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Promoting Young Children's Participation by Creating Adaptations for Routines and Activities

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Summary

Adaptations are widely used with older children with disabilities. However, they are not readily used in early childhood because teachers/providers may be more focused on traditional skill building than on children's participation in activities, are unaware of decision making strategies or of resources, or lack knowledge/training. Participants will gain research-based content relevant for professional development and/or immediate application to practice regarding the selection, design, and use of adaptations with young children with disabilities.

Objectives

1. Learn about a research-based approach of using adaptations for daily activities and routines so that children can successfully participate in early childhood classroom curriculum.
2. Gain a working knowledge about how adaptations may help children meet a variety of curricular expectations and pre-kindergarten standards.

Supporting evidence:

Adaptations are widely used with older children with disabilities (e.g., Campbell, 2005; Giangreco, Cloninger, & Iverson, 1998; Janey & Snell, 2000). Adaptations and assistive technology promote children's learning and development by allowing children to more effectively participate in activities and routines in their natural environments (Langone, Malone & Kinsley, 1999; Mistrett, 2001). Adaptation interventions function as a "bridge" or a mediator between the skills that a child can currently perform and the requirements or expectations of an activity or routines (Campbell, Milbourne, Wilcox, 2008). When there is a mismatch between a child's current abilities and the requirements of an activity or routine, adaptation interventions may allow a child to participate fully even without being able to perform all the required skills (Campbell, 2004). The potential of adaptation interventions is substantial. However, teachers and service providers may not readily use adaptation interventions because they are more focused on traditional skill building than on children's participation in activities and routines (Bruder, 2000; Dugan, Campbell, Wilcox, 2006), are unaware of decision making strategies or of potentially helpful resources (Ronski & Sevcik, 2005), or lack knowledge and training about adaptations (Long, Huang, Woodbridge, Woolverton, & Minkel, 2003).



CARA's Kit: Creating Adaptations for Routines and Activities
Milbourne S.A. & Campbell, P.H. (2007)

The CARA's Kit is unique in its design for use by staff and consulting professionals and its structure of using adaptations as potential solutions for resolving differences between unsatisfactory situations that may occur in program settings with either groups or individual children and the more optimal situations that adults would like to have happen.

Relevance

CARA's Kit links current research on the effectiveness of adaptations as an intervention with early childhood curriculum and early childhood pre-K standards. It is also relevant and timely in that more and more children with disabilities are being enrolled in "typical" early childhood/child care settings and the CARA's Kit is intended to provide guidance on how to make adaptations for daily activities and routines so that children ages 3-6 can successfully participate in "typical" classroom curriculum. Adaptations are a primary method for meeting the unique needs of children with disabilities and special needs. The whole purpose of using adaptations is to increase children's independent participation and minimize the amount of hands-on adult assistance required. When adaptations are effective, adults can be doing the same things for children with disabilities that would be done with all children and which generally include methods to facilitate children's participation and learning.

Implications for practice

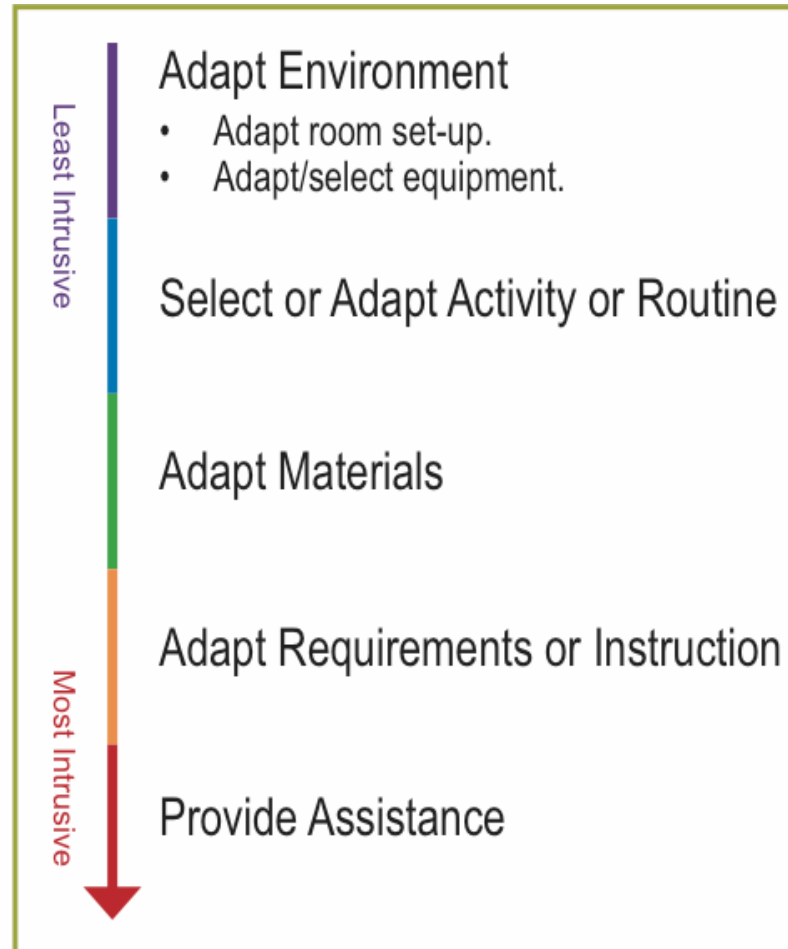
CARA's Kit helps professionals understand how to modify and adapt the curricular routines and activities. In turn, participation in daily activities and routines affect children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development, and thereby help children meet a variety of pre-kindergarten standards. Consultants can learn to engage teachers in the CARA's Kit process of creating adaptations for children and in turn, teachers learn to implement the CARA's Kit process independently. The structure of the CARA's Kit includes an adaptation planner to apply the process for identifying or designing adaptations, a format for assessing routines and activities (Campbell, 2005), an adaptation hierarchy flow chart (Campbell, 2000; 2004; 2005), used as a basis for systematic decision-making about adaptations, and a "Here's the Situation – Try this Adaptation" guide that suggests possible adaptations for use in specific situations. Adults use these tools to identify or create different ways in which environments, activities, and routines can be adapted to promote children's participation and learning.

