DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN EVALUATION REPORTS

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Learning Agenda

By the end of the presentation, attendees should have further knowledge in the following areas:

- Best practice guidelines for writing recommendations within evaluation reports
- Recommendations that are evidence-based for a variety of presenting concerns
- Resources for finding evidence-based recommendations to utilize in evaluation reports
- Applying knowledge of evidence-based recommendations within case examples
Guidelines for Recommendations

- Before you start writing recommendations, go through and read your report and scan for all areas of deficit
  - For each area of deficit or difficulty, you should have recommendation that ties to this area
  - If there are numerous, significant areas of need, you may want to consider broad competency areas, rather than individual skills
  - Example: If a child lacks friends, has social problem-solving issues, aggression related to peers, and is becoming withdrawn, consider how to shape this social behavior most effectively
Guidelines for Recommendations

- Utilize strengths of the child and tailor recommendations accordingly
  - What is the child good at?
  - What are the child’s cognitive and academic strengths?
  - What are the things the child likes to do?

- Example: If a child is very musically oriented, how can we use music as a reinforcer? How can we use music to assist in math or reading competencies?
Guidelines for Recommendations

- The biggest question - how many recommendations?
  - The number is not as important as the information you provide
  - If a child has greater needs, there will be more recommendations aligned with your FIE

- Recommendations should be as specific as possible
  - Recommendations are only strong if they are able to be implemented as intended
  - Think about if a teacher or parent could implement the recommendation based on what you have written
Example Recommendations

- **Non-specific:** It would be beneficial for John’s social development if he were involved in extracurricular activities.

- **Specific:** The data supports social skills deficits. John may benefit from participation in extracurricular activities to interact with typically developing children on a regular basis. Activities that he expressed interest in include basketball, soccer and karate. During these activities, an emphasis should be placed on initiating interactions with peers, appropriate conversations and turn-taking skills (at parent expense).
Example Recommendations

- **Non-specific**: Megan may benefit from a visual task list.

- **Specific**: Data supports that Megan has difficulty following along with classroom instruction and understanding how to complete tasks in a timely manner. A small visual task list may be helpful. The task list could consist of a small laminated strip with numbers 1-3. Adults could write the steps involved in completing an assignment down in sequential order. Megan could then mark off when she has completed each task.
Guidelines for Recommendations

- You can organize your recommendations in numerous ways
  - Home----school----community
  - Short-term goals----long-term goals
  - Academic----behavior----social----emotional

- Always note any recommendation that should be implemented by the parent in the home or community as *at parent expense*
Evidence-Based Recommendations

- We always want our recommendations to be based on research and evidence.
  - If possible, have some kind of research or reference as a back-up to show that the recommendations is evidence-based

- Biggest question we hear- where do we find recommendations?
  - Importance of staying on top of research
  - Networking with colleagues
  - NASP and TASP membership
  - Attending professional development conferences and regional trainings
Resources

- WJ IV Interpretation and Instructional Interventions Program
- Essentials of Evidence-Based Academic Interventions by Barbara J. Wendling & Nancy Mather
- The Iris Center
  - https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/ebp_summaries/
- Effective School Interventions (3rd edition) by Burns, Riley-Tillman and Rathvon
Resources

- Evidence-Based Intervention Network
  - ebi.missouri.edu

- Missouri Autism Guidelines Initiative

Resources

- Handbook for Evidence-Based Interventions for Children and Adolescents by Theodore (Editor)
- Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions at www.pbisworld.com
- Effective Child Therapy Programs
  - http://effectivechildtherapy.org/therapies/
Evidence-Based Intervention Examples

- **Cognitive Deficits**
  - You cannot technically intervene or improve cognitive abilities but you can accommodate them.
  - Examine what the cognitive concerns are and how we could assist the child in the classroom.

- **Examples:**
  - **Memory Deficits**
    - Provide memory aids and visual cues/models
  - **Processing Speed Deficits**
    - Allow more time for processing and wait time
  - **Auditory Processing or Visual Processing**
    - Provide information in multiple formats for maximum input
Evidence-Based Interventions

- **Academic Deficits** - Always need to examine acquisition vs. fluency

- **Academic Acquisition**
  - Target student’s deficit area
  - Explicit/direct instruction
  - Appropriate level of challenge
  - Sufficient repetition of skill
  - Immediate corrective feedback

- **Once skill is acquired, work on fluency and automaticity of skills**
  - Uninterrupted periods of sustained practice no longer than 5 minute segments
  - Utilizing material that is at the 90% mastery level
Evidence-Based Interventions

- Reading Big 5 (National Reading Panel): Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Fluency with Text, Vocabulary, Comprehension
- Math (NCTM) : Conceptual Understanding, Procedural Literacy, and Strategic Competence
- Writing: Mechanics and Conventions, Conveying Meaning, Planning and Revision
Evidence-Based Interventions

- **Behavioral Deficits**
  - ADHD: Medication and behavioral interventions such as behavioral contracts, daily report cards, self-monitoring and frequent reinforcement/consequence
  - ODD: Parent Training and behavioral contingency interventions utilizing home-school collaboration

- **Emotional Concerns**
  - Anxiety and depression: Counseling/Psychological services to include CBT principles
  - Consider direct teaching- how can the student learn these skills and transfer them across settings?
Evidence-Based Interventions

- Deficits related to Autism
  - Principles of ABA - can be used for social skills, behavioral deficits, communication concerns and sensory issues
    - Identify behaviors to replace or teach
    - Replace problematic behaviors with more appropriate ones
    - Teach new skills through explicit instruction
    - Break down concepts into small, achievable goals
    - Teach through repetition and reinforcement until mastery
    - Generalize and maintain learned skills
Case Examples

Read through the case information provided.

- Identify all areas of deficit for the child.
- Try to think of at least 1 individualized recommendation that could be utilized for each deficit. Focus on recommendations that are evidence-based.
- Try to think about how you would communicate these recommendations within a report so that they could be easily implemented and understood by parents and teachers.
Contact Information

- For further questions, comments or resources, feel free to contact us!

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