

# 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 - ▣ Example: If a child lacks friends, has social problem-solving issues, aggression related to peers, and is becoming withdrawn, consider how to shape this social behavior most effectively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/](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](http://ebi.missouri.edu)
- Missouri Autism Guidelines Initiative
  - ▣ <http://www.autismguidelines.dmh.mo.gov/documents/Interventions.pdf>
- ADHD 4<sup>th</sup> Edition: A Handbook for Diagnosis and Treatment by Russell Barkley

# Resources

- Handbook for Evidence-Based Interventions for Children and Adolescents by Theodore (Editor)
- Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions at [www.pbisworld.com](http://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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