



Down Syndrome 101

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Thefarmershouse.org

Our Mission

Empowering Youth and Adults
with Developmental Disabilities
to Pursue Their Best Lives!

Our innovative programs cultivate job readiness and self-sufficiency skills; community inclusion; and successful employment!

We currently serve over 300 teens and adults with various disabilities through our Early Work Experience, Community Integration and Transportation programs. We also operate three Social Enterprise Markets and a farm which all employ people with disabilities.

Down Syndrome 101

Most commonly occurring genetic condition resulting in 1:792 births

Down Syndrome is prevalent in all races, socioeconomic classes and shows no gender bias

There are 250,000 individuals are living with Down syndrome in the United States

Currently no known cause or cure for Down syndrome-it's a result of an error in cell division when a baby is forming in the womb



Down Syndrome 101

80 percent of babies with Down syndrome are born to women under the age of 35

Average life span if born with Down syndrome today: 55-60 years of age

Varied mental abilities, physical development, behavior, and accomplishments

Types of Trisomy 21



Possible Medical Issues

Heart Defects

Muscle Hypotonia

Hearing Loss

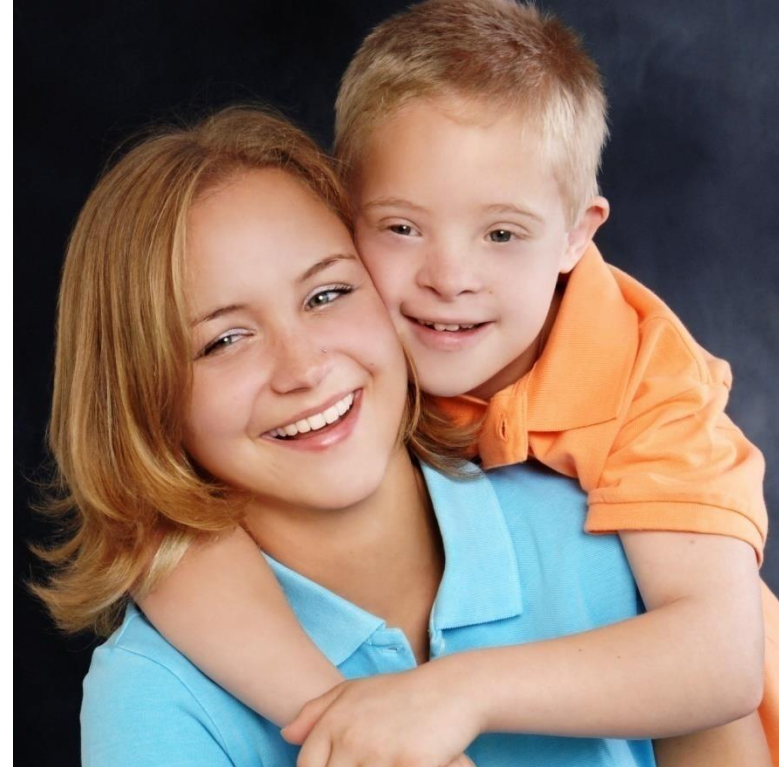
Leukemia

Vision

Thyroid dysfunction

Celiac Disease

Atlanto-Axial Instability



Possible Medical Issues

Tactile Sensitivity

High pain tolerance

Potty Training Issues

Stamina

Sleep apnea

Dual diagnosis of Autism



Communication Issues

Receptive language vs. Expressive language

Hearing

Short term memory

Speech articulation

Processing time

Echolalia

Generalization



Communication Strategies

Demands and Interruptions

Necessary vs. Unnecessary Demands

Talking too fast and too much information

10 seconds can change a life

Visual interruptions

Fallouts of Needless Demands and Interruptions

Shut Down-Down syndrome drop

Aggressive or Uncooperative Behavior



Communication Strategies

Ask the student to repeat instructions back to you

Ensure you are face to face and have good eye contact when giving instructions

Use simple and familiar language and short and concise sentences

Reinforce directions with facial expressions, gestures and signs

Emphasize key words and reinforce with visual aids as needed

Avoid closed questions and encourage the student to speak in more than one word utterances