CARA's Kit is available from DEC: <http://www.dec-sped.org/publications.html>



Adaptation Continuum

The Goal: Use the least intrusive adaptation. If an adaptation is not having the result you want, try the next least intrusive adaptation.





Here's the Situation

Try This Adaptation

Least Inclusive

Most Inclusive

Here's the Situation	Try This Adaptation				
	Environment	Activity	Materials	Requirements/Instruction	Assistance
<p>Children are having difficulty sharing books during library/book time.</p> <p>[Standards: 4, 21, 22, 32, 44, 49]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up the library center so that children have space to look at a book without being too close to the other children. Define the space with carpet squares, bean bags, soft chairs, etc. Limit the number of children in the area at one time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have children act out a book during library time instead of reading it by themselves. Assign two groups: one sits on floor cushions, the other sits on chairs at a table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide children with more than one copy of popular books. Include at least five books per child in the book area (e.g., 5 books x 4 children = 20 books minimum). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give a verbal directive that when the timer sounds each child will trade books with his or her book buddy. Post an illustration of two children exchanging books when the timer sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pair children with age-appropriate attention skills with children who have decreased auditory processing skills. Have book buddies choose books together and read to one another during library time.
<p>Children are leaving books on the floor instead of putting them back on the shelves when finished looking at them.</p> <p>[Standards: 5, 7, 27]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use baskets or bins on the floor instead of shelves to hold books. Put books on low magazine racks or low open shelves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use simple stickers or a card system to check books out and return them when finished. Assign two small groups for four games of charades. Have one group act while the other guesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a color-coded system for categories of books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post picture reminders to place books back in their proper storage location. Designate areas (e.g., animals, people, etc.) on the shelf. Demonstrate how to return books to the shelf location by matching the book topic with the category. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a "librarian for the day/week" who is in charge of collecting the books when it is time to clean up.
<p>Children are tearing the pages when looking at books.</p> <p>[Standards: 4, 7, 34]</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have children perform a movement activity such as wall push-ups prior to reading time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace books with paper pages with books with sturdy or fabric pages. Laminate the pages of popular books or put individual pages in a photo album. Provide children with "tearable" books like magazines or catalogs. 		



CARA's CHECKLIST OF PRIORITIES AND CONCERNS

This checklist is designed to help preschool teachers understand children's needs by describing children's typical performance in everyday classroom activities and routines. When completing the checklist, include input from teaching assistants, aides, and the director, if applicable.

Date: _____ Child's name: _____ Facility name and address: _____

Name(s) and position(s) of staff (e.g., lead teacher, aide) filling out questionnaire: _____

Does your facility participate in the State Quality Improvement System? Yes No

Does the child of concern receive early intervention services? Yes No If **yes**, does the classroom teaching staff consult with the early intervention team on a regular basis? Yes No

Checklist Instructions

- 1) Rate the child's ability to participate in the daily routines and activities by looking at the general expectations for the classroom. For example, during arrival and departure, does the child exceed, meet, occasionally meet, or not meet the expectations for the classroom?
- 2) Rate your level (and/or that of the entire staff) of satisfaction with the child's performance in each routine or activity. For example, are you very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the child's performance? *Note:* Each early childhood program has different priorities and some situations may be considered more important than others. Therefore, it is possible to be satisfied with performance that does not meet or occasionally meets the expectations of the classroom.
- 3) Circle the routines/activities that do not meet your expectations and with which you are not satisfied.
- 4) On the last page of the checklist, describe the strategies you and/or your classroom staff have tried to improve the routine or activity or to promote the child's participation in the routine or activity.

ACTIVITY	Exceeds classroom expectations	Meets classroom expectations	Occasionally meets classroom expectations	Does not meet classroom expectations		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not Satisfied
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GROUP MEETING / CIRCLE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TABLE TOP ACTIVITIES (manipulatives, puzzles, pre-writing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SMALL GROUP PLAY (sand & water, dramatic play, block play, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ACTIVE LEARNING & MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ROUTINE TRANSITIONS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMMUNITY OUTINGS (e.g., daily outdoor walks, trips in the community)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CARA's CHECKLIST OF PRIORITIES AND CONCERNS

DEVELOPMENTAL AREA/SKILL	Exceeds classroom expectations	Meets classroom expectations	Occasionally meets classroom expectations	Does not meet classroom expectations		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not Satisfied
SOCIALIZING (e.g., interacting with peers and adults)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMMUNICATING (with peers and adults)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GETTING AROUND (classroom, school, & community)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
USING HANDS & ARMS FOR FUNCTIONAL TASKS (e.g., use of utensils, tools)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Use blanks to add routines or activities specific to your classroom									
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Once you have completed the checklist, circle the routines/activities that do not meet your expectations and with which you are not satisfied.

We have tried the following strategies to improve the routine/activity or to promote the child's participation in the routine or activity (list below):



Try This Adaptation

Here's the Situation	Try This Adaptation				
	Least Intrusive				Most Intrusive
	Environment	Activity	Materials	Requirements/Instruction	Assistance
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ADAPTATION NOTES



■ What is currently happening?

■ What would you like to see happen?



■ How can we change the environment?

■ How can we change the activity?

■ How can we change the materials?

■ How can we change the requirements or instructions?

■ How can we provide assistance?

■ After you have made the changes, what is currently happening?