retardation - National professional organization of people in the field of mental retardation; publishes several journals.

Amniocentesis

A medical procedure for pregnant women who may be at risk of parenting a child with a developmental disability, in which fluid from the amniotic sac is tested to determine if there may be a genetic defects in the fetus.

ARC

The national organization for parents of children with mental retardation which is affiliated with numerous state and local chapters.

Adaptive Behavior

The degree to which the individual can function independently at home and in the community, along with his or her ability to conform to norms of personal behavior.

Advocate

A person who supports and represents the rights and interests of another individual in order to ensure the individual's full legal rights and access to services. The advocate can be a friend, a relative, a counselor, or any other interested person.

Assessment

The process used to determine whether, and to what degree, an individual has developmental deficits. An assessment identifies the individual's strengths, abilities, needs, and developmental level.

Audiology

Evaluation of hearing ability, and treatment of hearing impairments.

Autism

Autism is a developmental disorder, with onset prior to age three years, which manifests as qualitative impairment in social interaction and communication, and restrictive, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests and activities.

Baseline Data

Information collected about a behavior (frequency, severity, etc.) before an intervention program is begun to test the effectiveness of the intervention.

Behavior

Anything a person does that can be observed and measured.

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Behavior Management

Techniques designed to influence existing behavior in some predetermined manner, and replace problem behaviors with behaviors that are appropriate.

CAT (or CT) Scan

A test which is helpful in diagnosing structural problems in the body and brain, by taking thousands of x-ray exposures which are sent to a computer to produce an image. CAT stands for Computer Assisted Axial Tomography.

Cerebral Palsy

An umbrella term for a group of non-progressive conditions dating from birth or the first three years of life, which disrupts the brain's ability to control muscle movement, coordination, and posture.

Chaining

The process of combining simple behaviors to form a new complex behavior. For example, washing hands is really a series of simple behaviors that, when performed in sequence, result in hand washing.

EEG

Electroencephalogram, or EEG, measures brain waves that can show seizure activity, tumors, or other brain abnormalities.

Epilepsy

A seizure disorder characterized by recurring episodes of loss of consciousness, convulsive movements, falling, or disturbances of behavior.

Extinction

A behavior management principle in which a behavior is gradually weakened by withholding reinforcement.

Fading

An instructional strategy involving the gradual elimination of special assistance (such as physical assistance or modeling) until the person is able to respond independently.

Functional Assessment

An assessment to determine the antecedents and consequences of certain behaviors, and why these a certain behaviors are occurring, so that inappropriate behaviors can be reduced and the individual can be trained to use appropriate behaviors in their place.

Gastrostomy

A surgical opening into the stomach in which a tube is inserted so that the person can be fed.

Genetic Counseling

A service offered to a family or individual when a genetic defect is suspected. The counseling focuses on the risk factors involved in parenting a child with a developmental disability.

Genetic Disorder

Abnormalities in the genes of an individual which can result in some types of developmental disabilities or other genetic syndromes.

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Goal

A general statement of purpose that defines the desired outcome for an individual, or the desired end result of a program's impact for that individual, such as the behaviors or skills that an individual is to acquire.

ICF-DD

Intermediate Care Facility - Developmentally Disabled. A residential program funded by Medi-Cal (or Medi-Caid), for people with developmental disabilities who have medical conditions requiring health professionals on staff.

ICF-DD/H

Intermediate Care Facility- Developmentally Disabled/Habilitative. Similar to an ICF-DD but with staffing requirements which emphasizes habilitative training of residents.

ICF-DD/N

Intermediate Care Facility - Developmentally Disabled/Nursing Similar to an ICF-DD/H but serving clients with more need for intermittent skilled nursing care and supervision.

IEP

Individual Education Plan - A written statement of objectives and plans to achieve those objectives, which is required for every child in a special education school program.

IPP or IFSP

Individual Program Plan or Individual/ Family Service Plan - A written statement completed yearly which lists goals and specific objectives in areas important to the individual. Each objective contains a target date that the objective is to be met and one or more plans designed to reach the objective.

In Home Supportive Services

Financial assistance benefits paid to disabled persons to help them live independently

Informed Consent

The voluntary acceptance of any procedure, program, or practice that is performed by another individual. This requires knowledge of possible outcomes, including adverse reactions and other alternative procedures to accomplish the same outcome.