Develop language through drama and role-play

Use a home-school log to help relay information



Social Issues

The Dreaded “R” Word

At-risk population for bullying/abuse

Research indicates 70-80% of people with developmental disabilities will be abused either verbally, physically or sexually in their lifetime

Issues with self-reporting

People First Language

Extra curricular activities

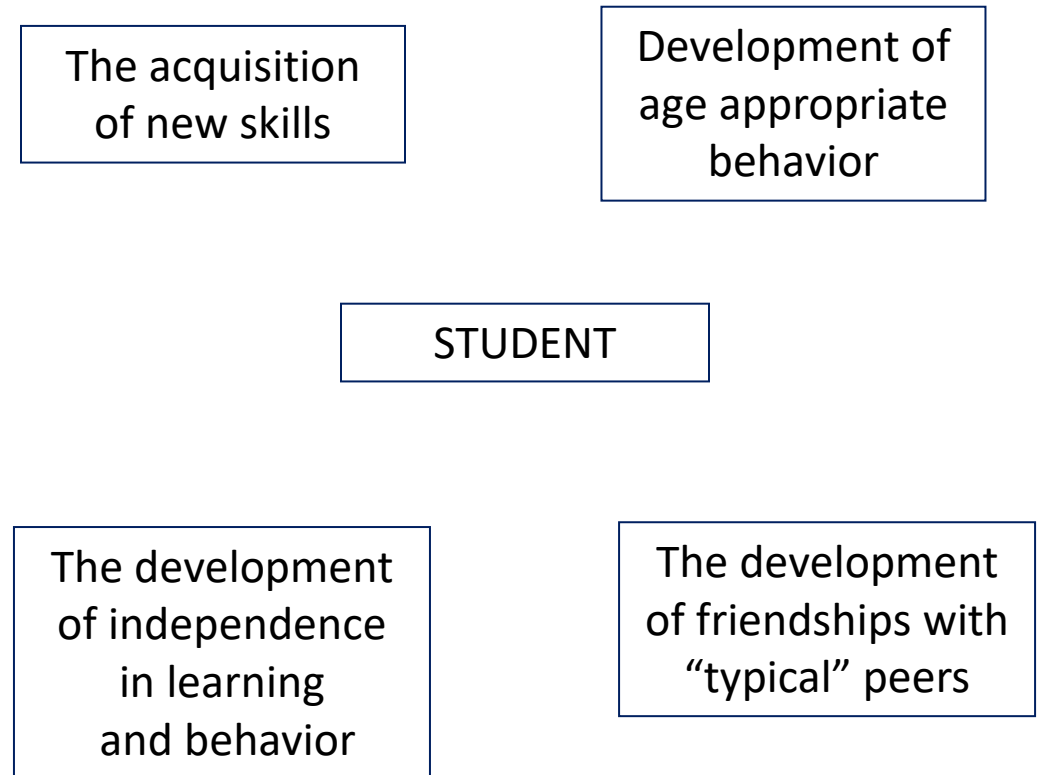


Why Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education benefits not only the student with Down syndrome, but also leads to greater understanding and less prejudice in the community at large.

Students in inclusive schools learn to become more tolerant and patient and to support each other, rather than competing or being afraid of the unknown. They also learn to value diversity and to appreciate that everyone has special gifts and talents.

Aims of Inclusion



Successful Inclusion Requires

A belief that all children can learn

A positive attitude throughout the whole school

Ownership of the student's learning by the classroom teacher

Good communication between home and school

Disability awareness education for students and educators

Teaching independence not learned helplessness



Avoiding Learned Helplessness

Presume competence!

Are the supports you have in place transferrable to other settings?

- Community outings
- Employment situations
- Post secondary education

Are you training your student to be a productive member of society?

Are you setting the student up to fail later in life by rescuing him/her now?



Avoiding Learned Helplessness

Promotes Learned Helplessness

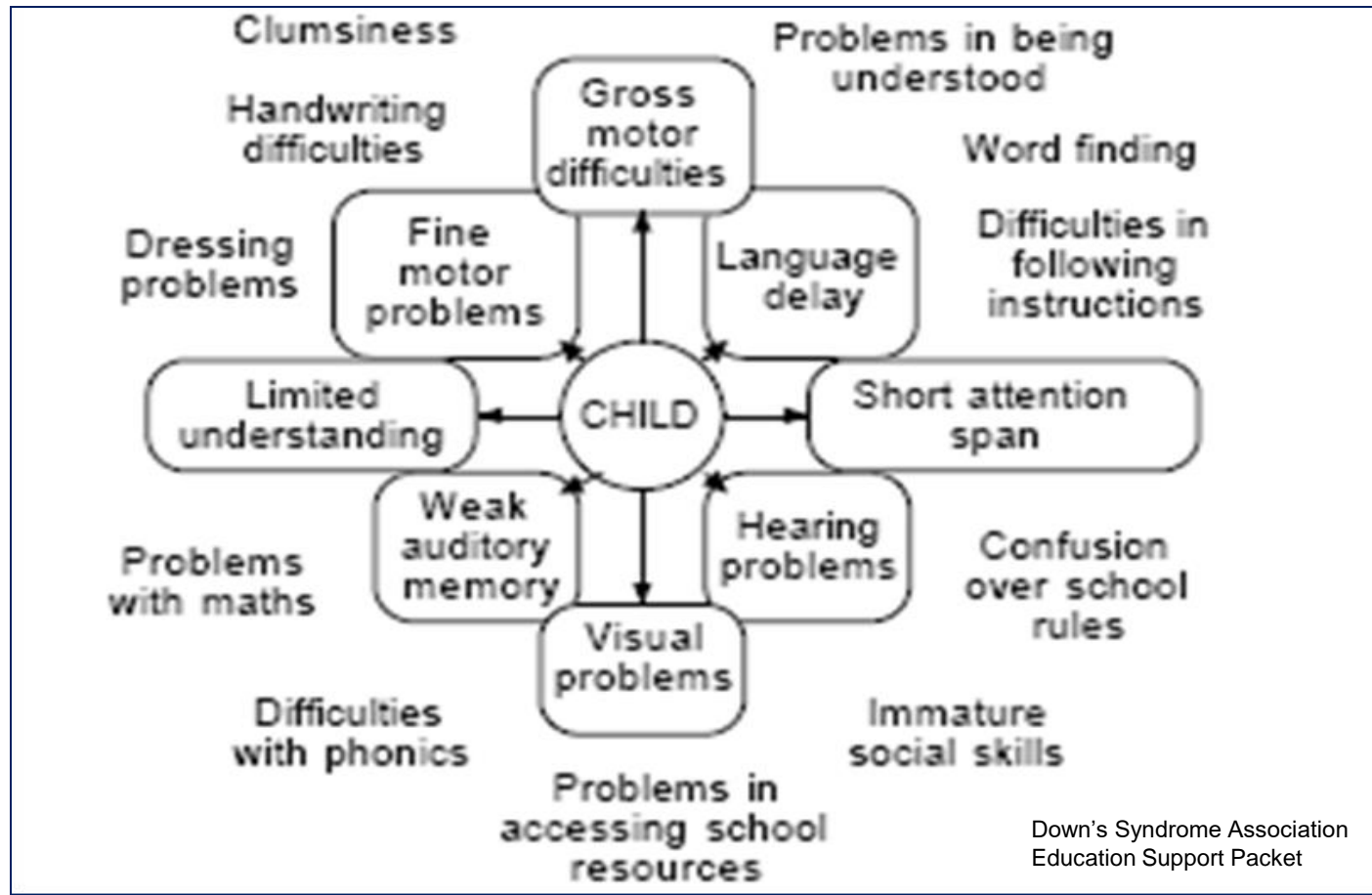
- Protecting student from taking risks
- Rescuing student from anticipated outcomes
- Overlooking errors
- Constant prompts
- Speaking for your student
- Giving inflated grades
- Permitting bad behavior
- Making excuses
- Interceding before they ask for help
- Inconsistency in discipline/expectations

Promotes Independence

- Setting clear limits on what is safe
- Discussing issues and creating solutions
- Giving clear directions/expect follow through
- Student encouraged to speak for self
- Teaching at a challenging level using learning strengths
- Using rubric scoring honestly
- Coaching student on errors
- Consistency in discipline/expectations
- Holding student accountable for actions
- Allowing student to fail in safe environment



How Down Syndrome Affects Learning



Preferred Teaching Methods

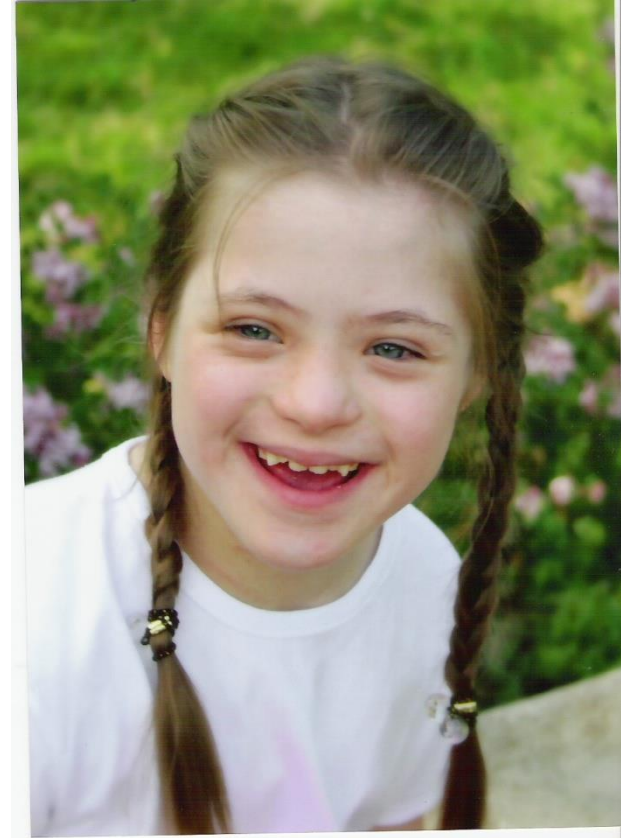
Hands on activities

Structured, sequenced activities

15-20 repetitions to acquire skill

Visual learning

The fewer the cues, the better!



Preferred Teaching Methods

Avoid learned helplessness

Allow student to try and fail

Use consistent vocabulary
between home and school

Avoid multi-tiered rewards
programs

Think like an employer

Utilize peer role modeling



The Role of Support Professionals

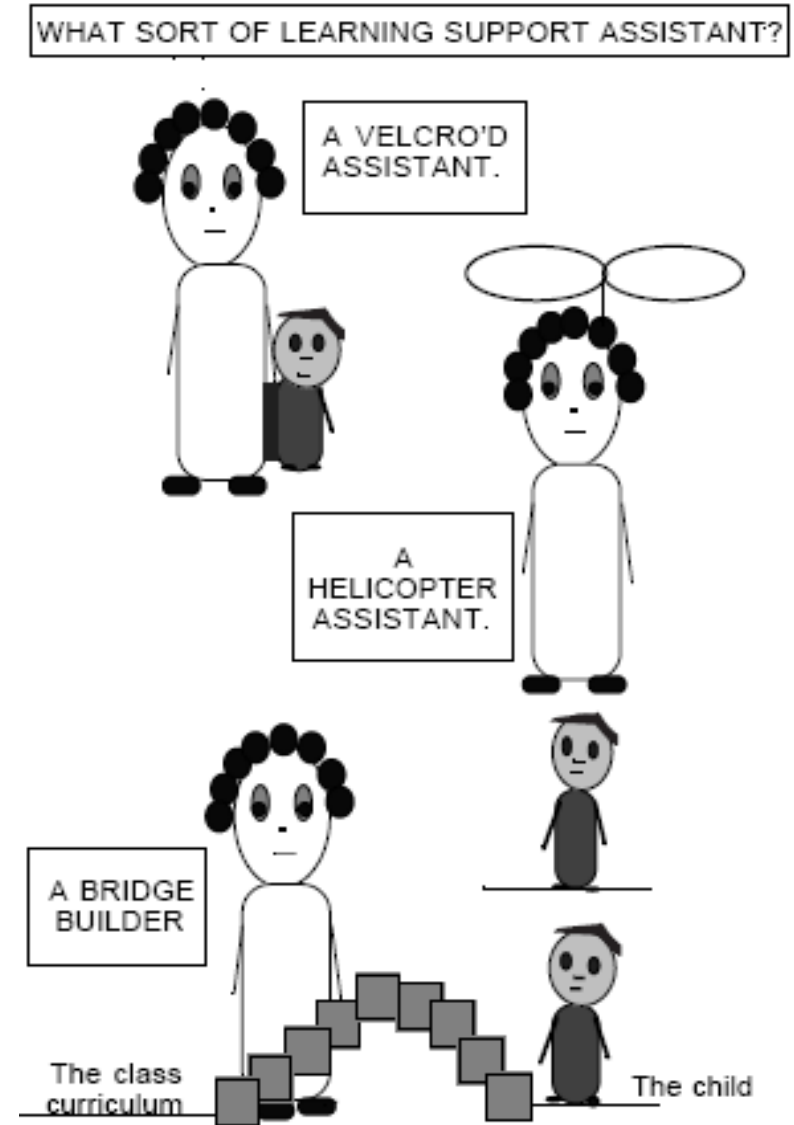
Encourage cooperative learning and involvement of peers as good role models

Act as a bridge between student and the curriculum

Provide feedback to the classroom teacher on the student's response to the curriculum

Encourage development of age appropriate behavior

Set high expectations and refuse to accept inappropriate behavior



Behavior is a Form of Communication

Rule out medical issues

Everyone rushes me

Confused about directions

Short term memory issues

Not prepared for NASA



REMEMBER!

Your child/student is not giving you a hard time.....
They are having a hard time!



Behavior is a Form of Communication

Behavior ignored/reinforced historically

Attention seeking or Avoidance?

Is your student treated like his/her peers?

NO! (it's easy to say and I have speech issues)

Lack of choice and control



Behavior is a Form of Communication

Respond don't react

Determine if it's a will or skill issue

Examine what part you play in behavior

Environmental changes

Wants to be the center of attention and dislike being ignored.

Resents having an adult by their side

Resents adult helping other students

Used to getting special treatment and object if it is withdrawn.



Will vs. Skill



Teach skills
Provide structure
Visual supports
Pacing

Teach behavior
Coping strategies
Consequences
Wait it out when possible



Successful Supervising Adults

Confident in their actions

Feel no guilt over the disability

Look into the future

Allow student to try and fail

Natural consequences

Avoid power struggles

Are process oriented vs goal oriented



What is Your Student Telling You?

Wants to do the same work as everyone else but an adult insists they do something different.

Tries to do the same as others, but find they can't cope without help.

Presumes the work they are being given is too difficult or sees it as too easy or uninteresting.

Confused by adults giving conflicting messages.

Students may feel under pressure/need a break.

Students may resent being regularly withdrawn from class and separated from their friends.



Strategies for Disruptive Behaviors

Give choices in activities

Give opportunity to resolve a conflict before intervening

When intervening - problem solve with the child, do not just stop the behavior

Don't do THIS....Do THIS instead

When possible allow the child to experience the natural consequence of his/her behavior.

Repeat rules and limits frequently; keep to a few basic rules.

Reinforce behavior you want to continue.



Strategies for Disruptive Behaviors

Warning before transitions are made

Arrange learning environment for positive interaction

First---Then for delayed gratification

Encourage to come up with their own solutions

Schedule the student's day for success

Try not to let the student become overly tired

Role-playing, using puppets or social stories to work out solutions to conflict situations



Curriculum Adaptations

Rely heavily on visual aides rather than auditory instructions.

Modify worksheets

- Fewer items and/or more visuals
- More border around edge of page
- Highlighted text that is important
- Large print
- Meaningful context to learner

Use of manipulatives

Multiple choice tests vs. spontaneous answers

Writing utensils

Books on tape



What does the future hold for people with Down syndrome?

Post secondary opportunities

Real jobs for real people

Relationships and marriages

Actively participating in their communities

Amazing medical advances

Cures for cancer and Alzheimer's??

Research which will result in therapies or medications which could enhance cognition



Where Can You Find Help?

Down Syndrome Alliance

Student's parents

Peers at school

Internet Resources

Library (books authored prior to 2012 are likely outdated)

Inclusiveschools.org

Swift Schools



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!



Questions???