Interdisciplinary Team

A group of persons who have individual areas of professional expertise and/or know the client and his/her skills and behavior and can develop an IPP based on that knowledge. Sometimes referred to as the ID Team.

Least Restrictive Alternative

Refers to an intervention or environment, usually a residential or day program setting, which provides care and/or training which most closely meets an individual's needs, with the least amount of intrusion and disruption to the client, and that represents the least departure possible from normal patterns of living without being overly protective.

Medicaid (or Medi-Cal)

The federal and state program which pays for medical care for public assistance recipients and other low-income persons.

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Mental Retardation

Refers to subaverage general intellectual functioning which originated during the developmental period (before the age of 18) and is associated with impairment in adaptive behavior.

Metabolic Screening

Blood and urine lab tests which measure how a person metabolizes food and, in children, its impact on growth and development. Some developmental disabilities may be treated with special diets.

Modeling

An instructional strategy whereby a skill or behavior is taught by showing or demonstrating the desired behavior.

MRI

Magnetic Resonance Imaging - MRI uses magnetic sensing equipment to create an image of the brain in extremely fine detail.

NICU

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Nonverbal Communication

Signals and messages given from one person to one or more other people through facial expressions, body movements, verbal tone, or posture.

Normalization

A principle defined as the utilization of culturally valued means in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviors, experiences, and characteristics that are equally culturally normative or valued.

OT

Occupational therapist or therapy - to improve fine motor and daily living skills such as feeding, writing, etc., and sensory motor skills such as balance, awareness of body position, and touch.

Objective

A statement of an expected behavior that is related to the achievement of a goal.

Observable

One of the requirements in the definition of a behavior. It refers to behaviors that can be seen or heard rather than emotions or feelings that are inferred to exist.

PT

Physical therapist or therapy - to develop strength, coordination, and movement, and improve the functioning of the body's larger muscles, or gross motor skills, through physical activities.

Physical Assistance

An instructional strategy whereby a person is physically led through behavior by another person. For example, to teach a person to wash his hands, the instructor puts his or her hands over the person's hands and completes the behavior.

Play-Based Assessment

Structured and unstructured play situations are used to provide information about a child's

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social, emotional, cognitive, and communication development.

Positive Reinforcement

Anything a person likes that is given after a behavior to increase behavior.

Reinforcement

A basic principle of behavior that refers to procedures used to make behaviors stronger and more likely to occur.

Restraint

Any physical or mechanical process used to restrict the movement of an individual or the movement or normal function of a portion of the individual's body. Devices used to provide support for body position or proper balance (such as positioning chairs) and devices used for special medical and surgical treatment are excluded from this definition.

Supported Employment

The provision of services and supports, which enable an individual with a developmental disability to maintain employment, such as a special job-coach who provides training and supervision, adaptations to the work environment, etc.

Supported Living

The provision of services and supports which enable an individual to live in his or her own home, such as physical assistance, training, assistance with certain household or community tasks, etc.

SNF

Skilled nursing facility - A residential facility for individuals with considerable medical needs.

SSA

Social Security Administration - Federal agency which administers benefits to retired or disabled workers and their surviving dependents. May also refer to monthly benefit payments.

SSI

Supplemental Security Income - financial benefits to retired or disabled workers and their surviving dependents, administered through the Social Security Administration.

Seclusion

Placement of an individual in a locked room; a technique sometimes used to modify behavior.

Speech and Language Therapy

Diagnosis and treatment of language and speech disorders to help an individual to communicate more effectively.

Suctioning

A procedure in which mucous is cleared so that proper breathing through a tracheostomy can occur.

Task Analysis

The process of breaking down the content of a complex behavior into smaller and more basic components in order to facilitate learning.

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Technology Dependent

People who have a chronic disability and require the routine use of a device to maintain a life sustaining body function (such as breathing) are often referred to as technology dependent. These individuals, usually children, require daily, ongoing monitoring by trained personnel.

Time - Out

A behavior management procedure whereby an individual is removed from a reinforcing situation for a period of time when the person engages in a specified, inappropriate behavior.

Tracheotomy

A surgical incision into the trachea of the neck, in which a tube is inserted so that the person can breathe. The term tracheostomy is also used, to describe this opening.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Special assessment, training, and job placement services to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment.